



A Message from your Town Administrator

July 2019

BROWNIES AND CUB SCOUTS COLLECTION AT TOWN HALL

Brownies Troop 82230 and the Tigers and Bears of Pack 45 are collecting School Supplies for the Dighton Elementary and Dighton Middle Schools as well as Food Pantry donations. They have collection boxes for both at Town Hall.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETINGS TO BEGIN 7:00 P.M.

The Board of Selectmen voted to begin meetings at 7:00 p.m., which is a modification from our previous start of 6:30 p.m.

We've had a new face at Town Hall! Mr. Christopher Laviolette has served as Interim Town Accountant and will be here for the duration of the summer until we can hire a full-time Accountant, which we anticipate having in place by September 2019. We also anticipate having another friendly face around the same time in the Board of Selectmen's office as we are hiring a part-time Administrative Assistant. I look forward to being able to introduce them to the Town.

The Fire Chief has brought on two new firefighters to join the call ranks: Christopher Sgro and Dana Costello. Welcome to Dighton and thank you for your service!

TOWN UPDATES

INCREASED COMMUNICATIONS

This month, we partnered with J.R. Guilfoil and Associates in an effort to provide increased up-to-date information regarding Town news and to ensure we are communicating news with our residents. John Guilfoil and his team are working on building a police website, a fire website, and a town news portal so that all of the Town's news can be found in one clear place for those who may be interested. All three are slated to debut in August 2019. The folks at Guilfoil have already sent out a variety of stories on our behalf, including the new ambulance authorized at Town Meeting, coverage on the car fires, information regarding local events such as Taste of Dighton and the Fire Association's Touch-A-Truck fundraiser, pedestrian safety announcements, and more. Here's a sneak peek of the Town's events site: <https://dightonportal.com/>.

*We rolled out our new email addresses town-wide.
The domain is now @dighton-ma.gov.*

NEW EMAILS

The Town also contracted with Netrospect, a local company from Somerset, for our network upgrades and maintenance needs. In doing so, we have revamped our email systems and have a new email domain, which is now @dighton-ma.gov. We've also made necessary upgrades for some of our network infrastructure that allowed our departments to continue offering superior services. Thank you to Netrospect for all of the assistance in rolling out the new emails and providing increased security for our

internet and file storing setup. It has been a lengthy, yet necessary and successful process.

FIVE YEAR PLAN UPDATES

At their meeting of July 10, the Board of Selectmen provided an update for the Five-Year Plan they adopted earlier this year. The items on this plan include building a new highway garage, renovating Fire Station 1, achieving ADA compliance town-wide, building a new library, exploring the economic vitality of installing sewer along Route 138, and renovating Town Hall. The Sewer Study was approved at Town Meeting in June and the Town will be contracting with a vendor later this summer. Town Hall has been renovated slightly for an updated meeting room in the lower level. New construction will begin to reallocate office space and will take up much of the fall to be completed. The Zoning Board of Appeals has moved to Town Hall at 979 Somerset Avenue as part of this process and is located in the Planning Board Office. Upon completion of work, the Town Accountant's office will be located on the lower level of Town Hall and the Town Clerk will move down the hall to that office. The Town is also actively working to enhance ADA Compliance town-wide and eliminate barriers for those with disabilities. We will be applying for a planning grant with the Massachusetts Office on Disability to conduct a self-evaluation for compliance and institute a plan for upgrades and changes. The planning grant, if received, will enable the Town to apply for construction grants to upgrade our facilities to current standards.

The Board has voted to continue exploring the installation of a fuel depot at the Transfer Station. The fuel station would be available to all municipal departments requiring town vehicles. The depot will enable the Town to procure gasoline and diesel fuel at lower prices than market rates while providing a centralized location for fueling. The Board is also exploring moving Highway Department operations to the Transfer Station, which will require engineering and permitting services as there would be a change of use on the property. The Transfer Station currently has a capped landfill and DEP requires notification of changes of use.

The Library is currently awaiting grant funds for a renovation project; however, it is clear that funding is not likely to occur anytime soon. In the meantime, the town is taking steps to explore the prospect of building a new library which many of us feel will be less expensive than the renovation project. We continue to work closely with our State Legislators on this project, always monitoring the likelihood of funding through the MBLC grants, special articles to the state budget, or other funding sources. The Library in its current state has considerable limitations, some of them ADA compliancy issues, and cannot continue offering necessary services in their facility as is without a strong, stable plan in place. I would like to thank the Library Board of Trustees and Library Director Jocelyn Tavares for their tremendous efforts in offering superb services in a subpar building and for overcoming many obstacles to do so. It does not go unnoticed!

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION

Also at their July 10th meeting, the Selectmen evaluated my performance as Town Administrator. This discussion is available for viewing on the Town's YouTube page which has all of our recorded meetings available. The Board provided a very positive evaluation of myself, my attitude, my work product, and leadership style. I appreciate the kind words and look forward to another year of work for the Board and for the great residents of Dighton. It has been a distinct pleasure and honor serving this Town and I look forward to new projects and challenges. The four agreed-upon goals for the coming year include developing a "Business Guide" for Dighton, including an organizational chart of our municipal functions, developing a by-law for minimum maintenance of unaccepted town roads, completing the Town of Dighton Policy Manual, which has been ongoing since the beginning of my tenure, and to set up a process to monitor and track all town assets.

PERMITTING NEWS UPDATES

Many residents are aware of the significant 40B development proposed off of Route 138 entitled Strawberry Fields. Developers are proposing a 94 single-family home development. Many of us are concerned over the sheer size of this development. We also have concerns over water availability, sewer capacity, stormwater management, and wetlands protection, among other concerns. Myself and many other boards and public officials are working with the Zoning Board of

IMPORTANT DATES

August 14, 21 – Selectmen's Meetings

September 14 – Fire Association's 3rd Annual

Touch-A-Truck fundraiser

*September 16 – Taste of Dighton fundraiser,
to benefit the Public Library*

Appeals to express these concerns so that a compromise can be reached. Their next hearing is slated for August 14, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. All interested parties are invited to attend that hearing.

Also going through the permitting process is a marijuana cultivator and dispensary, which will provide both medicinal and adult-use marijuana. The company, 1Connection, has received a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals and is anticipated to receive favorable permitting through the Planning Board at their hearing in August. They will be located at 200 Williams Street.

CABLE LICENSE AGREEMENT

The Cable Committee and myself have been hard at work collaborating over how to best negotiate terms for the next Cable License Agreement. This Agreement is between the Town and Comcast and enables us to finance Local Public Access programming. The vision and foresight of this group has been exciting to witness and I am very pleased with the wide variety of services that they hope to offer the community through this newly negotiated license agreement. We are slated to begin talks with Comcast in late August, early September, and are hoping for quick resolution. The Committee and myself have the assistance of Atty. William Solomon who has extensive experience in negotiating these agreements for other municipalities. Special thanks to the members of the Cable Committee who have worked with me on getting this far in the process and for providing some outside-of-the-box ideas to enhance services.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dighton Water District has imposed a Water Ban to manage water use and ensure the continued supply of safe, high quality drinking water throughout the hot summer months. Outdoor water use is currently restricted to an **ODD/EVEN** schedule. Odd numbered addresses are permitted use of water outdoors on odd-numbered calendar days and even numbered addresses are permitted use of water outdoors on even calendar days. We thank you for your cooperation with this order. For more information visit www.dightonwaterdistrict.com or call the office at (508) 824-9390.

The Board of Health has issued an alert for elevated risk for exposure to EEE. Effective August 5, 2019 all town fields and recreation areas are closed from dusk through dawn. This order is in effect until further notice. Aerial spraying is being conducted. Residents are encouraged to visit: www.mass.gov/guides/aerial-mosquito-control-summer-2019 for more information.

Per vote of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the basketball courts and tennis courts next to the old Police Station, 1551 Somerset Avenue, will now close at 10:00 p.m. However, during the duration of the Board of Health order, they are closed at dusk.

We need your help! We have various committees with vacancies, including the Dighton Trails Committee, Open Space Committee, Land Use Committee, By Law Review Committee, Cultural Council, and more. If interested in serving, fill out a volunteer information form or email boardfselectmen@dighton-ma.gov. We look forward to working with you!

THE BIG CHEESE



July's Big Cheese is Building Inspector James Aguiar, making him a two-time recipient! Jim has always had a can-do attitude when it comes to helping Dighton be the best it can be, and he frequently goes above and beyond. Jim pays attention to detail and is a true problem solver. This month, he managed three major projects simultaneously. He coordinated and oversaw the renovations to the lower level meeting room and the Animal Shelter while also managing the deconstruction of the Old Police Station. This included cataloguing inventory that will eventually be designated surplus and be disposed of in the best interest of the Town. Having multiple projects on-going can be confusing and overwhelming, especially when they are only one segment of the job. I applaud Jim for being coordinated and organized, for never shying away from a challenge, and always going that extra step to enhance the project. Great work, Jim!