



TOWN OF CONCORD

Office of the Town Manager

Operational Status Reports & Departmental Updates

For the Week Ending September 30, 2022

Town Manager's Office and General Administration

- The annual Employee Appreciation Picnic was held this week to celebrate the hard work and dedication of our employees. In addition to enjoying great weather, a BBQ buffet and ice cream, staff participated in a team building activity designed to create connections across departments and strengthen community. What we learned through this exercise is that Town of Concord employees are a diverse group, from all over, with many interesting talents and includes:

- marathon runners
- hikers
- opera singers
- musicians
- textile artists, poets, and crafts people
- devoted pet parents
- gardeners
- beekeepers
- travelers
- outdoor and exercise enthusiasts
- AND if you ever need a kazoo, we know someone who keeps one in her purse at all times, just in case!



Public Safety

Police Department

Activity Log Sept. 22 – Sept. 28

Log items	866
Traffic Enforcement	65
Motor Vehicle Stops	140
Arrests	1

Personnel news

On September 22, Chief Joseph O'Connor announced to the department that he plans on retiring on December 22, 2022. We thank Chief O'Connor for his leadership and commitment to move the department forward in challenging times. During his tenure, the CPD achieved accreditation from the Massachusetts Police



Chief Joe O'Connor

Accreditation Commission for the first time and became a leader in professional policing practices, while continuing to deliver exceptional service. He leaves a strong foundation for the future, and we wish him well.

Training

Sergeant Michael Burgess began attending the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar “LEEDS” training on Monday September 26 at the Municipal Police Training Committee facility in Lynnfield. This innovative program is designed for law enforcement leaders and focuses on the emerging challenges facing the police profession. The interactive program uses a wide range of source material and calls upon participants’ own professional experiences to facilitate individual development and learning. The following is a list of topics to be covered in the program:

- Trends in law enforcement
- Implications of the 21st Century Policing Report
- Public trust and legitimacy
- Bias and diversity
- Employee wellness
- Power
- Transformational leadership
- Social and emotional intelligence

Community events

The department assisted with the successful annual events the Kicks for Cancer, Mighty Moose 5k Road Race and Porchfest.

Fire Department

Calls for service

The fire department responded to 94 calls for service during the week. Captain Curran, a member of the State Hazardous Materials Team, responded to the City of Marlborough for a hazardous materials incident.

Fire Prevention

Semi-annual inspections took place at some of the public schools. Middlesex School fire drills were conducted. Fire companies conducted pre-plans of several commercial buildings.

Department of Planning and Land Management

Planning

- **Community Preservation Committee:** 11 applications requesting Community Preservation Act funds were submitted on September 16th for consideration by the CPC, totaling \$1,507,982.91. Six site visits were conducted on Saturday, September 24th, and an initial meeting with some of the applicants was held on Tuesday, September 27th. Applicant presentations will continue Tuesday, October 18th.
- **Transportation and Mobility:** Concord just received a “notice to proceed” for the Shared Streets and Spaces grant for traffic calming at the intersection of Main Street and Walden Street in Concord Center. We are excited to have one of our submitted projects chosen with the project designed to create a safer walkable space that lends itself to Concord’s historic charm. Unfortunately, the Town was not successful in its application for a Bottleneck grant for the Thoreau Depot area; the reasons given were that the bottlenecks created in other communities were of a higher need and more applications were received than funding available.

- **Assabet River Bridge & Trail:** MassDOT has granted Project Review Committee approval of the project with a current project estimate of \$8 million dollars. What does this mean? The construction of the project can be funded on the Transportation Improvement Program Plan with federal and state funds. The Town may be required to cover certain items, such as architectural ambient lighting, that MassDOT will not consider as “participating costs”, but that has not yet been determined. At this time, the project can move forward with the final 25%, 75% and final design process, which is expected to take approximately 2 years.
- **Planning Board meeting of September 27th:** The Board discussed its recommendation to the ZBA on the proposed PRD for 48Y Fitchburg Turnpike and continued the item to the October 11th meeting to review a draft letter recommending approval with conditions. The Board heard an update from the Chair of the Concord Housing Development Corporation on the status of the Christopher Heights Assisted Living Facility potentially not moving forward due to a budget shortfall. The Board is in full support for this project to move forward and voted to send a letter to the Select Board on its position. The Board reviewed and discussed a comment letters and memos from the Concord Historical Commission, from CPW Engineering to the Public Works Commission, and from CPW Engineering regarding comments from the Public Works Commission on the Draft Scenic Road Bylaw Rules & Regulations. Revisions will be made to the draft Regulations then sent back to the CHC and PWC, as well as a notice of their availability will be sent to stakeholders for review and comments before conducting the required public hearing for adoption. The Board discussed a potential Zoning Bylaw amendment to allow fast-food restaurants and requested the Town Planer look for a way to simplify the amendment. The Board reviewed a draft memo from the Town Planner regarding the MBTA Communities Zoning Requirement and the DHCD Guidelines and voted to send the memo to the Select Board, Finance Committee, and the Town Manager with a recommendation that the Chairs meet to discuss the MBTA Communities requirement.
- **Regional Housing Services Office:** The RHSO staff is working with another housing plan consultant in preparing the latest Housing Production Plan and met with Town staff to discuss the next Steering Committee meeting (October 19th) and when the draft plan will be available for public comment/input (November 1st). The RHSO also hosted the quarterly RHSO Advisory Committee meeting with representatives from all member communities. The RHSO staff presented an assessment of tenant services offered by the member communities, in addition to initiatives for the Advisory Group to consider relative to the DHCD protocols and practices.
- **West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee:** The weather on Saturday, September 24th was perfect as the WCJCDC unveiled the latest mural celebrating West Concord’s industrial past in the morning and celebrated the 3rd annual Porchfest, with musicians filling the air with sound in the neighborhood and at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center in the afternoon.



Economic Vitality & Tourism

- Looking ahead to October, the Concord Visitor Center will offer its daily tour at 1pm and has scheduled 7 private tours. There will be two Special Events of ‘Between Us Sisters’ and 26 specialty tours (African American, Indigenous, West Concord and Twilight). And the changing season brings over 25 tour buses into Concord during the month, having either lunch or dinner in Concord Center. September, in contrast, offered the daily tour, 3 private tours, 5 specialty tours and one Special Event of ‘Between Us Sisters’.
- Visitation is extremely high – higher than 2019/pre-pandemic with a significant number of international travelers.

- Fall and winter merchandise has begun arriving in the form of a new holiday ornament, baseball cap and 2023 Calendars of Walden Pond.

Health

- Thursday night, September 22, Health staff collaborated with the Library and the Fire Department for an Emergency Preparedness talk on Wildfires, presented by Chief Judge and Assistant Chief Latta. The recording is available on Zoom and is great overview of wildfires in Concord with some helpful tips on how to protect your home.
- We continuously work on inspections on housing, septic installation, food establishment and other complaints. On Friday, Sept. 23, 2022, a large onsite wastewater system at Granite Post Road was connected and completely installed, which had been an ongoing issue.
- The Health Division continues to interview for the vacant Environmental Health Inspector position.
- The COA sent a few residents with requests for homebound flu vaccine or COVID Booster to us this week, and we will continue to fill that need. Residents that are homebound are encouraged to call the Health Division and we will work with them to set this up.
- Covid -19 Community Level in Middlesex County: **Medium**

Updates to COVID Guidelines/Resources:

- Isolation guidelines:
 - **Day 0**, first day of symptoms OR day the positive test was taken, whichever is earlier
 - **Days 1-4**, continue to isolate
 - **Day 5**, last day of isolation if asymptomatic or symptoms are improving
 - **Day 6**, leave isolation (if you can wear a mask at all times when around other people, including in your household, through day 10). You may remove your mask prior to day 10, if you have had two negative tests taken 48 hours apart.
 - **After you have ended isolation, if your COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen**, restart your isolation at day 0.

Natural Resources

- **Library Climate Action Week:** Director Delia Kaye joined Concord Librarian Reni Cunningham, CLCT Executive Director Jane Gruba-Chevalier, and Pollinator Health Advisory Committee member Isabel Bailey for a Native Pollinator Plant Seed Collection Workshop this week. The workshop focused on the importance of our local pollinators in a healthy ecosystem, efforts to install a new pollinator garden at the Fowler Branch, and how to collect, dry, and sow native seeds. The library is expanding its Seed Lending Library from vegetables and ornamentals to include native pollinator seeds that residents can plant in their yards. The goal is to kickstart a seed collecting program of local, native plant species to expand native pollinator habitat, especially habitat for at-risk pollination systems, and to build resilient pathways and ecosystems across Concord.
- **Japanese Knotweed:** The Natural Resources Division has expanded its invasive plant species management through the purchase of the JK1000 Injection Tool, which provides target-specific herbicide injections to the hollow stems of



Japanese knotweed. The stem injection application method, opposed to alternatives such as foliar spraying, provide complete mortality of knotweed plants while keeping other nearby native plants out of harm. Over 500 knotweed stems were injected over the past two weeks at seven conservation properties around Concord, and along the serpentine path to the BFRT.

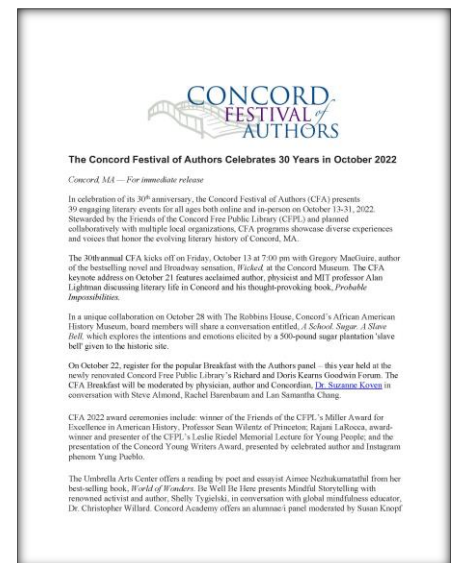


- Heywood Meadow, Middlesex School Service Day** Land Manager Will Holden, was joined by 15 Middlesex School students and three teacher chaperones for a morning of invasive glossy buckthorn removal at Heywood Meadow. The students focused on a 3000 sq. ft. work zone along the brook, pulling hundreds of buckthorn plants using primarily weed wrenches. The large truckload of invasives was disposed of at the 755 Walden St, town composting facility, utilizing the invasives dumpster. This was the second year in a row Middlesex School worked with Natural Resources for their annual student service day.

Library

Concord Festival of Authors

The [Concord Festival of Author](#) celebrates 30 years in October. The CFA kicks off a full month of literary events on Friday, October 13 at 7 p.m. with Gregory MacGuire, author of the bestselling novel and Broadway sensation, *Wicked*, at the Concord Museum. A complete run down of the month's events can be found at the link in the press release graphic.



Minuteman Media Network

Completed projects

- Between us Sisters
- Wildfires in Massachusetts: A Hot Topic
- CCHS Choral Pops Concert
- Mentors in Violence Fall Promo
- Fowler Mural "Draft"
- Open For the Season Salt Box Farm
- League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle – David Pepper

Upcoming projects

- Concord Museum live stream events (6)
- CCLWV EDI events over a few weeks (one is coming up this week at the library) (4)
- League of Women Voters Concord-Carlisle, Acton Area, and Chelmsford Candidate Forum: State Rep Middlesex 14th District (1)
- Castle Playground in Carlisle (1)