

**Town Manager Report to the Board of Selectmen**  
**Monday, February 4, 2019**

- In an effort to better communicate with the residents and taxpayers of the community and better inform our community about what town government is doing for them, I wanted to let you know that Stirling Technologies is nearing completion of the template for the new town e-newsletter, which will be linked to and tied to the news, information and calendar announcement on our town website. We expect to be able to launch this in test format by the end of February, with live and regular distribution beginning shortly thereafter.
- A little further down in our agenda, the Board will hear a proposal from Anne Gero to have the town support a proposal to apply to the state to participate in the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program. I am very familiar with the program from my time in Winthrop. I was able to get Winthrop into the program in its first year and last year Winthrop was able to get additional grant money to begin the process of implementing a solution to one of the town's top vulnerabilities. Anne's presentation tonight is just the first step, we will be seeking the support of several other boards and committees in town and the MVP process is very community oriented and driven by citizen participation, so I hope that people will be hearing a lot about this in the months ahead.
- Also, in a related program, town staff will begin working with MAPC staff tomorrow morning on the update to the town's lapsed Hazard Mitigation Program. The HMP, though similar in some ways to the state driven MVP, is a federally required element to be eligible for federal funds. There is substantial overlap in the types of information both plan utilize, but we are under a time constraint to get the HMP updated, so we will be pushing ahead on that as we apply to the state's MVP program.
- The town late last week received word that the company that provides our email service is going out of business. We had already been investigating options for changing our email service anyway, but this news will force us to make the change much quicker. All employees, boards and committee members should be aware that the town is in the process of contracting with CDW. CDW is on the state bid to provide this kind of service and given our time constraints, this is the most efficient way to access a new provider. To begin transitioning the town email accounts to Office 365 during the month of February, Marisa Batista, Hamilton IT coordinator Andrew Wood and I conducted a conference call with CDW last week and will be able to provide a cost for the new service to the Finance Committee and transition time frame to all users within the next two weeks. Our goal is to have the service transitioned by the end of February, as our current provider is expected to go dark by the end of March. I also want to thank Allison for helping us identify the qualified vendors on the state bid list to meet our needs.
- Joint Meeting with HWRSD and Hamilton-Wenham Finance Committees tomorrow night, Feb. 5 at the Buker School at 7 p.m.
- Union negotiations are planned. As we have stated previously in our discussions about the upcoming 2020 fiscal year, three of the town's five collective bargaining agreements expire on June 30 and we have opened negotiations with all three unions to reach new deals. I have bargaining sessions scheduled with the Administrative Union on Feb. 14 and Feb. 28 and I have

Meet & Greet meetings scheduled for both the fire and police unions later this week. As I standard practice in such situations, all negotiations will be conducted confidentially within the framework of goals and guidance set by the Board of Selectmen. When we are nearing a deal, we will involve the Board of Selectmen.

➤ Update on Town Manager Goals:

- Self-Sufficiency of the Patton Homestead – We have hired Kaleigh Pare to be the new Patton Homestead Director. Kaleigh comes to the town from the Buttonwoods Museum in Haverhill, where she is director of programming and has done an excellent job in growing programming and participation at the Buttonwoods and has been successful in using new media to attract visitors and supporters. She has also been working part-time for the Ipswich Museum, assisting with their program development as well. She will be starting with the town on Thursday, Feb. 14 and we will be planning a Meet & Greet event at the Patton Homestead to introduce her to the community.
- Financial Policies and Stabilization Funds – No current news to report here. During the budget process, the town finance department and I have been focusing on the FY 2020 budget; we will revisit new financial policies adoptions after the Annual Town Meeting in April.
- Chebacco Road/Well Exploration and Manchester – The FY'20 budget projection for capital investment does include a cost associated with the paving and possible laying of water main along Chebacco Woods Road. Tim Olson and I continue to investigate the feasibility of drawing water from the North Coastal Basin, potentially through an agreement with Manchester, as a way of fortifying our water security and reducing our reliance on the Ipswich River Watershed. We have asked the firm of Woodard and Curran to assess our proposal to lay water main along Chebacco Rod and pave the road to the correct right-of-way. Woodard and Curran is also the consultant that Manchester uses to run its water plant, so in addition to their expertise in multi-faceted public works projects they have specific knowledge of the Manchester plant and water supply that could be beneficial to us as we study this possibility. Tim and I will actually be talking to W&C on Tuesday morning.
- Town Hall Renovations –The architect LLB Associates, met again last week with the Town Hall Building Committee and offered three additional options for Town hall design, with an eye toward minimizing exterior construction and re-working the layout of various departments and functions within the building footprint as much as possible. The various designs and options will be posted to the town website soon.
- Master Plan and Housing – The first of Two (2) public forums for the update to the Housing portion of the Town's Master Plan will be held tomorrow night, Tuesday, February 5, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Hamilton-Wenham Library. The Planning Board also has a survey monkey link on the town website to gather input into the housing discussion and there was a nice story in the Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle detailing the Planning Board effort last week.