

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

JUNE 28, 2022

1. FIREWORKS SAFETY

As we approach the July 4th holiday there is an increase in illegal firework activity at our beaches and in our neighborhoods. Fireworks are dangerous and they are illegal in Massachusetts for anyone without a professional license. The Fourth of July is a busy time for firefighters. In fact, the week of July 4th is one of the busiest times of the year for fires. Firefighters, police officers, and medical professionals ask you to help us, and leave the fireworks to the professionals. Keep your July 4th holiday safe and fun. Stay away from illegal fireworks.

2. WELCOME TO OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS!

As you know, we have been actively recruiting for the position of DPW Director since this past December upon the retirement of David Johansen. After an extensive recruitment process, I am thrilled to share with the community the recruitment process has been completed and we welcomed our new Public Works Director Michael Lavin on Monday of this week.

Michael previously served as the Director of Public Works for the Town of Wrentham and has over 19 years of service in the public sector. Michael's professional experience and educational credentials have enabled him to make positive contributions to the communities he has served throughout his career.

Michael is more than qualified and ready to assume the DPW Director responsibilities. He is thorough, demonstrates attention to detail, is committed to working collaboratively, and is proficient in project management. His strong familiarity with the public works tasks at hand and ability to hit the ground running are extremely beneficial for the Town. Michael is an experienced professional with over 19 years of management experience, and has had experience in serving both the Town of Framingham as well as Wrentham.

He has a broad base of practical education and experience coupled with the management and critical skills well suited for this position. Michael is comfortable working with the public and government leaders at all levels. Specifically, Michael has a strong background in; municipal government, organizational management, financial management, capital improvement planning, personnel management, labor relations and economic development.

I believe with his experience and qualifications and his drive to serve on the Cape he will make a significant contribution to the Town as the next leader for DPW operations.

I also want to thank Assistant Town Administrator Greg Rounseville for all his tireless and diligent assistance in serving as Acting Director of Public Works during this interim period. The Department and the municipality were well served with both Greg and Deputy Director Tom O'Connor in place for the duration of the recruitment period and we are grateful for their leadership and service.

I know the Town will join me in welcoming Michael into his new role!

3. PLOVER MONITORING UPDATES

The Director of Natural Resources has provided an update on plovers at various beaches. As previously discussed with the Select Board the Town is currently managing a record high numbers of nest in Dennis this season.

Crowes Pasture currently has 2 nests which have hatched and 5 chicks on the beach. A third nest is set to hatch shortly. Two vehicle escorts were completed for the commercial shellfish grant holders. Escorts will not restart until July and will be limited. Escorting will only occur on the east side trail due to the location of the last plover nest. Recreational ORV access remains closed and will not reopen until plover chicks have fledged. At this time there is no estimated date for reopening.

South Village Landing had a nest hatch last week. Due to the high volume of people and the close proximity of the private road, silt fencing was installed to limit any movement of the birds to the roadway. People are cautioned to stay away from the birds and do not remove the fencing.

Chapin Beach has no active nests at this time.

West Dennis Beach remains very active with adult plovers and their chicks. Approximately 20 chicks and their parents are located at the far end of the beach.

One group (2 adults/1 chick) remain along the main beach and are prone to going into the parking lot. Silt fencing was installed to prevent their entrance into the parking area.

Three access points are provided for beach goers. These access points have temporary “gates” which allow people to enter yet prevent the chick from going through. These barriers MUST remain in place. If the chick enters the lot, parking will be closed again. This is mandated by MA Fish & Wildlife. All barriers will remain in place until the chicks can fly, which will not be for several more weeks.

Under normal circumstances, the state and federal guidelines for piping plovers and least terns would require that the road close to vehicles in the areas where unfledged chicks are present. However, the Town participates in the statewide Habitat Conservation Plan for Piping Plover, which allows the Town some flexibility for vehicle access along the road when chicks are present. Because of this permit, beachgoers are able to access the most of the road, parking lots and roadside parking areas, but with reduced hours. The Natural Resources staff monitors the location of the chicks and manages traffic if they approach or cross the road or parking areas. When traveling through signed areas, be alert to the possible presence of chicks and adult plovers in the road and stop to let them pass. If you do see chicks in or near the road, please notify the staff. If a take occurs (e.g., a chick is killed), the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife may suspend use of the road and vehicle access will be restrict where the chicks are located, so please be cautious when driving through these areas.

I wanted to give a shout out and my thanks for all the support of DNR staff both full-time and seasonal as well as Beach staff both full-time and seasonal, our Police Department and our DPW for all their determined efforts and stewardship in keeping the beaches open as much as possible while mitigating the plover habitat. Balancing the state and federal requirements for the plovers with recreational use is no easy feat, and requires DAY TO DAY management and changes as the bird’s nest and fledge. The Town has implemented measures to ensure vehicular access remains while meeting the requirements of our permits.

Please be mindful of the temporary measures, silt fencing, haybales that are in place. Kindly do not tear down or rip the silt fence. There are access points available to be used. When the fencing is vandalized it just means the town has to redo and may require further closures to the beach until staff is able to repair. Lastly, and most importantly do not disrespect or yell at town staff they are simply doing their job as directed to comply with State and Federal permitting. Thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation.

4. JULY 4TH OBSERVANCE

All Town offices will be closed on Monday, July 4, 2022 in observance of the July 4th Federal Holiday.

Town Hall will also be closed on Monday, July 4, 2022 for Sticker Sales.

The Dennis Transfer Station will be closed on Monday, July 4, 2022 and Tuesday, July 5, 2022.

The Transfer Station will reopen their regular hours of 8 AM to 4 PM on Wednesday, July 6.

The Dennis Golf Courses will be open their regular hours of 6 AM to 7 PM on Sunday, July 3, 2022 and Monday, July 4, 2022. Please visit <https://www.dennisgolf.com/> for more information.

The Dennis Public Library will be closed on Sunday, July 3, 2021 and Monday, July 4, 2022.

5. FIRE STATION 2 BUILDING PROJECT UPDATES

- Weekly construction meetings onsite by professional project team, FS2 Committee, Chief, Asst. Town Administrator and applicable town staff
- The foundation for the administration and basement section of building has been placed
- Unsuitable material on 85 percent of the site has occurred and screen and clean material back fill is occurring
- Infiltration system has begun to be installed
- Drainage structures have been delivered and ready for installation
- Project is within budget and within anticipated timeline

6. DENNIS CENTER FOR ACTIVE LIVING DCAL – BUILDING PROJECT UPDATES –

- Contract signed with builder; BSI
- Building Permit issued
- Kick off meeting conducted 6/22/22
- Construction to start 7/5/23
- NTP to be issued this week (Notice to Proceed)
- Old Kings Highway application submitted

- Builders risk insurance application with insurance submitted
- Very fortunate to have the same project teams for BSI, JHA, and Pomroy
- Town working on moving all existing furniture out of the side to be renovated
- Project meetings will be held every two weeks.

7. CHAPTER 90 ACCEPTING PROJECT REQUESTS

MassDOT and the Baker/Polito Administration are pleased to confirm \$200 million in new Chapter 90 apportionments for Fiscal Year 2023. Governor Charlie Baker has signed the legislation.

Fiscal Year 2023 apportionments are not considered final or available for use until funding is officially approved by Legislators and the Governor. Funding levels for the Chapter 90 Program are established by Massachusetts Legislature and approved by the Governor on an annual basis. Based on the amount legislatively approved, each of the Commonwealth's 351 municipalities are allocated a portion of overall Chapter 90 Program dollars each state fiscal year, which runs July 1 through June 30.

MassDOT is committed to working with cities and towns to help fulfill your project requests and commitments as expeditiously as possible, so we can have a robust 2022 maintenance and construction season. The District is now able to accept projects requests and reimbursements for Fiscal Year 2023.

As you know, MassDOT sent a letter to each municipality at the end of February of this year listing Fiscal Year 2023 apportionments. The Dennis Chapter 90 Fiscal Year 2023 apportionment is \$725,191. Town Engineer, Tom Andrade is working on the Chapter 90 project submittals.

Have a great and safe holiday weekend!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth C. Sullivan
Town Administrator