

MIDDLETON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2021
7:00 PM

This meeting is being recorded

Due to the state of emergency in Massachusetts due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this meeting will be held via ZOOM, an internet based meeting space. It is the intent that the virtual meeting space will be made accessible to the public; however, if this is not possible despite best efforts, the full and complete transcript of the meeting will be posted on the Town's website as soon as practicable upon the conclusion of the proceedings. To join the meeting, go to

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87058402868?pwd=dGhmb1llTjJRQlg5dTcyTGZqS2dNQ09>

Meeting ID: 870 5840 2868

Passcode: 814557

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,87058402868#,,, *814557# US (Chicago)

1. 7:00 Approval of Warrant: #2125
Minutes: Open Session: May 18, 2021
Town Administrator updates and reports
2. 7:15 Public Comment Period
3. 7:20 Continue discussion of location and date of Annual Town Meeting and Town Election
4. 7:30 Update on reopening plans
5. 7:40 Vote to approve collective bargaining agreement with IAFF 3097, Full Time Firefighters
6. 7:45 Discuss pay equity study and vote to implement non-union classification schedule retroactive to April 1, 2021
7. 8:00 Review and discuss one time vacation adjustment
8. 8:15 Review and vote to rescind March 24, 2020 local Declaration of Emergency with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic
9. 8:05 New Business: Reserved for topics that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed

Upcoming Meetings:	June 5	Annual Town Meeting, 9AM, 48 South Main Street
	June 15 & 29	Regular BOS meetings
	July 13	Regular BOS meetings
	August 17	Regular BOS meetings

The Board reserves the right to consider items on the agenda out of order. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

**MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, May 18, 2021 7:00 PM
This meeting was recorded**

1.

NOTE: Due to the state of emergency in Massachusetts due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this meeting was held via ZOOM, an internet-based meeting space.

Present: Chair Rick Kassiotis, Brian Cresta, Tim Houten, Kosta Prentakis

Absent: None

Others Attending: Town Administrator Andy Sheehan, Assistant Town Administrator Tanya Shallop, Minutes Secretary Judi Stickney, Paul Pellicelli, Adam Stone, Annie Wilton, Joan Garber, Frank Twiss, Town CFO Sarah Wood, George Dow, William Renault, Town Clerk Ilene Twiss

7:07 PM With a quorum present, Chair Rick Kassiotis called the meeting to order.

ROUTINES

- **Warrant Approval:** Town Administrator Andy Sheehan provided a brief review of Warrant #2123: Payroll: \$709,275; Bills Payable: \$573,265 and Warrant #2124: Payroll: \$814,803; Bills Payable: \$4,125,132; noting that the Town Accountant had reviewed the warrant and requested the Board's approval. After a brief discussion, the Board took the following action:

On a **MOTION** made by **Prentakis**, second by **Houten**, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to approve the warrants as presented.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
PRENTAKIS:	Yes
KASSIOTIS:	Yes
HOUTEN:	Yes

- **Minutes:** After a brief review of available minutes, the Board took the following action:

On a **MOTION** made by **Cresta**, second by **Prentakis**, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to accept the minutes of May 4, 2021 as written.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
PRENTAKIS:	Yes
KASSIOTIS:	Yes
HOUTEN:	Yes

- **Town Administrator's Report:** Town Administrator Andy Sheehan provided the Board with information and updates on the following:

- **Reopening:** Sheehan advised that it was great news from the Governor who is lifting most of the COVID restrictions as of May 29th. Sheehan publicly thanked everyone – employees and residents alike – who helped the town get through the pandemic by wearing masks, social distancing, etc.
- **Master Development Planning Committee:** Sheehan reported that the Master Development Planning Committee had held many informational presentations, the latest of which is on the town website. There are videos of the buildings and other associated information. There was an open house at Memorial Hall, the COA, fire station and police station this past Saturday. There will be another this Saturday from 10AM-1PM.
- **American Rescue Plan Act Funds:** Sheehan advised they are still getting information on the ARPA money and trying to get more information on what's allowable and what's not. There is also an infrastructure bill coming out of Washington which might be accessible to Middleton as well. A brief discussion ensued on whether some of the ARPA and/or infrastructure funding might be used for the municipal complex.
- **Congratulations to our MMA Suffolk University Program Graduates:** Sheehan publicly congratulated Assistant Library Director Loretta Johnson, COA Director Jillian Smith, and Sgt. Matt Armitage for completing the MMA Suffolk University certificate program in local government leadership and management.
- **The 16 Parcels:** Sheehan discussed the 16 parcels of former Essex County land that became part of DCAMM property. Middleton has been trying to get those parcels for many years. Sheehan was happy to report that they were able to close on 14 of the 16 parcels last week. The remaining two need corrective legislation. The book and page references need to be corrected which our delegation has filed a bill to correct. Sheehan publicly thanked the town's legislative delegation for their efforts, as well as Matt Cocciardi, who works at DCAMM.

7:22 PM Public Comment Period:

- **Rail Trail Update:** Rick Kassiotis provided an update on the status of the Rail Trail in town, noting that Phase 1, from Essex Street to Central Street and another just inside Essex Street, will be complete when ADA compliance measures are in place. Kassiotis added that some may have noticed a lot of work going on at the Maple Street and Liberty Street intersection. They are removing the two steel towers there and the area will be finished off with flower gardens and arborvitae. Phase II includes the trails from Central Street to Webb Street to Highland Road to behind the Hathorne Post Office on Route 62. Kassiotis thanked everyone involved in getting these trails developed and finished.

7:27 PM Master Development Planning Committee's Final Presentation: The Master Development Planning Committee met with the Board of Selectmen to make a final presentation on the municipal complex at 105 South Main Street and seek the Board's endorsement. Bill Renault, chair of the committee, as well as committee members Frank Twiss, George Dow, and Annie Wilton were also in attendance. Renault reported they've been on a public presentation tour and have received recommendations from the Master Plan Committee, Planning Board, and Finance Committee. Renault provided a PowerPoint presentation as he made his presentation on the project and its costs. Town Administrator Andy Sheehan provided information on funding and bonding for the project, assisted by Bill Renault. A lengthy discussion ensued on the costs and the suggested funding mechanisms. There were concerns expressed about the costs. After a lengthy discussion, the Board took the following action:

On a **MOTION** made by **Prentakis**, second by **Houten**, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to support the project.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
PRENTAKIS:	Yes
KASSIOTIS:	Yes
HOUTEN:	Yes

8:18 PM Application of Bluebonnet Consulting for Change of Manager: Town Manager Andy Sheehan provided the Board with some background information on the request from Merritt Boston North Operator LLC d/b/a Double Tree Boston North Shore Hotel at 50 Village Drive, to change the manager from Kevin Varr to Andrew Dunn, manager. After a brief discussion, the Board took the following action:

On a **MOTION** made by **Houten**, second by **Prentakis**, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to change the manager from Kevin Varr to Andrew Dunn for Merritt Boston North Operator LLC d/b/a Double Tree Boston North Shore Hotel at 50 Village Drive.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
PRENTAKIS:	Yes
KASSIOTIS:	Yes
HOUTEN:	Yes

8:23 PM Presentation of the FY2021 3rd Quarter Financial Report: Chief Financial Officer Sarah Wood met with the Board with a brief presentation on the FY2021 3rd Quarter financial report. Wood had provided the Board with spreadsheets and other information to view as she made her brief presentation. Wood expects there will be no action taken on the warrant article at Town Meeting that would supplement FY21 accounts. Revenues are trending at 98% of the budget for the rest of the fiscal year. Board members had a few questions on expenses and revenues.

8:39 PM Request to Change Road Name at 123 River Street: The Chair advised that the Board has been asked to reconsider the name of the road, which was requested by Pike Messenger, adding that Messenger has proposed the new name be Drumlin Road/Circle/Way. Selectman Prentakis felt they should stick with Messenger Circle. The rest of the Board agreed. They will not change the name.

8:41 PM Regional Information Technology Memorandum of Understanding: Assistant Town Administrator Tanya Shallop provided the Board with a copy of the MOU to view as she explained the agreement with 6 other towns on an IT collaborative. She asked the Board members to vote their approval on the MOU and sign it. After a brief discussion, the Board took the following action:

On a **MOTION** made by **Prentakis**, second by **Cresta**, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to sign the Regional Information Technology Memorandum of Understanding.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
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PRENTAKIS:	Yes
KASSIOTIS:	Yes
HOUTEN:	Yes

8:48 PM Annual Town Meeting and Town Election: Town Administrator Andy Sheehan reported that the logistics for town meeting are complete, noting that the tent, outside location, etc. are all lined up. The printing is complete on the warrant book. The jail did it this year. That will go out to the residents by the weekend. Just a reminder that Town Meeting will be held Saturday June 5th at 9AM. The election is June 12th from 7AM-6PM. Town Clerk Ilene Twiss reminded all voters that they are open Monday through Thursday from 9AM-1PM for early voting. Residents can come in earlier by appointment. On June 2nd they will be open from 9AM-8PM, which is the last day to register to vote before the town election. Twiss added that mail-in voting is in full swing as well, noting that they sent out 600 ballots already and are getting a fair return.

8:51 PM Update on Reopening Plans: Town Administrator Andy Sheehan provided a brief update on the town's reopening plans for municipal buildings and facilities, noting that they expect to be back open by June 15th. Sheehan added that they are still waiting on additional guidance on transitioning to meeting in person. He expects to have more information for the Board on June 1st. A brief discussion ensued on restaurants and outdoor dining.

9:01 PM Vote to Accept the Following Gifts and Grants:

- *Anonymous donation to the Middleton Food Pantry in the amount of \$500*
- *Sustainable Materials Recovery Program grant from the Mass. Department of Environmental Protection in the amount of \$16,164.34 to be used for transportation and recycling of mattresses*

On a **MOTION** made by **Houten**, second by **Cresta**, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to accept the donations of \$500 for the Middleton Food Pantry and a grant in the amount of \$16,164.34 to be used for the transportation and recycling of mattresses.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
PRENTAKIS:	Yes
KASSIOTIS:	Yes
HOUTEN:	Yes

9:02 PM Executive Session: Pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3) with respect to contract negotiations with collective bargaining units, specifically the Full Time Firefighters, IAFF, #3097:

On a **MOTION** made by **Cresta**, second by **Prentakis**, the Select Board **VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to go into Executive Session, pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3) with respect to contract negotiations with collective bargaining units, specifically the Full Time Firefighters, IAFF, #3097, not to return to open session.

Roll Call (Called by Clerk Houten):

CRESTA:	Yes
PRENTAKIS:	Yes

KASSIOTIS: Yes
HOUTEN: Yes

9:22 PM Adjourn

With no further business, the Board of Selectmen's meeting of May 18, 2021 adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Upcoming Meetings:

June 1: Regular BOS meeting
June 5: Annual Town Meeting: 9AM, 48 South Main Street
June 15: Regular BOS meeting

Respectfully submitted,



Judith A. Stickney, Minutes Secretary

Timothy P. Houten, BOS Clerk

Documents either distributed to the Board of Selectmen before the meeting in a packet or at the meeting:

- Agenda: May 18, 2021
- Warrant #2123: Payroll: \$709,275; Bills Payable: \$573,265
- Warrant #2124: Payroll: \$814,803; Bills Payable: \$4,125,132
- Minutes:
 - May 4, 2021
- Master Development Planning Committee Presentation
- Letter and supporting documents from Bluebonnet Consulting to Town Administrator, Re: Change of Manager: DoubleTree Boston North Shore, 50 Village Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 5/10/21
- Proposed Meeting Dates
- Memo and related documents from Sarah Wood, CFO to Board of Selectmen/Finance Committee, Re: FY 2021, 3rd Quarter Highlights, 5/5/21
- North Shore Regional IT Collaborative FY22 Overview
- MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH SHORE REGIONAL IT COLLABORATIVE
- Letter from COA to Board of Selectmen, Re: Anonymous Middleton Food Pantry Donation: \$500, 5/5/21
- Letter from Governor Baker to Town Administrator, Re: Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Municipal Grant, 5/6/21
- Letter from Department of Environmental Protection to Town Administrator, Re: Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Municipal Grant, 5/6/21
- E-Mail from Brian York to Town Administrator, Re: Resignation from Planning Board, 5/6/21

- Master Plan Committee's vote to recommend Article 22 which authorizes the Municipal Complex Project
- Memo from Planning Board to Board of Selectmen, Re: Recommendations on Article 22, and Article 30 of the June 5, 2021 Annual Town Meeting Warrant, 5/12/21
- Email from Attorney Jill Mann to Town Administrator, Re: Street Naming Northeast River Estates, 5/17/21



Town of Middleton

Compensation Analysis and Proposed Classification Plan

June 1, 2021

6.

Introduction

Why analyze compensation?

- Traditional volunteer-based governance model – no longer sufficient
- Attracting & retaining human resources requires competitive, market-based compensation structure – emphasis on pay equity
- Building capacity to attract & retain a skilled municipal workforce
- Volunteers are critical to civic-based municipal activities - BUT motivation is civic-based, not monetary
- Pay structure/philosophy is key to organization performance

Introduction

Considerations...

- **Legal:**
 - ADA, Pay Equity, Discrimination, FLSA, Litigation, Collective Bargaining/Unions
 - Ever-changing & complex laws/regulations: federal, state & local
- **Trends in Public Sector:**
 - Retirements – Experienced/Knowledge base retiring before new staff trained
 - Traditional public sector workplace/culture - Less apt to allow remote/flexible schedules
 - Shorter Tenures - Travel mobility, 24/7 access to job postings
- **Market:**
 - Limited pool of experienced candidates to fill unique, specialized roles
 - Cost of Living – Housing, utilities, limited pool of qualified applicants
- **Technical:**
 - New and emerging technology & competition with private sector
 - Limited public resources available to purchase new technology & training

Introduction

Why NOW?

- **New Pay Equity Laws:** Municipalities must be knowledgeable and acutely attentive to issues of perceived or actual pay inequity and gender-based hiring and compensation practices.
- **Gender Pay Gap & Diversity:** Heightened focus on gender pay gap and issues of diversity. Municipal pay structures should be analyzed and updated consistently to ensure a non-discriminatory atmosphere. Hiring practices must be reviewed to ensure equitable practices and equal pay for comparable work.
- **Reduce Liability & Potential Claims:** Updated compensation plans allow a municipality to strengthen awareness of new legal requirements and can reduce the likelihood of practices that may lead to discrimination claims.
- **Increase Employee Morale:** Regular compensation analysis can increase morale for employees who might otherwise find reason to file a discrimination claim because of perceived or actual pay inequity.
- **Retirement Trends:** Public sector staff are retiring before new staff can be trained or new employees can be attracted from other municipalities. When compensation is regularly surveyed and pay plans are updated, employees are less likely to be attracted to another municipality for a higher or more competitive salary.
- **Market Considerations:** In some key municipal roles there is a severely limited pool of experienced candidates to fill unique, specialized roles.

Survey Data:

- 11 Comparable Communities Surveyed (FY20, based upon usual comps returning surveys)

Ashland
Boxford
Georgetown
Groton
Hopkinton
Ipswich
Littleton
Maynard
N. Reading
Swampscott
Topsfield

External Comparisons:

Middleton vs Market Averages

- Of **16** positions, **69%** (11) are paid LESS than market average
- Of the **11** positions paid less than market, **73%** (8) held by females
- Example of “Gender Gap” trend or coincidence?
- Situation not unique to Middleton or municipalities

Classification:

Internal Ranking of Positions & Methodology:

The following factors have been utilized to evaluate each position (From ICMA's *Human Resource Management in Local Government*, Freyss, 2009). Each factor may have a slightly different scale based upon the importance of that factor. A short description of each component follows.

Physical Environment
Basic Knowledge, Training, Education
Intellectual Skills & Effort
Physical Skills & Effort
Experience
Interactions with others
Confidentiality
Occupational Risks
Complexity
Supervision Received
Supervision Given
Supervision Scope
Judgment and Initiative
Accountability

Classification:

- 8 “Grades”
- List excludes four contracted positions

CLASSIFICATION PLAN		
1	Assistant COA Director	1
2		2
3	Administrative Assessor Assistant Town Clerk	3
4	Assistant Library Director Assistant Treasurer Collector	4
5	Conservation Agent COA Director	5
6	Assistant Assessor (Principle) Building Commissioner Deputy DPW Superintendent Health Director Town Planner	6
7	Library Director Treasurer/Collector	7
8	Assistant Town Administrator DPW Superintendent	8

Implementation:

Proposed Implementation Plan

- Multiple Phases Needed
- STEP ONE:
 - Eligibility: Non-union/non-contractual Department Heads and Assistant Department Heads
 - Immediate placement onto new Classification Plan & Salary Schedule effective April 1, 2021
 - If below minimum, place at minimum; if above minimum, leave as is
- Fiscal Impact:
 - FY21: \$11,075(Retroactive from April 1, 2021)
 - FY22: \$44,299 (Annual: July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022)

Maintenance:

Annual Updates:

- As the annual operating budget is being developed, the salary schedule should be adjusted with a COLA
- COLA applied equally to all covered personnel

Market Surveys:

- Ideally, a salary survey should be conducted every 3-5 years
- For positions that are 10% or more away from the Market average, a salary survey should be completed in the next 2 years to assess and measure progress towards the Town's compensation strategy.

Next Steps:

- Eligible employees onto new Classification & Pay Grid in FY21, effective April 1, 2021
- Establish & Announce Appeal Process, if desired
- Determine compensation philosophy for FY22 & beyond. For example:
 - Goal: pay midway between Min and Mid in FY22
 - Goal: pay Market Average (Mid) by FY23/FY24, etc.
- Possible Performance Incentive Structure:
 - Annual Performance Evaluation for annual base performance increases:
 - Awarded equally or as a range (1% to 3% as funding permits)
 - Based on specific project targets & benchmarks to executive, Town-wide goals & objectives
 - Needs clear guidance, measurable outcomes & full transparency
 - Department head training may be appropriate
 - Typically awarded for “above average” and “superior” performance
- Optional Merit Pool Incentive Program:
 - Establish Merit Pool Reserve
 - Incentive(s) offered as funding may permit
 - Special projects, initiatives, unforeseen circumstances, promoting savings, implementing new efficiencies
 - Recognize performance “Above and Beyond” typical job description & regular duties
 - Nominations by staff, department heads, citizens




OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Town of Middleton
Memorial Hall
48 South Main Street
Middleton, MA 01949-2253
978-777-3617
www.middletonma.gov

7.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: Andrew J. Sheehan, Town Administrator 

SUBJ.: One Time Vacation Adjustment

DATE: June 1, 2021

The COVID pandemic and resulting societal impacts upset many people's lives over the past 15 months. The pandemic interrupted many Middleton employee's ability to take vacation. This was due both to the absence of travel opportunities and the demand for many employees to defer vacation in order to address COVID-related factors at work.

It is always our preference that employees use their vacation allowance, as time away from work is beneficial. However, the inability to take vacation over the past year was through no fault of the employees.

This has led to swollen vacation accruals as pandemic restrictions end and the fiscal year closes. Non-union employees stand to lose this accrued time unless a modification is made.

To this end, I am requesting that the Board make a one-time adjustment for non-union employees. For employees with two or more weeks of accrued vacation leave I request the following:

- Allow carryover of up to 1 week of accrued vacation leave
- Allow buyback of up to 1 week of accrued vacation leave

Carried over vacation leave would have to be utilized by December 31, 2021. Employees would have to exercise the buyback option in FY21 and the costs would be paid from the compensation reserve.

Our employees performed exceedingly well during adverse conditions. This modest adjustment will go a long way to recognizing and thanking them for their dedication.

I look forward to discussing this with the Board on June 1.

TOWN OF MIDDLETON DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a highly contagious and potentially fatal respiratory disease, the prevalence of which is increasing rapidly throughout the world, inclusive of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts issued a Declaration of a State of Emergency to Respond to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization designated the COVID-19 outbreak a Pandemic Health Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States announced a national declaration of emergency; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts announced emergency actions to respond to the evolving COVID-19 public health emergency impacting the Commonwealth, including prohibitions on public gatherings of twenty-five or more people and prohibiting on-premises consumption of food or drink at bars and restaurants from March 17, 2020 until April 6, 2020, as well as suspension of public and private elementary and secondary school educational operations from March 17, 2020 until April 6, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Middleton Town Administrator, the Health Director, and the Board of Health, in consultation with the State Department of Public Health has determined that COVID-19 presents a major disaster which poses an immediate threat to public health, safety, and general welfare of people residing both within and outside of Middleton; and

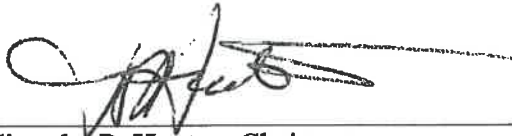
WHEREAS, the Middleton Town Administrator, Health Director, and Board of Health have determined that immediate public action is needed in order to prevent or minimize the spread of COVID-19 by and among the people of Middleton; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and welfare of the people of Middleton; and

WHEREAS, declaring a state of emergency will facilitate and expedite the use of resources to protect persons from the impacts of COVID-19, including but not limited to emergency expenditures pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 31 and limitations on operating hours and access to public buildings;

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the Civil Defense Act of 1950, we, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Middleton, Massachusetts, hereby declare that as of March 10, 2020, a state of emergency exists in the Town of Middleton. This declaration of emergency shall remain in effect until further notice, pursuant to our judgment that the conditions leading to this declaration no longer exist.


Date: 3/24/20



Timothy P. Houten, Chairman



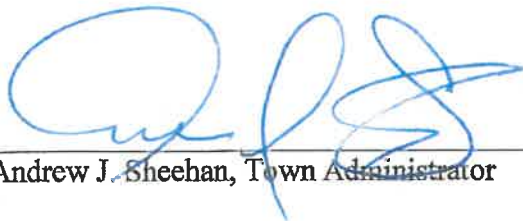
Todd Moreschi, Clerk



Kosta E. Prentakis, Member

Brian M. Cresta, Member

Richard Kassiotis, Jr., Member



Andrew J. Sheehan, Town Administrator

Correspondence and informational materials

MAY

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

25

2021

Gov. files legislation to extend certain special allowances from pandemic period

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Gov. Charlie Baker announced that he is filing legislation today to extend certain emergency measures currently in place by executive order that are set to expire on June 15, when the state of emergency will be rescinded.

The governor's legislation would extend measures providing for a temporary suspension of certain open meeting law requirements, special permits for expanded outside dining at restaurants, and billing protections for COVID-19 patients. Temporarily extending these measures, the governor said, would give communities and businesses time to transition, but extending them requires legislation.

"The abrupt end of the state of emergency on June 15 will create a number of major transition challenges for government and businesses, which is why swift passage of this extension legislation is essential," said MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith. "There are many innovations and operational improvements that we want to keep in place, and this bill would give municipal and state leaders adequate time to enact permanent provisions."



A restaurant provides outdoor service in Andover. (Photo courtesy town of Andover)

The [MMA sent a letter to legislative leadership yesterday requesting that they act quickly on a number of permanent changes](#) to ensure a seamless transition after the state of emergency is lifted on June 15.

To allow public bodies to safely meet during the pandemic and ensure public access to meetings, Gov. Baker issued an executive order in March 2020 allowing these bodies to meet quorum requirements even if meetings were held remotely through electronic means, as long as measures were taken to ensure the public with electronic access to the proceedings. The bill filed by the governor today would extend these provisions through Sept. 1 of this year. The governor said the extension would allow additional time to consider possible permanent changes to the open meeting law to provide for greater flexibility in conducting open meetings using electronic streaming and similar measures.

The governor's bill would also give municipalities the authority to extend special permits for restaurants offering outdoor dining, issued under the state of emergency, through Nov. 29 of this year. Under an executive order issued in 2020, municipalities were permitted to use an expedited process to approve temporary permits for new or expanded outdoor dining and alcohol service. Without a legislative extension, special permits granted under the order will expire 60 days after the end of the state of emergency.

The legislation would also extend a protection adopted in an executive order that prohibits medical providers from billing patients who have received COVID-related emergency and inpatient services for charges in excess of costs paid by their insurers. The protection would extend until Jan. 1, 2022, at which time recently passed federal legislation that included protections for both emergency and non-emergency cases will become effective. Earlier this year, Gov. Baker signed legislation establishing surprise billing protections for patients for non-emergency services.

"Massachusetts is leading the nation in the vaccination effort and that progress is enabling the Commonwealth to return to normal," Gov. Baker said. "These temporary measures will help businesses and residents in this transition period, and I look forward

to working on these and other issues in the week ahead with our partners in the Legislature.”

Before June 15, the administration says it plans to take additional steps that will permit the continuation of targeted public health measures beyond the end of the state of emergency, including the [mask requirements announced on May 17](#).

| News Categories

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

LABOR AND PERSONNEL

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| Recent posts

- [Towns hold meetings and elections in COVID Year 2](#)
- [Environment Committee chairs meet with MMA policy committee](#)
- [MMA opposes cannabis bills that would usurp local contract authority](#)



April 28, 2021

Middleton Board of Selectman Chairperson
48 S Main St
Middleton, MA 1949

Dear Board of Selectman Chairperson:

In a letter sent on December 16, 2020, you received notification that National Grid would carry out late winter-spring mechanical control, cut surface (CST) or basal treatment; a summer selective foliage treatment; and, as necessary, summer and fall CST and basal treatments on rights-of-way, which pass through your municipality. Information on National Grid's approved Yearly Operational Plan (YOP) and maps showing the rights-of-way to be treated were included with that letter.

The current Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) and approved 2021 YOP are posted at the following websites:

https://www9.nationalgridus.com/non_html/National%20Grid%20VMP%202019-2023.pdf
https://www9.nationalgridus.com/non_html/National%20Grid_2021%20YOP.pdf

Although you already received and reviewed copies of the YOP map(s) with the original notification please let us know if there are any additional *sensitive areas* located on or near the rights-of-way. Please advise us as soon as possible so we can establish permanent records and implement appropriate field protective actions. We particularly rely on this process to collect corrections to the public wells and to record the location of private wells.

National Grid's YOP details specific information pertaining to the intended 2021 program. Please note that the YOP also lists the rights-of-way from the 2020 treatment program in case National Grid needs to request a "touch-up" retreatment of scattered locations from our contractor(s). If upon review of the previous year's treatments, National Grid finds a site(s) within your municipality that need follow-up treatments, this letter serves as notification of that follow-up treatment. The individual landowner(s) will be also be notified about this work. *Please note that scheduled rights-of-way are subject to change based on workplan constraints*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts recommended herbicides for use in *sensitive areas* listed in Section 7 (pages 13-15) of the YOP will be selectively applied to target vegetation by experienced, Massachusetts' licensed/certified applicators that walk along the rights-of-way using backpack equipment. Copies of the manufacturers' herbicide labels and fact sheets are also included in the YOP, Appendices 8 and 9.

Potential Treatment Periods*		
February 1, 2021 – May 30, 2021	May 30, 2021 - Oct 16, 2021	Oct 16, 2021 – Dec 31, 2021
CST	Foliar	CST
Basal	CST	Basal
Dormant stem	Basal	Dormant Stem
	Cut stubble	

* The exact treatment dates are dependent upon weather conditions and field crew progress.

In compliance with 333 CMR 11.06-11.07, no herbicide applications will occur before the conclusion of the 45-day YOP review period, the 21-day treatment notice and the 48-hour newspaper notice. At the end of

these review periods, which can run concurrently, no application shall commence more than ten days before nor conclude more than ten days after the treatment periods listed above.

The work will be performed by one of the following vegetation management vendors:

Lewis Tree Service, Inc.	Stanley Tree	Vegetation Control Service, Inc.
300 Lucius Gordon Drive	662 Great Road	2342 Main Street
West Henrietta, NY 14586	North Smithfield, RI 02896	Athol, MA 01331
(585) 436-3208	(401) 765-4677	(978) 249-5348
Lucas Tree Experts	BluRoc	
12 Northbrook Drive	15 Atwood Dr, Suite 301	
Falmouth, ME 04105	Northampton, MA 01060	
(800) 339-8873	(413) 887-3653	

This informational 21-day notification follows Chapter 132B, section 6B of the Massachusetts General Laws, 333 CMR 11.05-11.07 Rights of Way Management and Chapter 85, Section 10 of the Acts of 2000. National Grid's vegetation management program is subject to federal and state regulations only. By statute, local permits or rulings are not applicable.

For inquiries concerning safety of the herbicides, please contact:

Director of Rights-of-Way Programs
Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114-2151
Telephone: (617) 626-1781

Please contact me if you have any questions about the application and monitoring of the vegetation control program. The best way to contact me is through email at mariclaire.rigby@nationalgrid.com or please leave a message at 508-860-6282

Sincerely,



Mariclaire Rigby
Lead Vegetation Strategy Specialist

cc: Board of Health
Conservation Commission
Massachusetts Pesticide Bureau
Municipal Water Supplier(s)
Assigned vegetation management vendor

Municipality: MiddletonROW#(S): 1491



You are cordially invited to join

Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito

for a

***Community Compact Efficiency & Regionalization
Grant Award Ceremony***

Date: Friday, June 4, 2021

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual (Register [here](#))

Please join Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, elected officials, and local leaders at an award ceremony relative to the Community Compact Efficiency & Regionalization Grant Program. These grant funds are used by cities and towns to provide financial support for governmental entities interested in implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability.



TOWN OF MIDDLETON

Public Works Department
195 NORTH MAIN STREET
MIDDLETON, MA 01949

Paul Goodwin
Superintendent of Public Works

Tel (979) 777-0407
Fax (978) 774-0718

May 26, 2021

Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School
565 Maple Street
Danvers, MA 01923

Dear Principal Donnelly,

The ENSATS Carpentry Students recently performed some repair work to the garage located at Oakdale Cemetery in Middleton. The roof has new shingles and there was also significant trim work replaced. Carpentry Instructors, Brian Borders and Ray Silva, worked diligently and effectively with the students to provide this much needed service to our community.

Communication for this project started a couple of years ago with Director of Career Technical Educators, Jill Sawyer and Middleton Public Works Deputy Superintendent, Ken Gibbons. Covid-19 caused for some delays and disruptions in this work. The entire faculty and student body continued through these obstacles and with proper communication and effort, followed through on this project until the end.

This work was a rare win-win opportunity. It saved the town resources and funds that were used in other areas to improve the entrance to our cemetery. It also gave the students valuable experience as they move on in their future career paths.

Again, thank you to all those who made this building improvement happen through many obstacles. A special thanks to the students. They should be proud of the work they performed and for continuing to battle through what has been a difficult last 14 months.

Respectively,

Paul Goodwin
Superintendent of Public Works
Town of Middleton, MA

Cc: Heidi T. Riccio, Ed.D., Superintendent-Director
Thomas O'Toole, Ed.D., Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum
Andrew Sheehan, Town Administrator
Rick Kassiotis, Board of Selectman Chair