

MEMORANDUM



To: Bedford Town Council  
From: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager  
Date: November 7, 2024  
Re: **Manager’s Report**

**News & Noteworthy:**

1) On Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> the community came together with a total of 14,757 ballots cast for the General Election which represents approximately 85% of our 17,410 people on our voter checklist. 22% or 3,284 of the ballots were done through the absentee process with the remaining 11,473 ballots cast in person. I want to thank our Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Moderator, Supervisors of the Checklist, Election Workers, Police Department, Department of Public Works, CERT, Town Councilors, and the School District for all of their hours of preparation and service on Election Day.

State / Federal Election - November					
Year	Ballots	Voters	Percent	Absentee	Same Day
2000	10365	13358	78	1260	943
2004	11026	14954	74	1789	582
2008	12764	16399	78	2485	737
2012	12860	15582	83	2091	928
2016	13659	16752	82	2750	820
2020	14926	19761	76	7727	740
2024	14757	17410	85	3284	913

- 2) The 2024 Tax Rate has been set at \$15.81 up from \$14.80 (\$1.01 or 6.82%). The Town portion is up 26 cents to \$3.55 from \$3.29 (7.9%). Tax bills have been mailed with a December 2<sup>nd</sup> due date.
- 3) The period for citizen petition zoning amendments runs between November 11<sup>th</sup> and December 11<sup>th</sup>. Anyone interested submitting a petition is encouraged to contact the Planning Department for assistance.
- 4) November 21, 2024 and December 19, 2024 at 7:00 PM the Electric Aggregation Committee will hold public hearings at BCTV for the purpose of taking testimony on the process for joining the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire. If adopted following these public hearings and a town wide vote on March 11, 2025 residents currently utilizing Eversource for their power supply and who don't have a solar installation would be automatically switched to Community Power unless the opt out of the program. Residents with any questions about electrical aggregation are encourage to attend one of the hearings.
- 5) November 20<sup>th</sup> – December 18<sup>th</sup> Santa’s Mailbox will be available in the lobby of the Town Office Building, 24 North Amherst Road for Express Mail to the North Pole. Santa’s helpers have asked that you be sure to print your name and address clearly on your letter.



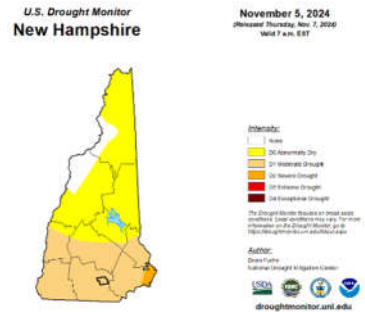
- 6) I am happy to announce that WBNH was recently recognized for their work by the New Hampshire Association of Broadcasters at their annual Granite Mike Awards for:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Place – Best Low Power FM Station**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Best Long Form Program** for Souvenir “A Night at Spit and Axis”.

Please join me in congratulating Harry Kozlowski and his team on these great achievements:



- 7) Drought – Drought conditions have significantly expanded in NH and Bedford is now categorized as having Moderate Drought. All but about 8% of NH is categorized as at least “Abnormally Dry” and 42% of the State is now Moderate or Severe. I would encourage all residents to conserve water as much as possible. It is expected that conditions will remain generally dry for some time.



- 8) PFAS - Reimbursements are available for residents who installed point of entry treatment systems (POET) on or after September 30, 2019. Residents outside of the Saint-Gobain Consent Decree area can apply through the State of NHDES [website](#). Residents within the Consent Decree need to apply through [Saint-Gobain](#) and is only for installations before May 10, 2023. Please email [gld.nh.rws@wsp.com](mailto:gld.nh.rws@wsp.com) call (800) 742-8498 for more information about the Saint-Gobain program.
- 9) The Bedford Winter Parking Ban began on November 1<sup>st</sup>, which requires no parking on public roads between midnight and 8 AM.

**Project Updates:**

- 1) Solar Array – Based on a new schedule for payment from the contractor that pushes the project later into the year we are now recommending that the January bond sale be delayed until after the March election so that we can comingle it with other bonds should they be approved at the election to save money and staff time.
- 2) Building & Planning Permitting Software – The RFP has been developed and issued with a December 2, 2024 due date for responses.
- 3) Employee Handbook Update – An internal committee with representation from all departments continues to meet to develop updated and new personnel policies for consideration by the Council.
- 4) Personnel – The Police Department has 2 openings (detective & community policing positions). Interviews are again being held for the Dispatcher position. The 2 Captain and 1 Lieutenant positions will be filled from within when staffing in patrol permits. The Fire Department has 2 firefighter positions, 1 Captain, and 1 Executive Assistant vacancies. Public Works has openings for Mechanic, Equipment Operator and Truck Driver with interviews ongoing. The Library Clerk

position has been filled. We have 1 window clerk vacancy in Finance with interviews being completed this week.

**Events:**

- November 11 – In honor of Veteran’s Day, Town Office and Library will be closed.
- November 12 – Transfer Station closed (holiday).
- November 21 - and December 19 Electric Aggregation public hearings, BCTV, 7 PM.
- November 28-29 – Thanksgiving Holiday, Town Office, Library, Transfer Station closed. The Library closes at 5 PM on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

- **November 13 – 6:30 PM, Town Council**
- ~~November 14 – 7:45 AM, Water and Sewer Committee~~
- ~~November 14 – 9:00 AM, Poles and Wires Committee~~
- November 18 – 6:30 PM, Planning Board
- November 19 – 6:30 PM, Zoning Board
- November 21 – 7:00 PM, Electric Aggregation Committee Public Hearing
- November 21 – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- November 26 – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- November 26 – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission
- December 2 – 6:30 PM, Planning Board
- December 3 – 6:30 PM, Historic District Commission
- December 10 – 7:00 PM, Parks & Recreation Commission
- **December 11 – 6:30 PM, Town Council**
- December 12 – 7:45 AM, Water & Sewer Advisory Committee
- December 12 – 9:00 AM, Poles and Wires Committee
- December 16 – 6:30PM, Planning Board
- December 17 – 6:30PM, Zoning Board
- December 18 – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission
- December 19 – 7:00 PM, Electric Aggregation Committee Public Hearing
- December 19 – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- December 24 – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee

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