



# A Message from your Town Administrator

October 2019

## VOLUNTEER

The Conservation Commission is seeking alternate members! If you're interested in volunteering with the town, visit our website at [https://www.dighton-ma.gov/i\\_want\\_to\\_volunteer.php](https://www.dighton-ma.gov/i_want_to_volunteer.php) to fill out a Volunteer Form!

## GOT SOCKS?!

A recently created Daisy Troop needs your help! They are collecting new socks for all to donate to those in need. Socks are the most under-donated articles and one of the most important! Drop off bins are at Under the Sun, the Library, and Town Hall.

Our productivity continues! We made so many decisions and moved toward accomplishing our goals. The Town applied for two grants, Complete Streets and ADA Compliance Planning, and kicked off two others this month. The two in progress are Green Communities and Hazard Mitigation Plan/Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (HMP/MVP). The first project under Green Communities is installing two electric vehicle charging stations at our municipal campus. We will also work toward weatherizing various buildings to increase efficiencies, installing wi-fi thermostats, and installing LED lighting.

The HMP/MVP work is an exciting, multi-departmental plan that identifies hazards and vulnerabilities within our community that would pose a problem under certain disasters, specifically natural disasters and storms. Having this plan in place allows us the opportunity to apply for Climate Change Action Grants, currently a large focus of Governor Baker's administration. This funding source would allow us to explore replacement of high cost items, such as bridge repair and replacement, culvert replacement, and potentially a fuel depot. The timing of this work couldn't be better as it coincides nicely with our stormwater management initiatives as well as the Selectmen's Town wide Five-Year Plan, which highlights the need for a fuel depot for municipal vehicles.

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Also coinciding with the Five-Year Plan is our ADA Planning Grant, which would provide funding to conduct a town-wide self-evaluation for municipal buildings and properties. There are many areas in which we need to improve accessibility and access to our properties. This creates a punch list of sorts, prioritizing areas of focus. I plan on requesting a separate budget line in our Public Buildings budget that will allow us to perform work in this area throughout the year. However, for major projects we will be pursuing project grants from Massachusetts Office of Disability and other areas. I also plan on requesting that ADA Compliance be named as a best practice through the Community Compact, which will also serve to open up various funding opportunities.

Complete Streets is a major grant program funded through MassDOT. We did not receive funding the first time we applied, but this round looks a bit more promising. We applied for funds specifically for Somerset Avenue/Center Street intersection improvements (and sidewalks) as well as Pearl Street in North Dighton. In the case of Pearl Street, the improvements planned address various pedestrian and accessibility issues, aligning with our ADA compliance goals. It's an exciting time for us as we explore creative financing to limit the burden on the tax payer but still

complete long-needed, and many times expensive projects. I thank my fellow Department Heads for sharing their expertise and assistance in helping us be the most successful we can be.

## TOWN UPDATES

### NEW FACES IN THE TOWN OF DIGHTON!

This month, we hired a new full-time dispatcher, Paul Beaudoin, who has previously served as a part time dispatcher for many years. We also hired a Town Accountant, a search that spanned a few months. Mr. Chris Laviolette was appointed permanently on October 23, 2019, after serving a few months as the Town's interim Town Accountant. Chris replaces long-time Town Accountant Jennifer Luiz, who retired this summer. The Highway Department has new part time administrative staff in Ms. Heather Nicora. Welcome aboard to all of our new employees! We look forward to working with you.

Next month, the Board of Selectmen's office will gain a new part time administrative assistant, Ms. Leeanne Kirwin. Leanne will embark on this newly-created position to assist both myself and the Board in administrative duties and special projects. Be sure to swing by and say hello! Also in November, the Communications Center and Police Department will begin training new part-time communication dispatchers and three reserve police officers.

### SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Once again, the Town gathered together for a fall town meeting which took place on October 28, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. The Town approved spending articles to purchase a new utility truck for the fire department, a man lift, wide area mower, an unmarked police cruiser, and a new highway pickup truck. The Town also set aside funds to install a canopy at PrimeTime, which will be matched with state funds received earlier this year, as well as funds to finish upgrades to our technological network and to survey Main Street in advance of repaving, upgrading, and installing sidewalks. In this endeavor the Town is working with Dighton Water District so that they can upgrade their water main infrastructure simultaneously.

Most debate centered around demolishing the house on 949 Somerset Avenue, as well as discussion of renaming the Board of Selectmen to "Select Board." Regarding the house, funds were appropriated to demolish the building. However, now the Demolition Delay By Law applies. The Historical Commission has six months to find a person to move the home from the property. This saves the home from being demolished. It is important to note that the *land* will still be owned by the Town of Dighton and it is not part of the sale of the home. Buyers must move the structure to another property. Additionally, the building also constitutes "real property" as defined under MGL Chapter 30B, Section 16. As such, the house would be advertised for removal and disposed of as surplus property. The highest responsible and responsive bidder will prevail. In this event, the Town will only have to fill in the property, and not demolish the structure. Funds received for the property would return to the "General Fund" and be free cash, available in the following fiscal year.

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Since coming to Dighton, I've drafted twenty policies that have been acted on the Board. They are posted on our website at <https://dighton-ma.gov/government/policies.php>. Any new policy that I draft is posted here as a draft before it heads to the Board of Selectmen for final vote and approval. During the approval process, we accept feedback and input on these policies over the course of three meetings. In November, the Personnel Record Policy and the Tobacco Use Policy will be adopted and enacted. A CORI policy will also be considered.

### COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

We've finally had a hard frost! The ban on visiting public parks and properties at dusk has been lifted by the Board of Health.

PrimeTime is seeking clients. If you or someone you know would benefit from meeting new friends, trying new experiences, and staying active, call Sheila at 508-669-6272.

## IMPORTANT DATES

*November 13, 20 – Selectmen's Meetings*

*November 30 – Lights On! See below for details.*

*December 7 – Police and Fire's Stuff a Cruiser*

Do you have Dighton news to share? Tell us about it! Visit <https://dightonportal.com/submit-a-story/> to provide details on our story!

## THE BIG CHEESE



This month, the Fire Department as a whole was awarded the Big Cheese award. They were recognized for their considerable efforts in improving the community as a whole, going above and beyond their regular duties to host a 9/11 Memorial Ceremony that was truly touching. They also conducted a boot fundraiser for Muscular Dystrophy and held a Touch A Truck to benefit two young kids with significant health problems. All there were done in the month of September alone. Their work in these endeavors significantly contributes to the strong sense of community that we boast about it Dighton, truly embodying Small Town, Big Heart. Thank you to our Fire Department, who continually think about Dighton as a community, and not just a workplace.

# Dighton Lights On 2019

Saturday, November 30, 2019 @ Dighton Town Hall



Sponsored by the Dighton Dunkin Donuts

### Schedule of Events

3:30 – 4:00 Story time with Mrs. Claus  
4:00 – 4:45 DRHS – Music Ensembles  
4:45 – 5:00 Dighton Elementary School Chorus  
5:00 – 5:15 Caroling with Dignitaries  
5:15 – 5:30 Parade  
5:30 Lights On!  
5:30 DR Marching Band Performance  
Stick around for Hayrides around the track!

Hot Cocoa, coffee, hot dogs, popcorn and cake available!

**Thank you** to the following for their donations & help!

*Araujo Farms*

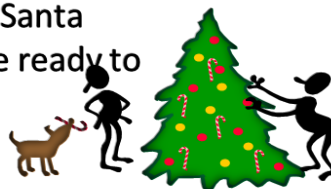
*Dighton Lions*

*Dighton Police, Fire & Highway Depts.*

Welcome to Sen. Marc Pacheco, Rep. Patricia Haddad, District Attorney Tom Quinn, and Dighton town officials.

### Meet Santa!

There will also be an opportunity to meet Santa during one of his visits to Dighton! Kids be ready to tell Santa what you want and parents be sure to bring a camera!



**The Dighton Community Food Bank** will be accepting donations at the event.

*Brought to you by the Dighton Holiday Committee*