

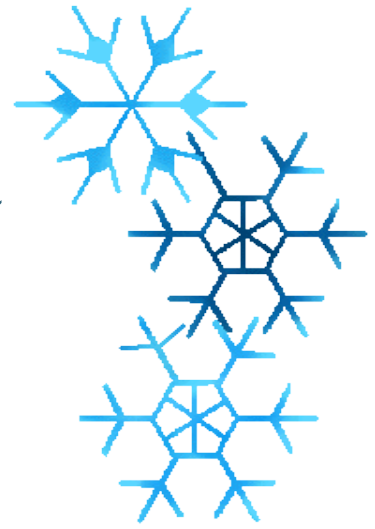


# Town Administrator's Transcript & Newsletter

Michael Mullen, Jr.

Dighton Town Administrator

January / February 2022



Hello, Dighton!

As I write this month, the snow from Friday's snowstorm is already beginning to melt. Hopefully we have seen the last of this winter's snow, but we know from experience not to rule anything out until we reach the end of April. Until then, I'll be looking forward to the longer days of sunlight and the daffodils beginning to bloom before being able to turn my spare time back to soccer games, gardening and yard work.

The last few weeks have been busy planning for another budget year to begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>, continued progress on grant implementation initiatives, and various procurement-related projects, to name a few of our current priorities. A significant part of our day-to-day efforts have focused on the development of proposed Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) operating budget recommendations to kick-off the budget process with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee before proceeding to Annual Town Meeting in late spring.

The development of the town's operating budget is a carefully constructed process that includes regular meetings between the town's financial team—including the Town Administrator and Executive Assistant, Town Accountant, Treasurer/Collector and Assessor—and is shaped by partnership with town department heads, boards and committees, and input from town residents.

We start the budget process in early November with a deep dive into understanding how current year revenue trends could help shape planning for the following fiscal year. In late December, we begin our departmental budget planning process where we invite all town departments, boards and committees to prepare and submit their individual budget requests. We devote significant efforts in January to revenue projection efforts, followed by the town accountant and I meeting with department heads and committee liaisons throughout the month of February. Next week, I expect to begin presenting proposed draft budget recommendations to the Board of Selectmen for review and consideration, which will be followed by the Finance Committee's budget review and recommendation process during the month of April. Conservative FY23 budget recommendations will prioritize the town's continued commitment to fund core town services to responsibly meet the needs of Dighton residents.

As always, keep reading for recent news, information and updates. It is an honor to serve as your Town Administrator. Please always feel free to contact me should any need arise.

Sincerely,

Mike Mullen, Jr.

## Upcoming and Important Dates

**Saturday, March 5, 2022** – Special Election, Proposed Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School Building Project, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Dighton Elementary School, 1250 Somerset Ave. [Click here for more information.](#)

**Wednesday, March 9, 2022** – Board of Selectmen meets at 6:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022** – Board of Selectmen meets at 6:00 p.m. with Dighton members of D-R School Committee to fill School Committee member vacancy. [Click here for more information.](#) Regular BOS meeting agenda to follow.

**Wednesday, March 23, 2022** – Board of Selectmen meets at 6:00 p.m.

**Saturday, April 9, 2022** – Town of Dighton Annual Election, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Dighton Elementary School, 1250 Somerset Ave. [Click here for more information.](#)

## Special Election for Proposed Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School Building Project Scheduled for this Saturday, March 5, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at DES

Just a reminder about Saturday's Special Election being held by Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School (B-P) where residents will be asked to consider B-P's proposed school building project.

The Special Election will be held on Saturday, March 5, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Dighton Elementary School.

Of the proposed \$305 million project, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has committed \$125.5 million through a project funding agreement contingent on B-P receiving local approval during Saturday's Special Election. This leaves \$180 million in remaining costs that need to be funded by B-P's member communities.



Dighton's estimated share is between \$21.5 million to \$22.7 million dollars, depending on debt structure, and based on student enrollment.

Town officials have created a portal on the Town of Dighton Homepage where residents can access more information about the proposed project and the project's financial impact to the Town of Dighton and its residents. [Please click here for more information.](#)

### Town Hall Interior Renovations Making Progress



In case you haven't had the chance to swing into Town Hall lately, we wanted to share an update on the ongoing Town Hall interior renovation projects.

Pictured above is the new Town Treasurer/Collector and Town Clerk customer service window recently installed by our Building and Highway Department Employees. You'll note that the woodwork has been repurposed from the historic Somerset Avenue Briggs House. We are grateful to have even more of Dighton's history helping to shape our future here at Town Hall.

A big thanks to Building Commissioner James Aguiar, Highway Superintendent Tom Ferry, and Foreman Michael Berube for their leadership in advancing this important project together with Highway Department and Town Hall staff.

### Dighton Board of Selectmen Announces School Committee Vacancy

It was with great gratitude, appreciation and regret that the Board of Selectmen last week accepted the resignation of Tom O'Connor as a Dighton member of the Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School Committee. Mr. O'Connor has been a valued leader on the D-R School Committee for a number of years, and we truly appreciate his service.

As stated in the Dighton-Rehoboth Regional Agreement, the Board of Selectmen and the remaining Dighton School Committee members shall, within 30 days, appoint a member to serve on the committee until the next election. At the next election, a successor shall be elected to serve for the balance of the unexpired term. **A candidate interested in filling the vacancy must be a Dighton resident.**

Those interested should submit a letter of interest and a resume either in person to the Board of Selectmen's office, 979 Somerset Ave., or via email to Leanne Kerwin, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen, at [lkerwin@dighton-ma.gov](mailto:lkerwin@dighton-ma.gov), by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2022. Interviews and the selection of a candidate will be conducted at the Board of Selectmen's meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 16, 2022. Dighton members of the Dighton-Rehoboth School Committee will participate in the selection process.



## Dighton Police Department Announces \$20,000 State Grant for Traffic Enforcement, Road Safety

Last week, we were very pleased to see Chief MacDonald announce a \$20,000 federal grant awarded by the state Executive Office of Public Safety to the Dighton Police Department.

“With the use of these grant funds, our department will have the ability to increase traffic enforcement which will, in turn, make our roads safer for the community,” Chief MacDonald said.

The funding, made available by the National Traffic Highway Administration and allocated by the Executive Office of Public Safety’s Office of Grants and Research, will be used to support Dighton’s Municipal Road Safety program, including the use of speed and traffic counters.



More information on the grant can be found by [clicking here](#).

We appreciate the efforts of Chief MacDonald and Lt. Shawn Cronin, who was instrumental in writing and securing the grant.

### Meet Director of Veterans Services

#### Ray Hague



**We're excited to introduce you to Ray Hague, who last summer began working as Dighton's Director of Veterans Services. A Dighton resident, Mr. Hague shares our tremendous passion for serving Dighton veterans and their families--and we're honored to have him as part of our team.**

**Name:** Ray Hague

**Position:** Director of Veterans Services

**Prior Experience:** Director of Veterans Services for 11 years in the City of Fall River

**What do you like most about your role?:** I am passionate about being able to help veterans and their dependents receive the benefits they earned through sacrifices they made serving our country. Assisting the veterans of this community in any way that I can is truly a privilege and an honor for me.

**What do you like most about Dighton?:** Everyone working in town government has been very helpful to me in getting acclimated with my duties and the operation of the Veterans Office. The residents of Dighton who I have met since working at Town Hall and those who I have met in town have been very supportive in my role as Veterans Service Officer. Dighton is truly a small town with a big heart.

**What do you like to do when you're not working (i.e. hobbies)?:** Any day that I can be on the water or near the water is a good day. I've spent many years in boating, enjoying the beautiful waterways of the South Coast. I also enjoy being a part-time radio host for a local radio station. In addition, I volunteer at various veterans organizations and I am especially proud to be a founding member of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall Committee in Fall River.