

TOWN MANAGER

For the Town of Concord, the year 2022 was a year of transition. The year opened with the appointment of Kerry A. Lafleur to the position of Interim Town Manager. Prior to her appointment, Ms. Lafleur had been serving as the Town's Chief Financial Officer, a position to which she was appointed in September 2016. The year also opened with widespread transmission of both the Omicron and Delta variants of Covid-19, which prolonged transition back to "business as usual," though our municipal offices were finally able to reopen to normal hours in the early Spring. This reopening was welcomed by all!

While the pandemic challenged us all on numerous fronts, we were also able to learn new ways of conducting business, through remote and electronic means. Though we may not have liked these changes initially, the benefits were soon obvious, and necessary in order to continue operations. Many of these practices continued into 2022, even though we were able to resume in-person service delivery and meetings, providing greater accessibility to and inclusion in the Town's decision-making processes. The implementation of hybrid meetings, where participation is allowed either in person or from a remote location through an online platform, will likely forever change the governance process, opening it up to a wider audience, and providing the opportunity for broader community engagement, which can only result in a strong, more resilient community.

As we reflect back upon the year, we are grateful for the process and advancements made in many areas, but specifically:

Affordable Housing: through a partnering of our land preservation and affordable housing advocates, the Town, in conjunction with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was able to purchase the Assabet River Bluff property- a seven-acre parcel, tucked in a bend of the Assabet River in West Concord. Six acres will be preserved for open space, while one acre will be developed into five units of affordable housing.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): continuing the work begun in 2021, the Town strengthened its relationship with the newly formed DEI Commission, whose charge is to increase cooperation, understanding, and dialog among residents of diverse cultural, religious, socio-economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and to promote inclusion throughout the town. To that end, the Town committed complete strategic action plan and provide training to board and committee members and for staff in all departments.

We are also appreciative of the extensive work of the Personnel Study Task Force which presented its final report to the Select Board in September 2022. Of particular interest were the results of the employee survey aimed at measuring employee satisfaction. Several themes were clear throughout the results, including:

- Need for more regular communication;
- High cost of health insurance;
- Concern that compensation is not "on par" with comparable communities;
- Lack of job satisfaction or feeling less satisfied than in the past; and
- Interest in better benefits package, including flex time, paid parental leave, student loan forgiveness, and employer contribution to deferred compensation plan (401, 457).

Partially in response to this feedback, the Town Manager's Office resumed distribution of a weekly status report, highlighting both important project and events, as well as the critical, everyday work being done by the Town's workforce in support of the quality of life valued by residents.

We were also able to launch the long overdue Classification and Compensation Study, funded in 2019, but put on hold due to the pandemic. Through the help of consultant GovHR, and in conjunction with the Personnel Board, the Town began a process to update the 2008 Plan, with an anticipation completion date in Spring 2023 for review and adoption at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting.

In 2022, we also solidified a plan to consider spending requests for the approximately \$5.6M in grant funding received by the Town through the American Rescue Plan Act, funding to aid in the recovery from the pandemic. While the Select Board acknowledged that the funds were to be expended under the direction of the Town Manager, it asked that approximately 25% of funding be programmed each year, FY23 – 26, in conjunction with the annual operating and capital budget review processes. The Board further agreed to consider some limited spending in FY22 to address immediate and urgent needs. A total of \$800,000 was committed for the following items:

FY	Amount	Description	Committed
22	\$400,000	Lost Revenue/ Parking Meter Receipts: meters shut off during significant portion of pandemic resulting in loss of revenue; contractual and other fixed costs must be paid. Approved by 2021 Annual Town Meeting.	Yes
22	\$300,000	Premium/ Hazard Pay, as allowed under ARPA combined with up to \$150,000 of local funds (FY22) for a total program expenditure of \$450,000.	Yes
22	\$100,000	Trolley Demonstration Project: seasonal transportation generally targeted at tourists, following a fixed route, 7-days per week. Collecting ridership data to support FLAP grant to create permanent service in time for 2025.	

We are thankful that in April, we were able to resume the time-honored tradition of our Patriots Day Parade. Though the number of parade entrants was fewer than in pre-pandemic years, the number of spectators exceeded predictions due to the fantastic Spring weather on that day. This provided a terrific opportunity for our Public Safety and Public Works personnel to test new traffic and crowd management protocols in preparation for the 250th Celebration in 2025. Throughout the year, we saw the return of many other treasured community events including a modified “Drop-off, Swap-off,” Porchfest, Stow Street Block Party, Egg Hunt, Shamrock Ball, Trunk or Treat, Turkey Trot, and finally our very popular holiday events: Tree Lighting with Santa; the Holiday Stroll; and Chanukah Celebration.

From a staffing perspective, we note that Kerry A. Lafleur was appointed to the position of Town Manager on July 1, 2022, after a successful six-month stint as Interim Town Manager. The Town Manager’s Office also welcomed the following new staff members:

- Shannon McAndrew to the position of Senior Administrative Assistant;
- Donna McIntosh to the position of Communication Manager; and
- Eric Simms to the position of Director of Sustainability.

We also bid a fond farewell to Deputy Town Manager Kate Hodges, who left in April 2022 to accept the position of Town Administrator in Lancaster, MA. We thank Ms. Hodges for her service to the Concord community and wish her much success in her future endeavors.

As we look forward to 2023, we are encouraged and inspired by Concord’s continued resilience and our collective commitment to working together to ensure our community remains one that is responsive, inclusive, healthy and safe.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Jason Bulger, Chief Technology Officer

The Technology department's mission is to:

1. Provide strategic technology vision and leadership to the Town of Concord
2. Provide secure, reliable information systems and technology to support all Town entities
3. Work with all departments and enterprises to support and improve business functions through the adoption and advancement of technology

IT Operations

In 2022, the Department continued to expand the services offered to Town Departments and Divisions by enhancing partnerships and setting up dedicated on-site resources. This allowed staff to have point-people where they could turn when they needed assistance and get speedier resolutions to their issues. While we continue to have a third-party Managed Service Provider to assist the Town with helpdesk tickets, internal staff played a larger role in performing adds, moves, and changes throughout the year.

Despite a steady move toward cloud operations, the Town of Concord maintains approximately 50 on-premise servers and 400 end-user devices in support of operations. We saw the replacement or retirement of 10 servers in the last year, and the deployment of over 90 workstations (laptops, desktops, or all-in-one computers). The Information Systems Technicians have done a fantastic job supporting end users by providing equipment in a timely manner and supporting these devices throughout their lifecycle and when issues arise. Around 5,000 tickets were managed by internal staff and our managed service provider partner, with the Town maintaining its own service board to track work by staff.

Security continues to be an area of concern as malicious actors increasingly see state and local governments as easy targets for network penetration and ransomware. Concord staff participated in a second year of cybersecurity awareness training, which both lowered our insurance liability and helped end users better identify threats they face. The Town also continued its migration to Microsoft 365, which, through data loss prevention tools and

other security policies, will better secure the Town's data and ensure resilience in the face of equipment failure or a cyber attack.

GIS

Concord GIS (Geographic Information Systems) hired a new GIS Program Manager and saw the official retirement of our full-time GIS Analyst, who will remain on as part-time project specialist. The division has strengthened its partnership with Concord Public Works to ensure continuity of operations and improve planning and coordination.

GIS staff held several staff and public workshops and training sessions to help people better understand and utilize these resources, and they responded to many requests for maps and data in a timely manner. The work of the GIS staff is hugely appreciated by the Technology Department and other Town staff.

Minuteman Media Network

Minuteman Media Network (MMN), which was formally rolled into the Technology Department in 2022, consists of a Production Manager, two Lead Producers, and 5 part-time videographers. This group exists to fulfill the mission of PEG by producing – and supporting the production of – local content focused on Concord and Carlisle. On the Government side of PEG, MMN staff directly produced coverage of many board and committee meetings in both communities, and they edited and published hundreds of other virtual meetings recorded on the Zoom platform. Since the pandemic, members of the public have grown accustomed to being able to watch nearly every public meet as a result of the virtual attendance made possible by the changes to Open Meeting Law. It is only through the hard work and dedication of MMN staff that this is ultimately possible.

MMN's YouTube channel has increased in popularity as more and more content is posted there. 2022 saw almost 7,000 hours of content consumed from the channel, and the number of subscribers is approaching 1,000. Visitors find this service incredibly helpful as they look to learn more about the community or catch up on public meetings.

It's important to note that some of the most beloved content released each year is not just the public meetings, but coverage of special events – like Town Meetings, school concerts, sporting events, parades, tree lightings – and produced content that highlights some aspect of the community. This requires a high level of coordination, planning, filming, and editing, which can take a good deal of time. We are incredibly grateful for the staff using this type of content to increase the public's awareness about what is happening in Concord and Carlisle.

Full-time staff also work hard to ensure that the equipment and staff abilities keep up with technology and procedures used in the industry. In 2022, MMN made steady progress on replacing or adding hardware that allows for a higher degree of professionalism in the production of content. Residents or Town Staff in Concord and Carlisle can make use of this equipment and are welcome to contact the studio to find out how.

We are grateful for the PEG Access Advisory Committee's hard work and dedication to ensure that Concord fulfills the mission of PEG, and we look forward to working with them as the franchise agreement renegotiation moves forward next year.

In addition to supporting operations and staff, we always welcome collaboration, input, and feedback from citizens. Feel free to look up our contact details on the Town website to get in touch.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Erin Stevens, Public Information and Communications Manager (PICM)

The Public Information Office is tasked with communicating with the public and helping to make information both easier to find and communicated in more useful ways for changing lifestyles. The Public Information Office shifted away from primarily working on COVID-19 pandemic related work and began to focus more on general communication and information dissemination in 2022.

The PICM assisted several departments revamp older website pages to create more dynamic and

visual pages to make information easier to find. An example of this was assisting the Health Division create a landing page for the White Pond Algae Bloom information and creating a system to inform interested community members when there was a water quality issue.

The Town was fortunate to have a group of international students from the US Air War College come to Concord for a brief presentation and lively discussion on the importance of local government and how citizen involvement is crucial to local government set up by the Public Information office. The group spoke with Deputy Town Manager Kate Hodges, Chief of Police Joseph O'Connor, and former Select Board member Alice Kaufman. Afterwards, the group attended a tour of the Minute Man National Historical Park and the Concord Museum.

The Public Information Office continued to assist various film makers and producers find locations within Concord and make connections between sites and productions.

Public Information continued to keep the community informed of Town related events, information, and more through social media, news and notices, the Town website, and Minuteman Media Network local cable.

The Public Information Office continues to work with various departments, boards and committees, and individuals to problem solve and get information about the Concord community out to people in creative methods and using creative design.

After 5 years in the role, Public Information and Communications Manager Erin Stevens stepped back from the role in September of 2022 to transition into a Senior Planner position in the Planning Division. Donna McIntosh began as the Communications Manager shortly after Ms. Stevens left the position.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Ryan Orr, Director

Facilities Management is responsible for maintaining, preserving, and improving the Town's buildings, open spaces, public bathing beach, and recreational playgrounds. The department is organized into the following divisions:

- **Facilities Administration:** The work of Facilities Administration is to maintain and improve upon the Town Government's twenty-one major buildings and an additional 17 small storage structures. The Division manages funding for the operation and maintenance of many of the Town's major structures.
- **Parks and Playgrounds:** This Division assists with the maintenance and improvements of the Town-owned land dedicated to active recreation, exercise, and play.

Accomplishments

The Facilities Division was again able to provide a high level of service to all departments in FY22. In August 2022, the Facilities Division completed 1000 work orders since implementing Facility Dude as our computerized maintenance management system in March 2019. Facilities completed another 325 work orders during the past year. Over the course of FY22, Facilities coordinated many projects. These projects included:

Renovations and Improvements

The Facilities Division renovated a portion of the Planning Department adding one office. At the Hunt Recreation Center two new offices were created from space in the multipurpose room. The Emerson Pool filtration system was re-piped. A new water service and backflow preventer were added. A persistent pool leak was located and patched resulting in significant water savings and no water loss during the pool operating season. White Pond beach and park improvements including accessible path, boardwalk, storm water management and plantings are 98% complete. Exterior repairs and painting were completed at the Assessor Building, Cemetery Building and 37 Knox Trail Building.

Sustainability

Installed an EV charging station at 133 Keyes Road, Installed two EV chargers for the Tesla and Mach E police vehicles at 219 Walden Street. Installed a dual EV charging station at 55 Church Street. Installed new fully electric HVAC system and electric hot water heater at 141 Keyes Road (141 Keyes Road in now 100% reliant on electricity). Installed fully electric HVAC system for third floor training room at the Police/Fire station. Installed bottle filler stations at 133 Keyes and 55 Church Street.

Maintenance

Replaced a circulator pump and garage unit heaters at 133 Keyes Road and replaced garage doors at 135 Keyes Road. A new air source heat pump was installed for the Police Dispatch area. On the Fire side of the station, a new stove and dishwasher, and new washer and dryer were installed. At Station 2 a new gear dryer was installed. Repurposed the breathing air compressor from Station 1 for Station 2 to refill the SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus.)

An indirect hot water heater utilizing existing boiler was installed at the Hunt Recreation Center. At the Beede Swim and Fitness Center work was completed controls on Lap Pool hot water scavenger loop, CO2 tank was relocated and touchless faucets were installed at all sinks. During the annual Beede Center shutdown, walls in Women's Locker Room were rebuilt, multiple pumps and motors were replaced for pool filtration system and the hot water mixing valve replaced. The building's card access system was also upgraded. At Rideout Park, lighting was added to pavilion extending use for community events. Two sewage injector pumps and alarm system were installed at 55 Church Street.

Facilities Management Best practices suggest that an annual maintenance budget goal should be about 2% of a building's replacement value. All major building renovations include the addition of energy efficient and sustainable infrastructure. With the 2% funding goal in mind, Departmental initiatives surround the Town's desire to develop strategies to respond to Concord's changing work environment and building needs. Utilizing the Comprehensive Facilities Master

Plan completed in 2019, the Department works to implement innovative building programs to reduce energy consumption and develop environmentally effective alternatives. The Department established an online database that assisted in the Town's efforts to reduce overall building operating costs by identifying outdated and/or potentially inefficient systems and infrastructure. This technology also helped Concord's Facilities Director to compile accurate building systems and utility data, which was incorporated into each renovation project and plan to ensure the Town's sustainability goals were properly aligned with the relevant industry space standards for public buildings and office spaces. The Facilities Management Department is responsible for the following buildings:



Facilities Division completes repairs to trim and clapboards at 37 Knox Trail prior to painting.

Year Built	Latest Renovation	Building	Replacement Value	Budget Goals	Other Funds
1826	2017	249 Harrington Ave	309,839	6,197	Revolving
1851	2020	Town House	3,064,914	61,298	
1903	2018	Harvey Wheeler Commuity Center	5,911,245	118,225	
1904	2019	141 Keyes Road	1,268,795	25,376	
1919	2018	Marshall Farm House	569,699	11,394	Revolving
1929	2002	101 Everett St.	271,401	5,428	MMN
1932	1996	West Concord Fire Station	976,359	19,527	
1935	1987	Hunt Recreation Center	2,400,846	48,017	Recreation
1950		CPW Garage	661,610	13,232	
1950		CPW Highway Dept. (133 Keyes Road)	348,824	6,976	
1950		CPW Office (133 Keyes Road)	2,763,837	55,277	
1950		CPW Water & Sewer Garage	1,002,930	20,059	
1959		Planning and Land Management Shed	11,317	226	
1959	2019	Police/Fire Station (Walden)	4,526,731	90,535	
1960		Gun House	156,394	3,128	
1960		Police Dept. Storage 203 Walden Rd.	105,525	2,111	
1992		135 Keyes Road (CPW)	2,442,236	48,845	Water & Sewer
1995	2019	McGrath Farm House	917,879	18,358	Revolving
1996	2020	Field House (Lawsbrook)	71,100	1,422	
1998	2019	Municipal Light Plant	5,218,502	104,370	CMLP

FY23 Goals

- Ensure Town buildings are maintained in a manner that provides a safe working environment for staff and an accessible and inviting atmosphere for residents and guests to conduct business.
- Safeguard public recreational facilities by maintaining to the highest standard of care while ensuring equal access for all persons regardless of age and ability.

- Continue to support sustainability director's efforts to achieve the Town's sustainability goals.
- Continue to maintain and improve the Town's existing public buildings, facilities, parks, and infrastructure at a level consistent with the Town's fiscal resources.
- Maintain the Town's sustainability goals by advocating for green energy projects and retrofits.
- Ensure that facilities planning, and practices reflect the best practices identified through the municipal vulnerability plan.