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## In Memoriam

**Judith Malcolmson**, 90, died on February 27, 2020. She lived most of her life in Sterling and was a lecturer and member of Sterling Grange #53. She was also active with the Boy Scouts of America.

**Michael A. Thomas**, 72, a US Army Veteran, passed away on March 3, 2020. In his retirement, he went to work at the 140 Club in Sterling and, for 16 years, cooked for their annual BBQ and Bike Run. He also served as a coach for the Sterling Youth Soccer Association and ran their concession stand.

**Charles "Kevin" Lowe**, 71, died on March 9, 2020. A lifelong Sterling resident, he owned and operated Village Catering for over 35 years. He was a member of St. Richard of Chichester Church and, with his wife, drove children with special needs for Van Pool Transportation.

**Steven M. Staudaher**, 66, died when his plane crashed in Sterling on March 11, 2020. He had retired from Cognex in 2016 was serving as vice chair of the Sterling Finance Committee.

**Sarah LaMountain**, 51, passed away on April 6, 2020 after a battle with cancer. She was a Girl Scout Troop leader, a former president of the Houghton Elementary School's Parent Teacher Organization, and a member of the Wachusett Regional School Committee.

**Walter R. Sanders**, 83, passed away on April 22, 2020. He was a US Marine Corps Veteran of the Korean War and CEO of the WR Sanders Co. for nearly 40 years. He played Bocce as a member of the Sterling Silvers and served for several years on Sterling's Industrial Development Commission and the Industrial Development Financing Committee.

## **In Memoriam**

**Florence "Fawn" D. Brown**, 92, passed away on May 6, 2020. She had been a resident of Sterling for nearly 60 years. She was a member of the First Church in Sterling and was active with the Sterling Historical Commission.

**George Clark Fifield**, 93, died on June 17, 2020. He was a US Navy Veteran of World War II. After the war, he received an appointment to the US Military Academy at West Point and retired from the army after a 20-year career. He was President of the Sterling Library and Chair of the Building Addition Committee. He volunteered at the Sterling Food Bank and was active in the East Lake Waushacum Association.

**Priscilla R. Nelson**, 96, died on July 12, 2020 in Sterling Village. She was a lifelong resident of Sterling and, with her family, owned and operated the Nelson Farm in Sterling.

**Joan A. Goodale**, 88, passed on August 3, 2020. A Sterling resident for 65 years, she worked as a clerk at the Sterling Junction Post Office and was a member and former deaconess at the First Church in Sterling.

**Jacqueline R. Czerniakowski**, 80, passed away on September 15, 2020. She was an active member of Saint Richard of Chichester Church where she served as a Eucharistic Minister. She also volunteered for Meals on Wheels.

**Edmund "Slim" Wronski** died at home on October 17, 2020 at the age of 100. He worked at his family's farm, now Stillwater Farm of Mass. Dept. of Conservation and Recreation. He later worked for the Sterling DPW water department and was a member of St. Richard of Chichester Church.

**Claudia Madden**, 66, passed away on December 21, 2020. For 18 years, she held an administrative and customer service position with the Sterling Municipal Light Dept. where she got to know many Sterling residents.

## 2020 Year in Review

Some years seem to fly by. 2020 did not. It was a memorable year, but many of us would rather forget it. Instead, we will always remember 2020 for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sterling wasn't spared, even making it onto the list of Massachusetts Communities in high-risk COVID red zones. We felt the loneliness and boredom of quarantine. We saw local shops, businesses and restaurants close throughout the area; we found ourselves out of work or had our jobs restructured, permanently for some of us.

Weddings, anniversary parties, holiday gatherings and other celebrations were cancelled, postponed or held with very small groups of masked friends and family members. Funerals were held without mourners.

Travel became difficult if not impossible, forcing us to change vacation and re-location plans. Schools went to remote and "hybrid" learning, leaving kids frustrated and parents realizing they had no idea how to help their 4<sup>th</sup> graders with math.

But Sterling showed our resilience and adaptability. And as much as we hated wearing masks, we discovered that masks warm our faces on cold days – a definite plus!

Here at Town Hall, the building closed to the public in March, opened briefly during the summer, then closed again for the remainder of the year (open by appointment only). Sterling residents were mostly patient with us as we searched for ways to accommodate you within the COVID health and safety guidelines. THANK YOU!

We got creative. The Annual Town Meeting was held outdoors and was very well attended, even by our local mosquitos. The Sterling Fair was cancelled, but sales of "No Fair 2020" t-shirts and buttons went well! The drive-by Halloween Party at the Senior Center featured a "no touch candy chute."

Four elections were held during this pandemic year including the presidential election in which 85% of Sterling voters participated, either by mail or in person, during early voting or on election day. 85%. Wow!

And finally, vaccines became available as 2021 began. So, with things starting to look up, I'll close with the farewell we all used and got used to hearing this year: Stay Safe!



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Left, Town Clerk Kathleen Farrell and Assistant Town Clerk Donna Landry at summer "ice cream social" hosted by former Town Administrator Ross Perry for Town employees. Thanks, Ross.

### ***Socializing COVID style!***

Below, a little ice cream goes a long way toward thanking employees for all that they did during the Pandemic. Thanks, everybody.



New Town Administrator, Kellie Hebert, being sworn in by Town Clerk Kathleen Farrell. Socially distant, outdoors and all together Pandemic-appropriate. Welcome, Kellie!

## ELECTED OFFICIALS – TOWN OF STERLING

### TERM EXPIRES

#### BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3 year term)

Donlin K. Murray.....	2021
Richard A. Sheppard .....	2022
Robert F. Cutler.....	2023

#### BOARD OF HEALTH (3 year term)

Gary C. Menin .....	2021
Allen Hoffman.....	2022
Catherine Martin .....	2023

#### SELECT BOARD (3 year term)

Maureen Cranson .....	2021
Arden Sonnenberg.....	2022
John F. Kilcoyne .....	2023

#### CONSTABLES (3 year term)

Nicholas J. Finizio .....	2022
James E. Hartnett .....	2023

#### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BOARD (3 year term)

Gregg W. Aubin.....	2021
Deane S. Day.....	2022
Blaine Bershad .....	2023

#### LIBRARY TRUSTEES (3 year term)

Michael Glavin .....	2021
Matthew Scannell .....	2021
Albert J. Carlin.....	2022
Sara Petullo.....	2022
Lisa Akerson .....	2023
Heide Martin .....	2023

#### MODERATOR (3 year term)

Mrithyunjaya K. Annapragada (Amrith Kumar) .....	2021
Resigned May 2020	
Julie Rusch .....	2021

**PLANNING BOARD (5 year term)**

Robert Protano .....	2021
John J. Santoro .....	2022
Kirsten A. Newman .....	2023
Patricia Page .....	2024
Carl Corrinne .....	2025

**STERLING HOUSING AUTHORITY (5 year term)**

Brian J. Pierce .....	2021
Robert Kneeland.....	2023
Carolyn Heimberg .....	2021
Weymouth Whitney (State Appointee, 3 yr. term) .....	2021

**STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD (3 year term)**

Eric Darlington .....	2021
Joseph Curtin .....	2022
Brian Pierce .....	2023

**WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (3 year term)**

Melissa Ayala .....	2021
Linda Helen Woodland .....	2022
Diedre Shapiro.....	2023
Kelly Williamson .....	2023



## APPOINTED OFFICIALS – TOWN OF STERLING

### TERM EXPIRES

#### **A.D.A. ADVISORY COMMITTEE (1 year appt)**

Donald Harding .....	2021
Ronald Pichierri .....	2021
Kenneth Stidsen Jr. ....	2021

#### **A.D.A COORDINATOR (3 year appt)**

Matthew S. Marro.....	2023
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#### **ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD (1 year appt)**

Ann Marie Catalano .....	2021
Edith McNamara .....	2021
Cynthia Miller .....	2021
Kathleen Nickerson.....	2021
Theresa E. Sadler.....	2021
Frances Simonds.....	2021

#### **ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER (1 year appt)**

Louis Massa .....	2021
Steven Jones (Alternate).....	2021

#### **ANIMAL INSPECTOR (1 year appt by BOH)**

David Favreau.....	2022
Louis Massa .....	2022

#### **BUILDING INSPECTOR/COMMISSIONER (1 year appt)**

Sarah Culgin .....	2021
George Tignor (Alternate) .....	2021

#### **BURIAL AGENT (1year appt by BOH)**

Kathleen K. Farrell .....	2021
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#### **CABLE TV ADVISORY BOARD (3 year appt)**

Richard H. Maki.....	2021
Gregory Billings .....	2023

**CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

Joseph Sova .....	2020
Elaine Heller.....	2020
Everett W. Heller .....	2020
Lynn Sheppard .....	2021
Ezequial Ayala, Jr. ....	2022
Robert Brown .....	2022
Todd Chapman .....	2023
Mary Cliett .....	2023

**CONSERVATION AGENT (3 year appt)**

Matthew Marro .....	2023
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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION (3 year appt)**

Michael E. Pineo .....	2021
Connor Emsley.....	2022
Scott Michalak .....	2022
Barbara Roberti .....	2022
Briana Smith .....	2022
Steven Pavlowich .....	2023
Sue Valentine .....	2023
Christopher O'Neil (Alternate) .....	2022

**COUNCIL ON AGING (3 year appt)**

Sheila Battles .....	2021
Joseph LaGrassa.....	2021
Debra MacLennan.....	2021
Kevin Beaupre .....	2022
David Cosgrove .....	2022
Nancy Castagna .....	2023
Elizabeth Pape .....	2023
Susan Protano .....	2023

**DPW SUPERINTENDENT (3 year appt by DPW Board)**

Paul Lyons .....	2022
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**EARTH REMOVAL BOARD (3 year appt)**

Carl Corrinne .....	2023
John F. Kilcoyne .....	2023
Valmore Pruneau .....	2023

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

Paul Cathcart, Jr. ....	2021
Keith Cordial .....	2021
Maureen Cranson .....	2021
Richard H. Maki .....	2020
James Patacchiola .....	2021
John Edwin (Jed) Lindholm.....	2022
Michael Pineo .....	2023

**ELECTION OFFICERS (1 year appt, annually in August)**

Bonnie Lee Alfke .....	2021
Jessica Baer .....	2021
Lisa Belmain .....	2021
Blaine Bershad.....	2021
Jane Brunetta .....	2021
Irene Camerano.....	2021
Anne Marie Catalano .....	2021
Constance Cleary .....	2021
Mary Cliett .....	2021
Judy Doherty.....	2021
Deborah Dupuis.....	2021
John Farrell.....	2021
Kevin Flannery.....	2021
Laura Giard .....	2021
Judith Glasier .....	2021
Philip Gold .....	2021
Utahna Hallett .....	2021
Carolyn Heimberg .....	2021
Linda Hill .....	2021
Carol Hoffman .....	2021
Cheryl Koleshis .....	2021
Karen Leclerc .....	2021
Marjorie Long .....	2021
Rosanne Mapp.....	2021
Heide Martin .....	2021
Arlene McGuirk .....	2021
Alicia McHugh.....	2021
Anita E. McKenney.....	2021
Marina Meehan.....	2021

**Election Officers, cont.**

Kevin Moulton.....	2021
Judith Muckenstrom .....	2021
Kristin Newman .....	2021
Robert Nickerson, Jr. ....	2021
Carol Sarafconn.....	2021
Kyle Shelton .....	2021
Beth Stephenson .....	2021

**ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR (1 year appt)**

(John) Gary Harrington .....	2021
Curtis Bjorkman (Alternate) .....	2021
Paul Kathman (Alternate) .....	2021

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR (2 year appt)**

David C. Hurlbut.....	2022
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**ASSISTANT EMERGENCY MGMT. DIR. (1 year appt)**

James Emerton.....	2021
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**ENERGY COMMITTEE (2 year appt)**

Ross Perry.....	2020
Joseph Curtin .....	2022
Patrice Fullhart .....	2022
Daniel (Chip) Hallet.....	2022
Sean Hamilton .....	2022

**EXTENSION SERVICE (1 year appt)**

Loret Schur .....	2021
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**FINANCE COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

Steven Staudaher.....	2020
Joseph Sova .....	2020
Everett W. Heller .....	2020
Todd Chapman .....	2021
Mary Cliett .....	2021
Christopher Paquette .....	2022
George Handy .....	2023
Ezequial Ayala, Jr .....	2023

**GAS INSPECTOR (1 year appt)**

Robert Janda.....2021  
Jeremy Pierce (Alternate).....2021

**HEALTH AGENT (1 year appt by BOH)**

David Favreau .....2021  
Kathleen Nickerson (Associate) .....2021

**HISTORICAL COMMISSION (3 year appt)**

David Gibbs .....2021  
Catherine Harragian .....2022  
James Carroll .....2022  
James French .....2023  
Lindsey Van Gieson .....2023

**HOUSING INITIATIVES COMMITTEE (1 year appt)**

Angela Grattaroti .....2020  
Diana Baldarelli .....2021  
Patrick Fox .....2021  
Robert Protano .....2021  
Weymouth Whitney .....2021

**LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Patricia Campbell

**MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE**

Charles Conroy (ZBA Rep.) .....2020  
Angela Grattaroti.....2020  
Marion Larson.....2020  
Richard H. Maki .....2020  
Blaine Bershad.....2021  
Keith Cordial .....2021  
Carl Corrinne (Planning Board Rep.) .....2021  
Maureen Cranson .....2021  
Robert Dumont.....2021  
James French .....2021  
John Kilcoyne .....2021  
Rose Koven .....2021  
John (Jed) Lindholm .....2021

**Master Plan Committee, cont.**

Patty Page .....	2021
Elizabeth Pape.....	2021
Charles Plaisted.....	2021
Robert Protano .....	2021
Julie Rusch .....	2021
Erin Sikorski.....	2021

**MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL (4 year appt)**

William Brassard.....	2022
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**MUNICIPAL COORDINATOR (2 year appt)**

David C. Hurlbut, Jr. ....	2022
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**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

Marion E. Larson .....	2021
Charles Plaisted.....	2021
Robert Protano .....	2021
Geoffrey Caldwell .....	2022
James Wilkinson.....	2022
Jeffrey Keay.....	2023
Peder Pedersen .....	2023
Sue Valentine (ConComm Liaison) .....	2023

**PLUMBING INSPECTOR (1 year appt by BOH)**

Robert Janda .....	2021
Jeremy Pierce (Alternate) .....	2021

**POLICE CHIEF**

Gary Chamberland

**POLICE MATRON / CELL MONITOR (1 year appt)**

Benjamin Dame.....	2021
Danielle Mallette.....	2021
Dawn Metcalf .....	2021
Kim Thebeau .....	2021



**PUBLIC WEIGHERS (3 year appt)**

Jeff Henningson .....	2021
Edward Perkins, Jr. ....	2021
Heidi Lindgren.....	2023

**RECREATION COMMITTEE (5 year appt)**

Deidra Shapiro .....	2021
Bonnie Pulda.....	2022
Andrew Parker.....	2023
Jo-Ann Cummings.....	2023
Glenn Donaldson.....	2023
Heidi Grady.....	2024
Mark Hryniewicz.....	2024

**RECREATION SITE COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

Virginia Beaudin-Meade .....	2021
Jay Brunetta .....	2021
David Citro.....	2021
Jack Labrack.....	2021
Connor Meade .....	2021
Brent Powers .....	2021

**REGISTRAR OF VOTERS (3 year appt)**

Christine Arsenault .....	2022
Richard O. Barriere .....	2023
Melissa Chalmers.....	2022
Kathleen Farrell.....	2023

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (WRSD)**

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR (3 year appt)**

Ross Perry .....	retired October 2020
Kellie Hebert .....	2023

**TOWN ACCOUNTANT (3 year appt)**

Fred Aponte.....	2023
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**TOWN CLERK (3 year appt)**

Barbara Bartlett .....resigned May 2020

Kathleen K. Farrell .....2023

**ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK (3 year appt)**

Donna Landry .....2023

**TOWN COUNSEL (3 year appt)**

Kopelman & Paige .....2023

**TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

James French.....2023

Michael E. Pineo .....2023

**TOWN TREASURER / COLLECTOR (3 year appt)**

Victoria Smith .....2023

**ASSISTANT TOWN TREASURER (3 year appt)**

Elizabeth Clemence.....2021

**ASSISTANT TOWN COLLECTOR (3 year appt)**

Theresa Murray.....2023

**VETERANS AGENT (1 year appt)**

Richard Voutour.....2021

**VETERANS OFFICER (1 year appt)**

Robert Temple.....2021

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (5 year appointment)**

Matthew CampoBasso .....2021

Joseph Curtin .....2021

Jerry Siver.....2022

Patrick Fox.....2023

Diana Baldarelli .....2023

Charles Conroy (Alternate) .....2021

**1835 TOWN HALL COMMITTEE (3 year appt)**

Robert Barwise .....	2021
Joanne K. Drown .....	2021
Ronald Pichierri .....	2021
Carol Stuart-Grinkis .....	2022
John (Jack) Chandler.....	2023
Carl Corrinne.....	2023
Christine McCarthy.....	2023

**2020 TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

John Chandler .....	2020
James French .....	2020
Larry Pape .....	2020
Kate Pietrovito .....	2020
Julie Rusch .....	2020
Victoria Smith .....	2020
Todd Solar .....	2020

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES****TERM EXPIRES****AGRICULTURE COMMISSION (3 year appt)**

David Grinkis .....	2023
Robert Nickerson, Jr.....	2023
Michael E. Pineo .....	2023
Diane Melone (Alternate).....	2022

**CULTURAL COUNCIL (3 year appt, 2 consecutive terms)**

Rosanne Mapp.....	2021
Margaret Spaulding .....	2021
Beth Stephenson .....	2021
Sarah Jordan .....	2022
Diane Pedersen .....	2022
Patricia Ward .....	2023

**FAIR COMMITTEE (3 year appt; 1 year for Assoc. Member)**

Patricia Ward .....	2023
David Agurkis .....	2021
Margaret Agurkis.....	2021
Philip Campbell.....	2021
Linda Davis .....	2021
Douglas Downey.....	2021
Carl Gronblom .....	2021
Daniel Hallet .....	2021
Terry Heinold .....	2021
Donald Jewett .....	2021
Robert Kneeland.....	2021
Nicholas Kronopolus.....	2021
Susan Lambert .....	2021
Christopher P. O'Neil .....	2021
Michael E. Pineo .....	2021
Barbara Roberti .....	2021
Heather Rockwell .....	2021
Carrie Ann Rugg .....	2021
Gloria Rugg .....	2021
Raymond Rugg, Jr.....	2021
Joan Strang .....	2021

**REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (1 year appt)**

Gary Chamberland.....	2021
James Emerton (CERT Rep.) .....	2021
David Favreau (BOH Rep.).....	2021
Donald Hamilton.....	2021
David C. Hurlbut, Jr. (Emergency Management Director)	2021
Peter MacDonald (Alternate).....	2021

**WACHUSETT FUND COMMITTEE (1 year appt)**

Gary Chamberland.....	2021
David C. Hurlbut, Jr.....	2021
Peter MacDonald .....	2021

## **Office of The Town Administrator**

2020 has been an unusual year. The Corona Virus started to catch our attention in January. Working with the Board of Health, weekly meetings were held monitoring the situation with updates to operational and financial plans occurring on a regular basis. One plan change was a vote by the Select Board to move the Annual Town Meeting date from May to June 22, 2020. This date would provide more time to adapt to the pandemic and still ensure completion before the end of the fiscal year.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the pandemic was increasing in this area. To protect residents, visitors, and employees we decided to close Town Hall and other municipal buildings. Employees worked from home through VPN computer connections that were established a month earlier. An online Building Permit program that had just finished implementation also made working from home feasible. Through the dedicated work of Town employees all critical functions and 'customer service' continued without significant interruption.

The FY 21 budget was almost complete when it became apparent the next budget year was going to be different. With the help of Town Accountant / Operations Manager Fred Aponte and the Finance Committee, a second budget was developed based upon estimated reduced revenues and corresponding reductions in expenses. To address the risk of not completing the ATM and FY 21 budget process before the end of the fiscal year, a third "1/12<sup>th</sup>" budget was prepared, voted by the Select Board, and approved by Mass Dept of Revenue.

At this time, the Governor announced the deferral of payment of Property and Excise taxes by one month. To ensure the Town had ample funds on hand we started the practice of monitoring cash flow every month. The result was a request to WRSD to spread out the Town's lump sum quarterly school assessment payments. Through their agreement, the Town maintained adequate cash levels at all times.

Another change was the location of the Annual Town Meeting (ATM). To ensure proper social distancing and address voter and town officials' concerns, an outdoor venue at the Sterling Airport was selected. Many thanks to Jim Simpson for making this space available and agreeing to shut down airport activities for 3 days. Numerous departments, especially the DPW and volunteers worked together over a truly short period of time to make the 'drive-in movie' attendance feasible. Electronic 'clickers' for voting were obtained through the State's CARES Act money, tested and implemented. A stage was built on a flatbed trailer. Voter check-in stations were created like toll booths

on the runway. Attendance was 47% higher than average. With the help of a warrant reduced by several articles, the ATM was completed in one night with the FY 21 budget set two weeks before the end of the fiscal year. The revised, very frugal FY 21 budget with level funding for most expenses resulted overall budget of \$24,280,607, representing a 2.01% increase over the FY 20 budget.

The estimated property tax impact is \$97.36 or a 1.56% increase on the average tax bill. This leaves a financially sound Excess Levy Capacity of \$1.1M before a Proposition 2½ would be required in the future.

In mid-September, the Division of Local Services notified the Town that Certified Free cash was \$1,162,447. This is after taking out \$300K for the reserve fund to handle potential un-forecasted drops in revenue during FY 21. First, finding out so soon after the year end closing is an indication of professionally managed accounting system by the Town Accountant, Fred Aponte and Treasurer Collector Victoria Smith. Second this number is higher than previous years, partly because of restrained spending in FY 20 and a plan to hold more Free Cash for future uncertainties. Third, it leaves the Town in a healthy position to fund new one time – capital projects for FY 22 and beyond.

The help fund the reduced FY 21 budget and reduce the impact to taxpayers, payments to the Stabilization and OPED accounts were reduced. The Town's Financial Policies were amended to repay these accounts over the next couple of years. Thus, preserving the Town's long-term commitment towards maintaining and building its 'savings' accounts.

Collective bargaining agreements were negotiated and signed by all parties with the Dispatch, Fire, and Police unions. All employee groups, union and non-union, will receive the same increase of 2% for FY 21.

RFP's were issued, contracts signed, and project work completed for:

- 190 gallon propane fueled water heater at the Houghton School. This replaced a failing 600 gallon oil fired heater. If the school converts to natural gas, the new water heater can be converted as well.
- Sprinkler system for the 1835 Building. This project was made more feasible by the DPW that installed the new water line to the building. These savings allowed the upgrade to the alarm system, required to support the new sprinkler system.
- The hardwood floors of the 1835 building were sanded and refinished These floors had years and years of wear and needed this work. The result was a great improvement to the appearance of the building will and enhance future use.



Through the efforts of Town Planner, Domenica Tatasciore and with the support of DPW Superintendent, Paul Lyons, the Town has been awarded an MVP grant. The Town joined the Complete Streets program which opened eligibility to more state funds. The engineering drawings were updated for the Town Center improvement project. As part of this project the DPW completed the modified driveway for the library. The Town Planner was able to use Shared Streets grant funds to demonstrate the reconfiguration of the Meetinghouse Hill Rd to Main Street intersection. The DPW has improved a few sections of the sidewalk along Main Street. The main portion of this project is waiting for Verizon to place their wires underground.

Barbara Bartlett resigned as Town Clerk to move closer to family in NY. Assistant Town Clerk Kathy Farrell was promoted to Town Clerk and hired Donna Landry as Assistant Town Clerk. Both have done a fantastic job in a very demanding year complicated by mail-in-voting and two weeks of early voting.

By the end of May, Town Hall re-opened to the public by appointment. Town Hall opened to the public Aug 31, subject to wearing masks and using hand sanitizer upon entry.

Through the work of Cathie Ryan and Pete Monchamp who have been cataloging grant history, I'm pleased to report the Town has obtained \$1,673,211 in grant funds over the last three years, \$1M of this is a State bond available in the future for the beach renovation and Swett Hill Drainage project obtained through the efforts of Dick Maki. This total does not include number technical assistance grants. \$673.211 is a real cash benefit to the Town. These grants have been obtained through the work of many Town employees.

The Select Board voted to have the Town Administrator issue one day liquor licenses. This should reduce the work and number of meetings for the Select Board. Several one day licenses were issued.

A lot of big projects and many small projects have been accomplished in the last three-and one-half years. These accomplishments are largely due the hard work of the Town's employees. Sterling has the most professional staff and department heads of any community I have seen. Their willingness to accomplish new tasks has made this job exciting.

Instead of calling out everyone for their individual contributions, I want to mention Kama Jayne for her incredible knowledge, foresight, and support running the Select Board and Administration offices. You are the best.

To the Select Board, Finance Committee, and ultimately the voters that have supported these efforts, thank you. I hope that everyone will continue to look towards the future and help Sterling move forward.

All of you have been a pleasure and privilege to work for.

Ross Perry  
Sterling Town Administrator - Retired

## Select Board Annual Report

2020 was an extraordinary and uniquely challenging year for everyone due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We are grateful to volunteers, employees, boards, and committees for ensuring municipal services continued without interruption. Your concern, dedication, and response to the well-being of neighbors, friends, residents, and businesses was remarkable. Thank you!

The Select Board's goals and priorities have remained consistent. Staying focused on these goals has resulted in the completion of several projects. As we move forward, these goals and COVID-related needs will remain a priority. Additional support for tasks and activities is driven by our municipal employees and volunteers.

- Provide exceptional service to taxpayers by improving communication between boards, committees, and departments.
- Increase tax revenue through the economic development of Sterling's industrial areas, downtown and beyond.
- Support of Master Plan initiative and citizen committee.

### **COMPLETED PROJECTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTED BY SELECT BOARD:**

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- 1835 Town Hall capital repairs completed; new sprinkler system, upgraded alarm system, refinished hardwood floors, new vinyl flooring, and interior painting. Occupancy approval received.
- Installation of new energy-efficient windows in Town Hall – Butterick Building.
- 3-year Dispatchers Union Contract signed and ratified.
- New Town Administrator hired with a 3-year contract.
- SMLD Fiber Optic Network installed in town-owned facilities.
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program completed through the award of a grant secured by Town Planner and DPW Superintendent.
- Propane fueled water heater (190 gallons) installed at the Houghton School, replacing a failing oil-fired heater. This upgrade will allow the school to convert to natural gas if desired.

### **COVID RELATED IMPACT**

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- Cares Act funding covered the cost of supplies and equipment needed to support municipal operations during the pandemic. Cleaning supplies and PPE for municipal employees and all departments were requested and funded.
- Sterling obtained reimbursements for electronic voting devices used at Town

Meeting which will enhance future Town Meetings through the efforts our previous Town Administrator (Ross Perry) and our Accountant/Operations manager (Fred Aponte).

- Additional computer equipment in support of remote work was purchased through the Cares Act.
- Town employees accommodated a first-ever *work-from-home* schedule and touchless work environment. Town employees demonstrated their creativity by swearing in elected/appointed officials outside.
- The *drop box* at Town Hall was extensively used for town forms, payments, and applications, providing a safe alternative for employees and taxpayers alike. Our staff strived to ensure operations continued without failure.
- The use of virtual meeting tools was implemented to hold important board/committee meetings.

#### **ON-GOING PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED:**

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- Town Center Renovation.
- 1835 Town Hall Septic System and Use Plan.
- Library Repairs and Upgrades
- Recreation Planning; Field upgrades and potential Recreation Facility.
- Expansion of the town's water supply and water conservation efforts.
- Master Plan Initiative
- Beach renovations at Lake Waushacum.
- Construction of a Senior Center Garage previously approved at Town Meeting.
- SMLD's Fiber Network – Next Steps
- Electric and Water Meter Upgrades
- Municipal Technology & Innovation Upgrades
- Human Resources - Monitor and implement policies designed to meet current laws and regulations. Continue evaluation and integration of best practices.
- By-laws Updates – The Town Administrator and Select Board strived to assist other boards and committees in their efforts to rewrite and improve town by-laws, and ultimately reducing/eliminating legal costs associated with existing and inefficient by-laws.
- Board and Committee Collaboration. The Select Board remains committed to building more cohesive groups through collaboration and liaison activity.

#### **FINANCE & BUDGET ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

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- A balanced budget for the past three years with an increase of approximately 2% per year approved at Annual Town Meeting. *FY21 Exception: 2% COLA for overall 2.01% budget increase.*

- Average tax rate increases of just \$.16 per thousand or less than 1 percent at .95%. This helped offset the overall tax increase of 4.9% due mainly to an average valuation increase of \$14,400, or 3.96%.
- Maintained account balances in Free Cash, Stabilization, and the Capital Investment Fund as recommended by Financial Policies Manual. *FY21 Exception: Increased allocation of Stabilization.*
- Adopted former replenishment funding policy for Stabilization OPEB for the next six years.
- Maintained Moody's financial bond rating of Aa2 (third strongest rating), confirmed by independent auditors Roselli, Clark & Company.
- Attained grants over \$100k through the efforts of the 1835 Town Hall, Town Planner, Affordable Housing Committee, Council on Aging, Cultural Council, Fire, Police, and Library.

In closing, we express our deep appreciation and thanks to newly retired Town Administrator Ross Perry. Mr. Perry's leadership was instrumental in preparing the town for future success. As we welcome our new Town Administrator Kellie Hebert, we thank Fred Aponte and Kama Jayne for their leadership and governance during the transition.

To all our residents and businesses, we thank you for your continued support of the Select Board and in the future of Sterling's vitality. Sterling is a strong and welcoming community. We look forward to an exciting and bright future for all.

Maureen Cranson, Chair

Arden Sonnenberg, Vice Chair

John Kilcoyne, Clerk

## Office of The Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's Office is staffed by Kathleen Farrell, Town Clerk and Donna Landry, Assistant Town Clerk. Three senior associates complete our team: Irene Camerano, Sheila Hudson, and Melissa Chalmers.

Despite the pandemic, we were able to carry out the functions of the Town Clerk's Office this year by complying with COVID standards and ensuring everyone's health and safety. We held four elections this year, a Presidential Primary, Annual Town Election, State Primary and the General Election. Changes in State Law allowed expanded voting options including Vote by Mail and a combined total of four weeks of Early Voting in Person.

We received a Massachusetts State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) Grant for a Strategic Assessment & Program Review from the Roving Archivist Program. After meeting with the Archivist, the office is beginning the process of inventorying, organizing and establishing policies for the contents of the town's vault.

We thank our staff for their creativity and flexibility in dealing with the new protocols and helping us meet our goals. The goals/ responsibilities of our office include:

- Oversight of Elections, including registration of voters, testing of voting equipment, and training of Election Officials. COVID protocols were followed at the polls, including social distancing, a mask requirement, single use pens for marking ballots, and frequently sanitized voting booths.
- Preparation and administration of the Annual Town Census and production of the Annual Street List
- Processing Business Certificates, Fuel Storage Registrations, and Dog Licenses
- Recording Town Meeting Minutes and votes taken, submitting bylaw changes to the Attorney General, and bylaw document updating
- Filing applications and decisions by the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and issuing certificates and information regarding appeals
- Swearing in elected officials and appointed board and committee members, posting meetings and agendas, distributing the Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest information to all employees and board and committee members
- Records Access Officer, responding to increased requests for public records
- Maintenance of the Town website, vault storage, and official records
- Recording and issuing vital records: birth, marriage and death certificates
- Provision of Notary Public Services

Results of all 2020 elections are provided below followed by the Minutes of the June, 2020 Town Meeting.



## Presidential Primary March 3, 2020

<b>DEMOCRATIC PARTY</b>	<b>PRECINCT 1</b>	<b>PRECINCT 2</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE</b>			
Deval Patrick	10	2	12
Amy Klobuchar	17	22	39
Elizabeth Warren	144	158	302
Michael Bennet	0	1	1
Michael R. Bloomberg	92	104	196
Tulsi Gabbard	4	12	16
Cory Booker	0	2	2
Julian Castro	0	0	0
Tom Steyer	7	11	18
Bernie Sanders	240	248	488
Joseph R. Biden	312	292	604
John K. Delaney	0	0	0
Andrew Yang	1	3	4
Pete Buttigieg	49	42	91
Marianne Williamson	1	0	1
No Preference	0	1	1
Write-ins	0	1	1
Blanks	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>1,777</b>
<b>STATE COMMITTEE MAN</b>			
Patrick G. Haverly	565	613	1,178
Write-ins	1	1	2
Blanks	311	286	597
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>1,777</b>
<b>STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN</b>			
Natalie Higgins	597	634	1,231
Write-ins	0	1	1
Blanks	280	265	545
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>1,777</b>
<b>TOWN COMMITTEE</b>			
Fionuala Margaret Dullea	414	437	851
Blaine D. Bershad	426	442	868
Paul V. Curley	415	441	856
Angela C. Grattaroti	411	436	847
Richard T. Harrison	392	435	827
Patricia Joan Ward	418	463	881
Robert A. Bloom	416	434	850
Maryanne MacLeod	432	457	889
Catherine M. Ryan	422	439	861
Robert A. Sarafconn	395	441	836
Carol A. Lavigne	416	440	856
Rosanne D. Mapp	411	443	854
Christine A. Smith	436	479	915
Christine R. Nelson	409	459	868
Sherri A. Grande-Direda	414	448	862
Write-ins	9	10	19

***Presidential Primary, March 3, 2020, cont.***

<b>REPUBLICAN PARTY</b>	<b>PRECINCT 1</b>	<b>PRECINCT 2</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE</b>			
William F. Weld	23	28	51
Joe Walsh	3	0	3
Donald J. Trump	202	211	413
Roque "Rocky" De La Fuente	0	0	0
No Preference	9	2	11
Write-ins	0	0	0
Blanks	2	3	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>483</b>
<b>STATE COMMITTEE MAN</b>			
Thomas F. Ardinger	189	191	380
Write-ins	0	3	3
Blanks	50	50	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>483</b>
<b>STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN</b>			
Susan E. Smiley	199	193	392
Write-ins	4	0	4
Blanks	36	51	87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>483</b>
<b>TOWN COMMITTEE</b>			
Write-ins	1	10	11
Carroll, Virginia	4	15	19
Dumont, Robert	4	16	20
Dwyer, John	4	14	18
Icker, Joan	4	15	19
Petullo, Sara	5	15	20
Pineo, Michael	4	16	20
Schur, Loret	4	16	20
Schur, Joel	3	15	18
Shelton, Kyle	4	15	19
Suto, Mary	4	15	19
Valentine, Sue	3	15	18
Westbrook, John (Jr.)	4	15	19

<b>GREEN-RAINBOW PARTY</b>	<b>PRECINCT 1</b>	<b>PRECINCT 2</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE</b>			
Dario Hunter	0	1	1
Sedinam Kinamo Christin Moyowasifza-Curry	0	0	0
Kent Mesplay	0	0	0
Howard Hawkins	0	1	1
No Preference	0	0	0
Write-ins	0	0	0
Blanks	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>STATE COMMITTEE MAN</b>			
Write-ins	0	0	0
Blanks	0	2	2

<b>TOTAL</b>	0	2	2
<i>Presidential Primary, March 3, 2020, cont.</i>			

<b>STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN</b>			
Charlene R. DiCalogero	0	2	2
Write-ins	0	0	0
Blanks	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	2	2
<b>TOWN COMMITTEE</b>			
Write-ins	0	0	0

<b>LIBERTARIAN PARTY</b>			
<b>PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE</b>	<b>PRECINCT 1</b>	<b>PRECINCT 2</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Arvin Vohra	0	0	0
Vermin Love Supreme	0	0	0
Jacob George Hornberger	0	0	0
Samuel Joseph Robb	1	0	1
Dan Taxation is Theft Behrman	0	1	1
Kimberly Margaret Ruff	1	0	1
Kenneth Reed Armstrong	0	0	0
Adam Kokesh	0	1	1
Jo Jorgensen	0	0	0
Max Abramson	0	0	0
No Preference	0	1	1
Write-ins	0	0	0
Blanks	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	3	3	6
<b>STATE COMMITTEE MAN</b>			
Write-ins	0	0	0
Blanks	3	3	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	3	3	6
<b>STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN</b>			
Write-ins	0	1	1
Blanks	3	2	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	3	3	6
<b>TOWN COMMITTEE</b>			
Write-ins	0	0	0

	<b>PRECINCT 1</b>	<b>PRECINCT 2</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
Democrats	516	553	1069
Republicans	521	558	1079
Green-Rainbow	1	1	2
Libertarian	10	16	26
Unenrolled	1875	2070	3945
Other	19	26	45
<b>*Total Reg Voters each PRECINCT</b>	2,942	3,224	6,166
<b>Total voted</b>	1,119	1,149	2268
<b>Voter Turnout %</b>	36.78%		

\*As of February 12, 2020 Deadline to register

## Annual Town Election June 29, 2020

	PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
Total votes cast in each precinct	203	172	375
<b>BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Robert F. Cutler</b>	163	127	290
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	23	22	45
Blanks	17	23	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>BOARD OF HEALTH (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Catherine L. Martin</b>	171	156	327
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	5		5
Blanks	27	16	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Heide M. Martin</b>	178	149	327
<b>Lisa Akerson</b>	13	12	25
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	16	8	24
Blanks	199	175	374
<b>TOTAL</b>	406	344	750
<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN (3yrs)</b>			
<b>John Francis Kilcoyne</b>	176	145	321
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	1	8	9
Blanks	26	19	45
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>CONSTABLE (3yrs)</b>			
<b>James E. Hartnett</b>	171	143	314
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	0	4	4
Blanks	32	25	57
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS BOARD (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Blaine D. Bershad</b>	157	145	302
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	0	4	4
Blanks	46	23	69
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>PLANNING BOARD (5yrs)</b>			
<b>Carl D. Corrinne</b>	162	132	294
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	3	6	9
Blanks	38	34	72
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>PLANNING BOARD (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Kirsten Annette Newman</b>	99	99	198
<b>Valmore H. Pruneau Jr.</b>	75	52	127
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	0	0	-
Blanks	29	21	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375
<b>PLANNING BOARD (1yr)</b>			
<b>Robert J. Protano</b>	163	148	311
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	0	4	4
Blanks	40	20	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	203	172	375

***Annual Town Election, June 29, 2020, cont.***

<b>STERLING HOUSING AUTHORITY (5yrs)</b>			
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	13	6	19
Blanks	190	166	356
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>375</b>
<b>STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Brian J. Pierce</b>	176	153	329
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	1	0	1
Blanks	26	19	45
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>375</b>
<b>TOWN MODERATOR (1yr)</b>			
<b>Julie H. Rusch</b>	179	155	334
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	0	0	-
Blanks	24	17	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>375</b>
<b>WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (3yrs)</b>			
<b>Kelly Williamson</b>	39	43	82
<b>Deidre Shapiro</b>	19	22	41
<b>Total Write-ins</b>	10	15	25
Blanks	338	264	602
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>750</b>
<b>Total Registered voters each PRECINCT</b>	<b>2,960</b>	<b>3,225</b>	<b>6,185</b>
<b>Total Votes Cast in EACH Precinct</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>375</b>
<b>Voter Turnout %</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>6%</b>

All candidates are required to submit campaign finance forms 30 days after the election to the Town Clerk. The candidate may otherwise be subject to penalties.

## State Primary Election September 1, 2020

Total votes cast in each precinct	PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
<b>DEMOCRATIC PARTY</b>			
<b>SENATOR IN CONGRESS</b>			
EDWARD J MARKEY	443	467	910
JOSEPH P KENNEDY III	461	391	852
Total Write-Ins	2	3	5
Blanks	4	7	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1778</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS</b>			
JAMES P MCGOVERN	800	763	1563
Total Write-ins	15	13	28
Blanks	95	92	187
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1778</b>
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>			
PAUL M DEPALO	499	452	951
PADRAIC RAFFERTY	296	288	584
Total Write-ins	2	1	3
Blanks	113	127	240
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1778</b>
<b>SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT</b>			
JOHN J CRONIN	734	702	1436
Total Write-ins	8	6	14
Blanks	168	160	328
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1778</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT</b>			
MEGAN KILCOYNE(PCT 2)		518	518
CEYLAN ROWE(PCT 2)		160	160
ALEXANDRA W TURNER(PCT 2)		140	140
Total Write-ins	153	1	154
Blanks	757	49	806
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1778</b>
<b>REGISTER OF PROBATE</b>			
JOHN B DOLAN III	391	374	765
KASIA WENNERBERG	402	346	748
Total Write-ins	2	2	4
Blanks	115	146	261
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>1778</b>
<b>REPUBLICAN PARTY</b>			
<b>SENATOR IN CONGRESS</b>			
SHIVA AYYADURAI	118	143	261
KEVIN J O'CONNOR	182	160	342
Total Write-Ins	0	2	2
Blanks	5	2	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>612</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS</b>			
TRACY LYN LOVVORN	268	274	542
Total Write-ins	2	4	6
Blanks	35	29	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>612</b>

***State Primary Election, September 1, 2020, cont.***

COUNCILLOR			
Total Write-ins	56	42	98
Blanks	249	265	514
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>612</b>
SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT			
DEAN A TRAN	287	285	572
Total Write-ins	2	3	5
Blanks	16	19	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>612</b>
REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT			
KIMBERLY N FERGUSON (PCT 1)	284		284
SUSAN A SMILEY (PCT 2)		280	280
Total Write-ins	1	3	4
Blanks	20	24	44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>612</b>
REGISTER OF PROBATE			
STEPHANIE K FATTMAN	271	274	545
Total Write-ins	1	7	8
Blanks	33	26	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>612</b>
LIBERTARIAN			
SENATOR IN CONGRESS			
Total Write-Ins	6	6	12
Blanks	3	2	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS			
Total Write-ins	4	5	9
Blanks	5	3	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
COUNCILLOR			
Total Write-ins	2	4	6
Blanks	7	4	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT			
Total Write-ins	2	4	6
Blanks	7	4	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT			
Total Write-ins	0	6	6
Blanks	9	2	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
REGISTER OF PROBATE			
Total Write-ins	2	5	7
Blanks	7	3	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
GREEN RAINBOW			
SENATOR IN CONGRESS			
Total Write-Ins	4	4	8
Blanks	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>

***State Primary Election, September 1, 2020, cont.***

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS			
Total Write-ins	4	2	6
Blanks	0	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
COUNCILLOR			
Total Write-ins	4	4	8
Blanks	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT			
Total Write-ins	3	2	5
Blanks	1	2	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT			
CHARLENE R DICALOGERO		2	2
Total Write-ins	4	2	6
Blanks	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
REGISTER OF PROBATE			
Total Write-ins	2	4	6
Blanks	2	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
Voter Registration			
Democrats	530	569	1099
Republicans	520	562	1082
Green-Rainbow	2	1	3
Libertarian	7	18	25
Unenrolled	1923	2124	4047
Other	18	24	42
<b>*Total Registered Voters each PRECINCT</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>3298</b>	<b>6298</b>
<b>Total voted</b>	<b>1228</b>	<b>1187</b>	<b>2415</b>
<b>Voter Turnout %</b>			<b>38.35%</b>



## State Election November 3, 2020

Total votes cast in each precinct	PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
<b>PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT</b>			
BIDEN AND HARRIS	1378	1463	2841
HAWKINS AND WALKER	8	22	30
JORGENSEN AND COHEN	53	47	100
TRUMP AND PENCE	1174	1270	2444
All Others	15	21	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2628</b>	<b>2823</b>	<b>5451</b>
Blanks	17	22	39
<b>SENATOR IN CONGRESS</b>			
EDWARD J. MARKEY	1342	1414	2756
KEVIN J. O'CONNOR	1192	1314	2506
SHIVA AYYADURAI	46	43	89
All Others	0	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2580</b>	<b>2774</b>	<b>5354</b>
Blanks	65	71	136
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS SECOND DISTRICT</b>			
JAMES P. MCGOVERN	1410	1529	2939
TRACY LYN LOVVORN	1158	1236	2394
All Others	5	3	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2573</b>	<b>2768</b>	<b>5341</b>
Blanks	72	77	149
<b>COUNCILLOR SEVENTH DISTRICT</b>			
PAUL M. DEPALO	1749	1837	3586
All Others	40	53	93
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1789</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>3679</b>
Blanks	856	955	1811
<b>SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT WORCESTER &amp; MIDDLESEX DISTRICT</b>			
DEAN A TRAN	1373	1503	2876
JOHN J. CRONIN	1154	1216	2370
All Others	3	4	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2530</b>	<b>2723</b>	<b>5253</b>
Blanks	115	122	237
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT FIRST WORCESTER DISTRICT</b>			
KIMBERLY N. FERGUSON	1971		1971
All Others	44		44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2015</b>		<b>2015</b>
Blanks	630		630
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT TWELFTH WORCESTER DISTRICT</b>			
CHARLENE R. DICALOGERO		84	84
MEGHAN KILCOYNE		1410	1410
SUSAN SMILEY		1243	1243
All Others		4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2741</b>	<b>2741</b>
Blanks		104	104
<b>REGISTER OF PROBATE WORCESTER COUNTY</b>			
STEPHANIE K. FATTMAN	1433	1579	3012
JOHN B. DOLAN III	929	971	1900

***State Election, November 3, 2020, cont.***

All Others	0	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2362</b>	<b>2553</b>	<b>4915</b>
Blanks	283	292	575
<b>QUESTION 1</b>			
<b>YES</b>	2031	2112	<b>4143</b>
<b>NO</b>	530	670	<b>1200</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2561</b>	<b>2782</b>	<b>5343</b>
Blanks	84	63	147
<b>QUESTION 2</b>			
<b>YES</b>	928	995	<b>1923</b>
<b>NO</b>	1613	1751	<b>3364</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2541</b>	<b>2746</b>	<b>5287</b>
Blanks	104	99	203
<b>VOTER TURNOUT</b>			
	<b>PREC 1</b>	<b>PREC 2</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>Registered Voters</b>	3057	3365	<b>6422</b>
<b>Total Voted</b>	2645	2845	<b>5490</b>
<b>Voter Turnout    %</b>			<b>85.49%</b>





**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF STERLING  
JUNE 22, 2020  
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES**

At 6:40 pm, on Monday, June 22, 2020, the Town Moderator, Amrith Kumar, opened the Annual Town Meeting held at the Sterling Airport, 121 Greenland Road in said Town of Sterling. There was a quorum present; 346 voters attended the meeting.

Town Moderator, Amrith Kumar noted the receipt of the posting of the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting by Constable, Jay Hartnett and asked all who were able, to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Moderator explained that Sterling Town Meeting is being recorded by Sterling Lancaster Cable TV and is governed by the General Laws of the Commonwealth, the General Bylaws of the Town of Sterling, and the guidelines established in "Town Meeting Time".

Town Administrator, Ross Perry thanked the following people for their assistance with the logistics and assistance needed to hold the ATM at the airport:

Jim Simpson, for letting the Town use the airport  
Bob Kneeland  
Fred Aponte  
Patrice Fullhart  
Paul Lyons and the DPW  
Barry Lein  
Jim Emerton  
Darren Borge, Tim Gray and Sean Hamilton  
Julie Rusch  
Mike Cove  
Kama Jayne  
Terry Heinold  
Doug Downey  
Tom Duffy, Airport Manager  
Matt Downing and SLCT  
Jeff Carrol

Town Moderator, Amrith Kumar reviewed logistics of participation including review and practice with the vote counting devices. He explained the Consent Calendar and how to address the meeting. The Moderator noted that all voters have copies of the motions, so there would be no need to read them unless there were substantive differences.

Town Moderator, Amrith Kumar noted that he was not finishing his term, he thanked the community and welcomed Julie Rusch as the new Moderator. Participants honked in appreciation of the Moderator's service.

## **MOTION MADE TO DISPENSE WITH THE READING OF THE WARRANT AND THE CONSTABLES'S RETURN**

**Motion passed unanimously as declared by the Moderator**

### **ARTICLE 1. FY20 Town Operating Budget**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$24,323,887 as shown on page 8 line 225 of the Omnibus Budget and to further appropriate, from the Ambulance Receipts Account, the sum of \$500,000.00 and to further appropriate, from the Cemetery Perpetual Care Account, the sum of \$5,000.00 for a total appropriation of \$24,828,887 for the payment of salaries and compensation, payment of debt and interest and for charges, expenses and outlays of the Town Departments, for the ensuing fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021, as shown in the municipal operating budget printed at the back of this Warrant.

Mr. Sova addressed the meeting by first remembering Finance Committee Member Stephen Staudaheer who died tragically in March.

He then summarized the Finance Committee Annual Report in the Warrant explaining that the current COVID 19 pandemic affected the budget presented noting their emphasis was on not increasing the tax rate, by taking measures like reducing capital expenditures.

**Motion Passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova to reconsider Article 1. (Town Meeting voted after Article 26 to suspend the General Bylaw C180-10 to allow reconsideration of this article alone outside of 1 hour).

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova that the Town vote the Omnibus Budget Article 1 as written in the motion book changing line #167 to reinstate the Town Administrators salary in the Omnibus Budget to \$122,400.00 and delete line #166 for \$80,000 for a total of \$24,280,607.00

**Motion passed as amended by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**Selectman Maureen Cranson read a list in Memoriam:**

James John Dubovick  
Charles Foster  
David Chandler  
Norman Plourde  
Yvonne Swisher  
D. James Harper III  
Roger and Ruhamah "Rainy" Sabourin  
Denise Hewson  
Marion Tuttle  
Pamela Pingeton  
Robert Bloom  
Woody Woodcock Jr  
Michael Thomas  
Charles Lowe  
Steve Staudaher  
Sarah LaMountain

**ARTICLE 2. Fund Deficit due to Snow and Ice**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova that the Town vote to transfer from Certified Free Cash the sum of \$97,202.29 to the Snow and Ice Account to cover any deficit in the snow and ice budget for the current fiscal year.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 3. Transfer Certified Free Cash to the Capital Fund**

**MOTION MADE** by Everett Heller to move no action on Article 3

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 4. Transfer Certified Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund**

**MOTION MADE** by Everett Heller to move no action on Article 4

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 5. Transfer Balances from Old Warrant Articles to the Capital Fund**

**MOTION MADE** by Mary Cliett that the Town vote to transfer the sum of \$77,724.63 funds remaining from previous Town Meeting warrant articles or other inactive accounts as printed in the warrant, to the Capital Investment Fund.

<b>Account #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Recapture Dollars</b>
01999-58020	FY 20 ATM Art#7A: Butterick Electric door locks	\$1,506.81
01999-58038	FY 20 ATM Art#8E: Repair Tennis Courts	\$71,349.53
01999-58106	FY 18 ATM Art#36: Medical Waste Kiosk	\$1.10
01999-58107	FY 18 STM Art#4: 1835 Town Hall Septic Design	\$0.35
01999-58115	FY 19 ATM Art#12F: Server Upgrade	\$1.84
01999-58091	FY 18 ATM Art#9B: Replace Radio Equipment	\$4,206.00
01999-58128	FY 20 ATM Art#7F: Replace Radios	\$659.00

**Total**      **\$77,724.63**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 6. Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Plan – Free Cash**

**MOTION MADE** by Todd Chapman that the Town vote to transfer from Certified Free Cash the sum of \$238,000 to be used to fund the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Plan for the Town of Sterling, as recommended by the Finance Committee, as listed below, such funds to be administered and expended under the direction of the requesting department.

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Department</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
1. Animal Control Vehicle	Police	\$ 45,000
2. 1835 Building cleaning	1835 Com	\$ 3,000
3. Multiple IT projects	Operations	\$ 61,000
4. Mulch for Muddy Pond Playground	Recreation	\$ 9,000
5. Beach Project, environmental eval.	Selectmen,ConsComm	\$ 20,000
6. <u>Master Plan</u>	<u>Selectmen</u>	<u>\$ 100,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 238,000</b>

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 7. Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Plan – Capital Investment Fund**

**MOTION MADE** by Everett Heller that the Town vote to transfer from the Capital Investment Fund the sum of \$419,151 to be used to fund the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Plan for the Town of Sterling, as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Capital Planning Committee, as printed in the warrant, such funds to be administered and expended under the direction of the requesting department.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1. Radio Replacement	Fire Dept.	\$ 118,000
2. Utilities Placed underground	Selectmen	\$ 121,151
3. Athletic Field Complex Design	Recreation	\$ 70,000
4. 1 1/2 Ford 550 Plow truck with wing	DPW	\$ 60,000
5. <u>Engineering for new entrance and elevator</u>	<u>Library</u>	<u>\$ 50,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$419,151</b>

**Motion passed by 2/3rds as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 8. Water Dept. Operation Enterprise Fund**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$949,226.70 from water department revenue, and further to appropriate \$40,000 from Water Enterprise Retained Earnings, for extraordinary or unforeseen expense as determined by the DPW Board and approved by the Finance Committee, for a total appropriation of \$989,226.70 to operate the Water Department Enterprise Fund for Fiscal Year 2021 under the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 53F1/2, as amended, as follows:

Salaries/Wages	\$255,290.70	
Expenses	\$350,727.00	
Principle & Interest	\$235,209.00	
Indirect Costs	<u>\$108,000.00</u>	
Subtotal	\$949,226.70	from FY21 water charges and fees
Reserve Fund	<u>\$ 40,000.00</u>	from Retained Earnings
Total Appropriation	\$989,226.70	

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

## **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

**MOTION MADE** by John Kilcoyne that the Town vote by unanimous consent to combine the following articles into a Consent Calendar and to approve those Articles that have not been requested “held” in one vote as shown in the Warrant; those consent articles being: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and further, to fund Article 12 in the amount of \$410,022.

Moderator Amrith Kumar explained the function and process of voting the Consent Calendar to Town Meeting Members.

No holds were requested by the voters

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

### **ARTICLE 9. Compensation for Elected Officers (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to fix the salaries and compensation of all elected officers of the Town as provided by Chapter 41, Section 108 of the General Laws [MGL Ch. 41 §108], as amended, as follows and as presented in Article 1 of this Warrant

#### **FY 21 Stipends**

Assessor	1500.00 yr.
Selectman	1500.00 yr.
Health Board	103.00 yr.
Planning Board	300.00 yr.
DPW Board	600.00 yr.
Town Moderator	500.00 yr.

### **ARTICLE 10. Set Salary of Municipal Light Board (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to set the salary of the Sterling Municipal Light Board members as provided by Chapter 41, Section 108 of the General Laws [MGL Ch. 41 §108], as amended, as follows: Chairman \$1,500; Clerk \$1,500; Third member \$1,500; said sum to be an expense of the Sterling Municipal Light Department.

### **ARTICLE 11. Reserve Fund for FY21 (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to transfer from free cash the sum of \$300,000 for the Reserve Fund for Fiscal Year 2021 in accordance with the provisions of General Law Chapter 40, Section 6 as amended.

### **ARTICLE 12. Chapter 90 Funding (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to accept Chapter 90 funds in the amount of \$410,022 as funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for highway resurfacing and/or other related



work or expenditures as allowed by the State Chapter 90 regulations, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works, with approval of the Board of Selectmen, and in accordance with the DPW's 5-year Capital Plan reviewed annually by the Capital Plan Committee.

**ARTICLE 13. East Lake Waushacum Treatment (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,000, to account 01999-58050, the East Lake Waushacum Treatment Account, said sum to be used for the study and treatment of the Lake, which is projected to cost \$24,000 during FY21.

**ARTICLE 14. Authorize Treasurer to Borrow Money (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020, in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 4, and to renew any note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year, in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 17.

**ARTICLE 15. Compensating Balance Agreements (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53F, to authorize the Town Treasurer to enter into compensating balance agreements, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020.

**ARTICLE 16. Tax Title Payments Agreements for Properties in Tax Title (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, pursuant to Chapter 60, Section 62A of the General Laws, as amended, to enact a bylaw to authorize the Town Treasurer/Collector to pursue and establish a written payment agreement with any person(s) entitled to redeem ownership of parcel taken by the Town for nonpayment of real estate taxes; and further, to authorize the Town Clerk to assign such numbering as is appropriate to bring said bylaw into conformance with the existing codification; said bylaw to take the form as printed in the warrant.

**Redemption of tax title real estate.**

- A. Pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 60, Section 62A, the Treasurer/Collector of the Town of Sterling ("Town") may enter into a written payment agreement ("agreement") with any person(s) entitled to redeem ownership of parcels of real estate ("redeemer") which have been taken by the Town as a result of nonpayment of real estate taxes. The agreement shall be executed by the Town and redeemer and shall set forth the terms and conditions for payment of the delinquent taxes, interest and any other costs, fees or charges associated with the same.

- B. The redeemer of the following assessment categories of real property shall be eligible to enter into an agreement provided for in the preceding paragraph:
  - 1. Commercial property;
  - 2. Residential property;
  - 3. Industrial; and
  - 4. Open space.
- C. The following conditions must be met prior to the Town and redeemer entering into an agreement.
  - 1. The Town has not filed a petition to foreclose the rights of redemption with the Land Court, and the recording date of the Instrument of Taking recorded in the Worcester County Registry of Deeds or Worcester Registry District of the Land Court must be no more than 10 years from the date of the proposed agreement; and
  - 2. All real estate taxes due for the current fiscal year assessed against the parcel must be paid to date;
- D. All payment agreements shall comply with the following minimum requirements:
  - 1. The payment agreement shall have a term of five (5) years; provided, however, that nothing herein shall preclude the taxpayer from completing payments of the amount owed in a shorter period of time;
  - 2. The payment agreement shall include a waiver of fifty percent (50%) of the interest that has accrued in the tax title account, but only if the taxpayer complies with the terms of the agreement (no taxes or collections costs may be waived); and
  - 3. The payment agreement shall state the amount of the payment due from the taxpayer at the time of execution of the agreement, which must be at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount needed to redeem the parcel at the inception of the agreement. The taxpayer must then agree to pay the remaining balance due to the Town in equal monthly installments.
- E. After the Town has received seventy-five percent (75%) of the total amount due, the taxpayer shall be entitled to a credit equal to twenty-five percent (25%) of the accrued interest on the tax title account. This credit shall be applied against the final installment payment(s) due under the payment agreement.
- F. During the term of the agreement, the Town may not bring an action to foreclose the tax title of the redeemer unless payments are not made in accordance with the schedule provided in the agreement or timely payments are not made on other amounts due to the municipality that constitute a lien on the same parcel.

Or take any other action in relation thereto.

**Submitted by:** Board of Selectmen

**Recommendation:** The Board of Selectmen recommends passage of this article.

**Recommendation:** The Finance Committee recommends passage of this article.

**Summary:** The purpose of this article is to allow the Treasurer/Collector to establish payment agreements for any property owner that has a property in Tax Title by using the above requirements. This will enable the property owner to pay off their back taxes and reduce the Town's tax liability.

**ARTICLE 17. Fund Wachusett Greenways Expenses (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,400 to be used to pay the expenses, including but not limited to pay for a portable toilet and trail maintenance on the MASS Central Rail Trail, of the Wachusett Greenways, an eight town collaborative, said funds to be administered and expended by Wachusett Greenways.

**ARTICLE 18. Fund Sterling Land Trust Expenses (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to transfer from Certified Free Cash the sum of \$1,300 to be used toward the payment of expenses incurred by the Sterling Land Trust, Inc. to preserve and manage various parcels of land within the Town, said funds to be administered and expended by the Trust.

**ARTICLE 19. Revolving Funds Bylaw (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to set the FY 2021 spending limits for the revolving funds identified in Chapter 143 of the Town's General Bylaws, as printed in the warrant.

**ARTICLE 20. Building Rental Revolving Fund (Consent Calendar)**

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, to continue to provide for any amounts collected for building rentals, other than rental of school buildings, to be credited to a separate account to be expended without further appropriation by the board, committee or department head in control of the building for building-related upkeep and maintenance, and further, to accept the provision of the second paragraph of G.L. Chapter 40, Section 3, as amended to allow any balance in such an account at the close of the fiscal year to remain available for expenditure without appropriation for such purposes in future years.

**CONCLUSION OF CONSENT CALENDAR**

**MOTION MADE by Town Moderator, Amrith Kumar, to have Julie Rusch take over the meeting as Moderator.**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

Julie Rusch, Deputy Moderator, thanked Mr. Kumar.

## **ARTICLE 21. Amendments to Personnel Policy Bylaw Compensation Matrices**

**MOTION MADE** by John Kilcoyne that the Town vote to waive prior review and report by the Personnel Board, to the extent same is necessary, and to amend the Personnel Policy Bylaw of the Town of Sterling, by updating Attachments A, C, E, F, G and H as printed in the warrant.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Personnel Bylaw of the Town of Sterling, by updating Attachments A, C, E, F, G and H as indicated below, and waive the requirement of prior consideration by the Personnel Board to the extent the same is necessary:

### **Attachment A — Classification Plan Regular Non-Union Positions Effective as of July 1, 2020**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Position/Title</b>
I	Clerk Typist
	Library Technician (All)
	Custodian
	Van Driver
	Laborer (DPW)
	Property Lister
II	Admin Assistant
	Library Associate I
	Outreach Aide (COA)
	Meal Site Coordinator (COA)
III	Senior Center Operations Coordinator (COA)
	Assistant Mechanic (DPW)
	Assistant Town Collector
	Assistant Town Treasurer
	Associate Health Agent
	Program Assistant (Rec)
	Executive Assistant (DPW; Police; Fire)
	Assistant Town Clerk
	Animal Control Officer
	Library Associate II
	Water Technician (DPW)
	Truck Driver (DPW)
	Equipment Operator (DPW)

IV	Asst. Library Director (Child Services)
	Working Foreman
	Facilities Maintenance Technician
	Conservation Agent
	Mechanic (DPW)
	Senior Executive Assistant (Selectmen/TA)
	Senior Water Technician (DPW)
V	COA Director
	HR Administrator
	Town Clerk
	Town Accountant
	Town Treasurer/Collector
	Assistant Superintendent (DPW)
	Town Planner
	Operations Manager
	Recreation Director
	Health Agent
	Building Commissioner
VI	DPW Superintendent
	Assistant Town Administrator

#### Attachment B - Deleted

#### Attachment C - Compensation Schedule Non-Union Regular Positions Effective July 1, 2020

Grade Level	Hourly Salary Range Minimum	Hourly Salary Range Mid-Point	Hourly Salary Range Maximum
I	\$14.40	\$17.29	\$20.17
II	\$15.60	\$19.49	\$21.82
III	\$17.92	\$22.41	\$26.00
IV	\$21.02	\$25.77	\$30.50
V	\$24.74	\$30.93	\$37.11
VI	\$36.36	\$45.44	\$54.55

Grade Level	Salary Range Minimum	Salary Range Mid-Point	Salary Range Maximum
I	\$29,952	\$35,963	\$41,954
II	\$32,448	\$40,539	\$45,386
III	\$37,274	\$46,613	\$54,080
IV	\$43,722	\$53,602	\$63,440
V	\$51,459	\$64,334	\$77,189
VI	\$75,629	\$94,515	\$113,464

#### Attachment E – Compensation Schedule

##### Call Fire Force Positions

Effective as of July 1, 2020

Grade Level	Hourly Salary Range Minimum	Hourly Salary Range Mid-Point	Hourly Salary Range Maximum
I	\$14.21	\$21.60	\$27.97

#### Attachment F — Stipend Positions

Effective Jul 1, 2020

Position Title	Amount
ADA Coordinator	\$1,500
Animal Inspector	\$3,400
Emergency Management Director	\$10,000
Gas Inspector	\$6,132
Plumbing Inspector	\$11,149
Sealer of Weights and Measures	\$1,200

#### Attachment G – Temporary Positions

Effective July 1, 2020

Position Title	Minimum/Hour	Maximum/Hour
Police Special Officer	State Minimum	\$15.00
Constable	State Minimum	State Minimum + \$1.00/hr.
Cell Monitor	\$15.00	\$25.00
Election Officer	State Minimum	State Minimum
Board of Registrars	State Minimum	State Minimum + \$1.00/hr.
Assistant Board of Registrars	State Minimum	State Minimum
Deputy Election Warden	State Minimum	State Min + \$1.00/hr.
Election Warden	State Minimum	State Minimum + \$5.00/hr.

## Attachment H – Miscellaneous Positions

Effective July 1, 2020

Position Title	Minimum/Hour	Maximum/Hour
Seasonal Laborer	State Minimum	\$14.50
Seasonal Truck Driver	\$17.00	\$22.50
Lifeguard	State Minimum	\$16.00
Seasonal Recreation Assistant	State Minimum	\$16.00
Food inspector		\$40.00
Parking Clerk		\$25.00
Assistant Building Inspector		\$40 per inspection
Assistant Plumbing and Gas Inspector		\$40 per inspection
Wiring Inspector		\$40 per inspection
Assistant Wiring Inspector		\$40 per inspection

Or take any action in relation thereto.

**Submitted by:** Board of Selectmen

**Recommendation:** The Board of Selectmen recommends passage of this article.

**Recommendation:** The Finance Committee recommends passage of this article.

**Summary:** This article updates the compensation plan with a 2% cost of living increase.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

### **ARTICLE 22. Transfer From the Water Enterprise Fund**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova that the Town vote to transfer from the Water Enterprise Account the sum of \$93,192.00 to General Fund.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

### **ARTICLE 23. Transfer From the Water Enterprise Fund – Retained Earnings**

**MOTION MADE** by Maureen Cranson that the Town vote to transfer from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings Account the sum of \$180,000.00 for the following: (1) to pay for a new Water

Supply Master Plan / Hydraulic Study; (2) to purchase and equip a vehicle for the Water Department; and (3) for the purchase of materials and supplies and for installation of a Flanagan Hill Road to Pratts Junction Road water line loop, and for all costs incidental or related thereto.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 24. Board of Health Administrative Assistant**

**MOTION MADE** by Allen Hoffman that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,905.00, said sum to be added to Board of Health account number 01510-51200, for administrative services, and further to authorize the Board of Health to hire a part-time (less than 20 hours per week) Administrative Assistant, Grade II, between the minimum hourly pay rate of \$15.60 per hour and maximum hourly pay rate of \$21.82, as shown on the Classification Plan.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 25. Assistant Town Administrator for FY 2021**

**MOTION MADE** by Maureen Cranson the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$80,000, to hire a full time Assistant Town Administrator at Grade Level VI. This is a transitional position and is only authorized for one year through June 30, 2021, unless further appropriation is made to fund the position beyond June 30, 2021.

**Majority vote required, motion does not pass as declared by the Moderator**

**MOTION MADE** by Maureen Cranson to turn meeting back over to Amrith Kumar.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 26. Full time Firefighter / Paramedic Position**

**MOTION MADE** by Dave Hurlbut that the Town vote to Transfer from Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation the sum of \$62,000.00 for one (1) additional fulltime daytime Firefighter / Paramedic position currently classified in the Fulltime Firefighters Contract under Appendix "A" – Wages, and be subject to collective bargaining agreements, said sum to be expended by the Fire Chief.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**WITHOUT OBJECTION THE MODERATOR MOVED TO RECESS THE MEETING TO CONFER WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**



**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova to reconsider Article 25. Mr. Sova, Chairman of the Finance Committee explained that the failure of the passage of Article 25 effectively reduced the Town Administrator's salary in the Omnibus Budget passed in Article 1. Article 1 was passed over an hour ago, outside the time allowed by local by-laws for reconsideration.

Jim Gettens, 7 Shady Lane, stated the motion was out of order, and would like to reconsider Article 1.

Town Counsel advised the Town meeting that to go back and reconsider Article 1 would require a vote to suspend the rules of the Local General Bylaw for that Article.

**Motion to reconsider Article 25 withdrawn by Joe Sova**

**MOTION MADE** by Jim Gettens to Suspend the Rules of Town Bylaw 180-10, only for the purpose of reconsidering Article 1.

**Motion passed by 2/3rds as declared by the Moderator**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova to reconsider Article 1 (now that rules are suspended)

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**MOTION MADE** by Joe Sova that the Town vote the Omnibus Budget Article 1 as written in the motion book changing line 167 to reinstate the Town Administrators salary in the Omnibus Budget to \$122,400.00 and delete line 166 for \$80,000 for a total of \$24,280,607.00

**Motion passed as amended by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 27. Amend the Personnel Bylaws**

To see if the Town will vote to amend certain provisions of Sections 1-13 of the Town's Personnel Bylaw as follows, with additional language noted in bold, and deleted language shown as stricken through, and, specifically, to dissolve the previously established but currently vacant Personnel Board and vest all powers and authorities previously vested in the Personnel Board in the Town Administrator acting as Human Resources/Personnel Director (unless otherwise specified); and further to authorize the Town Clerk to make any non-substantive, ministerial revisions to ensure internal consistency and to effectuate the purpose and intent of this Article:

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*Amend Section 1, as follows:*

## **SECTION 1: AUTHORIZATION and DISCLAIMER**

Pursuant to the authority contained in MGL Ch41, Sections 108A and 108C [MGL Ch41:sec 108A and 108C], the Town of Sterling establishes a Personnel Bylaw (this bylaw) that consolidates all provisions pertaining to the administration of its personnel including among other things, the compensation plan, and **assigns responsibility to the Town Administrator, acting as the Human Resources/Personnel Director,** ~~a Personnel Board (“the Board) for the purpose of administering to administer~~ said plans or other provisions of its bylaws pertaining to personnel, determining any questions arising there under, and advising the town in any matters pertaining thereto.

The Classification Plan and/or Compensation Plan or any other provisions of this Bylaw may be amended by vote of the Town at either an Annual or Special Town Meeting. ~~No amendment shall be considered or voted on by Town Meeting unless the proposed amendment has first been considered by the Personnel Board, **unless this requirement is waived by Town Meeting.** The Board, of its own motion, may propose an amendment to the plans, policies or other provisions of this Bylaw based on its findings resulting from its investigations. The Personnel Board shall report its recommendations on any proposed amendment to the Board of Selectmen. Any proposed amendments to the Personnel Bylaw that The Board shall submit any amendment to this Bylaw that has will have a financial impact on the Town shall be submitted to the Finance Committee for their review and comment prior to Town Meeting. The Board shall make its recommendations with regard to any amendment at the Town Meeting at which such amendment is considered.~~

~~The Personnel Board hereinafter referred to as the Board may, at its own discretion, or on the advice of the Appointing Authority (as defined herein), or on the advice of the Town’s Administration, draft and adopt procedures that it believes to be required for the purpose of administering this bylaw and the Personnel practices of the Town. Such procedures shall be enacted by the Personnel Board after:~~

~~A. Conducting a public hearing if required under MGL Ch 30A, Section 2 or MGL Ch 41, Section 108A and 108C~~

~~B. They have been reviewed and approved by a majority of the members of~~

~~the Personnel Board at an open meeting~~

Nothing in any of the Town of Sterling's Personnel Rules, Policies, Procedures or other documents relating to employment with the Town of Sterling ("the Town") creates any express or implied contract or guarantee of continued employment for a specific term. No past practices or procedures, whether oral or written, from any express or implied agreement or contract to continue such practices or procedures. No promises or assurances, whether written or oral, which are contrary to or inconsistent with the limitations set forth in this paragraph create any contract of employment unless: 1) the terms are put in writing, 2) the document is labeled "Contract," 3) the document states the duration of employment, and 4) the document is signed by the Board of Selectmen or Appointing Authority.

Employees of the Town that are not otherwise covered by a collective bargaining agreement, employment agreement, ~~or State Civil Service statutes~~ **or statutory term of employment/appointment** are at-will employees. Either party may terminate the employment relationship at any time with good cause as long as it is not based on a discriminatory motive. The Term "Good Cause" shall include but not be limited to the following: incapacity other than temporary illness, inefficiency, incompetence, insubordination and conduct unbecoming the office.

This Bylaw shall apply to all Town Departments and to all positions of all employees in the service of the Town, whether full or part-time, temporary, seasonal, special, per diem or any other type of employment, other than those positions which are filled by popular election, those under the jurisdiction of the School Committees, those within the Municipal Light Department, and those positions which are covered by separate agreements between any employee or Association of Employees and the Town developed through Collective Bargaining. If any agreement between an employee or Association of Employees and the Town does not address any item addressed in Section ~~10 6~~ B, C, and D, then the provisions of Section ~~10 6~~ B, C, and D shall apply to those employees.

***Amend Section 2, as follows:***

## **~~SECTION 2: PERSONNEL BOARD~~**

### **~~A. MEMBERSHIP~~**

~~There shall be a Personnel Board consisting of five (5) members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the Town Moderator and the Finance Committee,~~

~~each entity having one vote for a total of three (3) votes. The membership of the Board shall be made up of residents of the Town who are neither employees of the Town, nor appointed or elected officials of the Town. Members should have a working knowledge of personnel practices and procedures in a municipal or corporate work setting. All members of said Board shall be residents of the town and shall serve without compensation. Except when an appointment is made to serve the balance of an unexpired term, each member of the Board shall serve for a term of three years. Appointments shall be made in such a fashion that they will expire on June 30<sup>th</sup> of a given year. Each member shall continue to hold office until their successor has been appointed, qualified and sworn in by the Town Clerk, but in no instance for a period of greater than sixty (60) days after their term has expired. Members of the Personnel Board serving upon the effective date of this Bylaw shall serve until the expiration of their respective terms. Upon the expiration of such terms members shall be appointed for successive three-year terms by vote of the Board of Selectmen, the Moderator and the Finance Committee as specified above.~~

~~If a member resigns or a member's office becomes vacant by removal from the Town, or any other cause, their successor shall be appointed for the balance of the unexpired term of such member. The Town Clerk shall have sole authority to determine if a person has fulfilled their oath of office, or moved out of town or a position is otherwise vacant. A member may be removed from the Personnel Board at any time, with or without cause, by vote of the Board of Selectmen, the Moderator and the Finance Committee in the same manner as appointments are made.~~

## **~~B. ORGANIZATION~~**

~~The Personnel Board shall organize annually, as soon as possible after July 1st of each year, at the~~

~~call of the then Chairman, or lacking a Chairman any member of the Board, and shall elect a Chairman and appoint a Secretary from among its members. The Chairman shall hold office until his/her successor has been elected. In the event a vacancy occurs in the office of the Chairman, the~~

~~Personnel Board shall elect a successor Chairman from among its members, such successor to serve until the next organizational meeting of the Personnel Board and until his/her successor has been elected. A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of the Board shall determine the action the Board must take in all matters upon which it is authorized or required to pass under this Bylaw.~~

~~In the event that a bare quorum of the Board only is present, there must be a unanimous vote. A bare quorum of the Board may not enact or amend any existing policy or procedures.~~

## SECTION 2: GENERAL PROVISIONS

### A. ADMINISTRATION

The ~~Board~~ **Human Resources/Personnel Director** shall be responsible for the review and recommendation of all changes to the Town's Personnel Bylaw, and the establishment of all policies pertaining to the provision of human resource services to employees covered by the provisions of this Bylaw that it deems necessary for the proper administration thereof.

### B. PERSONNEL RECORDS

The Human Resources/**Personnel Director** ~~Administrator, as agent of the Personnel Board,~~ shall be responsible for the maintenance of official personnel files for all employees in the service of the Town, other than those under the jurisdiction of the School Committees, or those within the Municipal Light Department, including therein such information as required by law ~~or as deemed desirable by the Personnel Board~~. Said records shall be kept in the office of the Town Treasurer/Collector and shall include all original documentation pertaining to each employee in accordance with applicable state and/or federal regulations. Department heads may maintain files supporting departmental actions. Department Heads shall furnish such information as shall be requested by Human Resources/**Personnel Director** ~~Administrator on behalf of the Personnel Board~~.

Current and/or former Town employees have the right to examine their personnel files pursuant to G.L. c. 149, Sec. 52C. No personnel files may be taken out of the Treasurer/Collector's office without consent of the Human Resources/**Personnel Director** ~~Administrator~~.

The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resources Administrator, as agent of the Personnel Board,~~ **or their designee**, shall provide a copy of the Personnel Bylaw to each new employee and Department Head. The employee shall execute an acknowledgement form indicating receipt of the Bylaw. The original signed acknowledgement shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 149, Sec. 52C, the **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~HR Administrator~~ will notify an employee within (10) days of placing information in an employee's personnel file that is, has been used, or may be

used, to negatively or positively affect an employee's qualification for employment, promotion, transfer, additional compensation or subject to disciplinary action.

### C. AUTHORITY

The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resources Administrator~~, from time to time, will review provisions of this Bylaw and shall recommend any changes or adjustments to the Personnel Bylaw, ~~and the Classification Plan, and/or Compensation Plan for approval by the Personnel Board-Town Meeting.~~ Such reviews shall be made at intervals as the **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resource Administrator or Board~~ deems necessary ~~and, to the extent which the Board considers practicable, shall include all occupational groups in the Classification Plan (Attachment A).~~

~~The Board may employ assistance and incur expenses as it deems necessary, subject to the appropriation of funds therefore.~~

Each year, the **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Personnel Board~~ shall make a recommendation at the Annual Town Meeting for an appropriate compensation adjustment for all employees in the Town through either a "step increase" or a "cost of living adjustment", or some other means.

*No changes to existing Section 3.*

## SECTION 4: CLASSIFICATION PLAN

### A. ADMINISTRATION

The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resource Administrator~~ shall be responsible for the administration of the Classification Plan (the Plan), establishing only such procedures as may be consistent with the policies as established in the Bylaw.

The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resource Administrator~~ shall maintain written descriptions of the jobs or positions in the Plan describing the essential characteristics, requirements and general duties. The descriptions shall not be interpreted as either complete or restrictive and employees shall continue to perform any duties assigned by an employee's superior(s).

**Unless otherwise provided by law, the Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~HR/Personnel Director~~ is responsible for ALL employee matters

relating to Merit, Work Hours, Work Location, Discipline, Termination and any other employee related issue. Boards and Committees will have input, however the final determination will be with the **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~HR/Personnel Director~~.

The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resource Administrator~~ shall, from time to time not to exceed three (3) years, review the wage and salary schedules of all positions subject to the Plan in order to keep informed as to pay rates and policies outside the service of the town, and be in a position to recommend to the Town any action deemed desirable to maintain a fair and equitable (competitive) pay level.

The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resource Administrator~~ shall review the duties of all employees subject to the Plan at intervals of not more than three (3) years. The **Human Resources/Personnel Director** ~~Human Resource Administrator~~ upon receipt of substantiating data may ~~recommend to the Personnel Board for approval~~ **approve** a new position **for addition** to the classification schedule, or reclassify an existing position to a different group, subject to the subsequent ratification of this action by formal amendment of **the relevant Classification or Compensation Plan** ~~this By Law~~ by vote of the Town Meeting. Any change that requires an additional appropriation of funds is subject to the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approval of Town Meeting.

The allocation of a position is based on the application of a Position Appraisal Method consisting of a set of universal evaluation criteria or minimum qualifications that are required to successfully perform the essential functions of a position. Each position is assigned a numerical point value based on the application of degree levels within each of the evaluation criteria; the sum point total will determine which grade level a position is to be classified.

**Any changes to** ~~The Personnel Board shall vote to retain or change~~ the Classification and Compensation Plan **recommended by the Human Resources/Personnel Director** for the forthcoming year **shall be sent to all appointing authorities as well as the Finance Committee and Department Heads** by December 10<sup>th</sup> of each year in conjunction with the development of the Town's Annual Budget, subject to the subsequent ratification of its action by formal amendment of that section of this Bylaw at the next Annual Town Meeting. ~~This vote shall be sent to all appointing authorities as well as the Finance Committee and Department Heads~~

***No changes to the remainder of Section 4.***  
***No changes to Section 5.***

***Existing Section 10 (renumbered Section 6), is amended as follows:***

## **SECTION ~~10~~ 6: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

### **C. VACATION PAY**

Employees will accumulate vacation pay on a monthly basis, on the last day of each full month worked in accordance with the provisions of this section listed below. Regular full time employees are eligible for vacation as follows:

- After completing six (6) months of continuous service, the employee is eligible for six and 2/3 hours of paid vacation at a normal day's pay for each full month of continuous service to the Town from the date of hire.
- After one (1) year and up to a maximum of five (5) years' service, the employee is eligible for six and 2/3 (6 2/3) hours of paid vacation at a normal day's pay for each full month of continuous service provided to the Town, but not to exceed a maximum of eighty (80) hours.
- After five (5) and up to a maximum of fifteen (15) years' service, the employee is eligible for 10 hours of paid vacation at a normal day's pay for each full month of continuous service provided to the Town, but not to exceed a maximum of 120 hours.
- After fifteen (15) years and up to twenty (20) years' service, the employee is eligible for 160 hours of paid vacation earned and paid as above.
- After twenty (20) years' service, the employee is eligible for 200 hours of paid vacation earned and paid as above.

Employees who are eligible for 160 or 200 hours of paid vacation may elect to work no more than one (1) vacation week and receive vacation pay plus their regular straight time pay for that week, but only after prior approval has been received from the employee's Department Head or Board, Committee, ~~Agency~~ or Commission responsible for the employee's Department.

Vacation time shall not be cumulative from year to year except for up to 80 hours which may be held over to be used during the next fiscal year at a time that is mutually agreeable to the employee and their department head.



The choice of vacations shall be on the basis of seniority in the department and approved by the department head. Department heads shall post the vacation schedule annually.

In case of retirement or termination of employment, the employee shall be paid for all accrued vacation time earned up to the termination date. **A negative balance for Vacation must be reimbursed to the town with the last paycheck or arrangements must be made to repay the deficit, unless otherwise prohibited by law.**

#### **D. SICK LEAVE**

Each regular full time employee shall earn sick leave credit with pay at the rate of 10 hours for each month of continuous employment with the Town, to a maximum of 120 hours per fiscal year. The sick leave credit of a regular part-time employee shall be prorated in accordance with the provisions of this section for regular full-time employees. The maximum number of such days of sick leave credit that may be accumulated is one hundred ninety (190) days. Employees will accumulate sick leave on a monthly basis, on the last day of each full month worked and in accordance with the other provisions of this section.

The Office of the Treasurer/Collector is responsible for maintaining records of sick leave days accumulated and used for all eligible employees within the Town and reporting same to the Human Resources Administrator.

The Town at its exclusive discretion, reserves the right to request a written certificate from a Town selected physician, at the cost to the Town, establishing incapacity as a condition of payment of sick leave benefits or for an employee who seeks to return to work after being absent, whether paid or unpaid, to determine the employee's fitness for work.

If an employee uses sick leave for purposes other than legitimate illness or non-working injury as well as in an excessive manner, the employee may, at the sole discretion of the Town, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Payments made under the provisions of this section shall be limited in the case of an employee who is receiving Workers Compensation payments to the difference between the total amount paid to the employee in Workers Compensation and the employee's regular pay. In the event of such payments, the Town may debit the employee's accumulated sick leave by such amounts as it determines to be equitable in relation to such payments.

Only employees who retire in good standing from employment with the Town of Sterling shall be paid ten (10) percent of the value of their unused sick leave, at the time of retirement. It is to be understood that the payment of any amount under this rule will not change the employee's pension benefit.

**In case of termination and a negative balance for Sick time the amount will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck or arrangements must be made to repay the deficit, unless otherwise prohibited by law.**

***Remainder of Section unchanged.***

***Existing Section 12 renumbered as Section 7***

***Existing Section 13 renumbered as Section 8.***

Or take any action in relation thereto.

**Submitted by:** The Board of Selectmen

**Recommendation:** The Board of Selectmen supports this article

**Summary:** The current bylaw refers to a Personnel Board that no longer exists. The updated version replaces the Personnel Board with the HR/Personnel Director or in his/her absence the Town Administrator. It clarifies that employees are supervised by the appropriate departmental person while all personnel issues are centralized with the HR/Personnel Director / Town Administrator.

**MOTION MADE** by Arden Sonnenberg that the Town vote to amend certain provisions of Sections 1-13 of the Town's Personnel Bylaw as printed in the warrant, with additional language noted in bold, and deleted language shown as stricken through, and, specifically, to dissolve the previously established but currently vacant Personnel Board and vest all powers and authorities previously vested in the Personnel Board in the Town Administrator acting as Human Resources/Personnel Director (unless otherwise specified); and further to authorize the Town Clerk to make any non-substantive, ministerial revisions to ensure internal consistency and to effectuate the purpose and intent of this Article.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 28. Join the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project**

**MOTION MADE** by Allen Hoffman that the Town vote to become a member of and participate in the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project at a cost estimate of \$87,000/year pursuant to Chapter 583 of the Acts of 1973, Chapter 40 of the Acts of 1977, and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 252, Section 5A [MGL Ch252:5A] and other applicable sections of said law, subject to an assessment through a reduction in Cherry Sheet revenue in an amount to be determined annually by the District Commissioners, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen and

the Board of Health to enter into all agreements and to execute any and all instruments as may be necessary to affect this vote.

**Motion defeated as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 29. Road Acceptance – Chad Lane**

Motion Made by Patty Page that the Town vote to accept as a public way the roadway known as Chad Lane, as heretofore laid out by the Board of Selectmen and shown on a plan entitled “As-Built Plan, Chad Lane, Sterling, Massachusetts,” dated November 18, 2019, prepared by Whitman & Bingham Associates, LLC, which plan is on file with the Town Clerk, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by gift, purchase, and/or eminent domain the fee to and/or easements in Chad Lane for all purposes for which public ways are used in the Town of Sterling, and any drainage, utility, access, and/or other easements related thereto, all as shown on the plan.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 30. Bylaws and Regulations amendment to change the Board of Selectmen Name - Citizens Petition**

**Name - Citizens Petition**

To see if the Town will vote: to amend the Bylaws and Regulations of the Town of Sterling to change the term "Board of Selectmen" to "Select Board", and to change references to Chairman to Chair, and the words "selectman, selectmen, selectwoman, or selectwomen" with the words "select board member(s)" or "member(s) of the select board" in each and every place they appear in the Town of Sterling General Bylaws and Regulations, Personnel Bylaws and Regulations, and Protective (Zoning) Bylaws and Regulations.

For purposes of these bylaws and Regulations, and for all official business of the Town, the board previously referred to as the Board of Selectmen shall hereinafter be referred to as the Select Board, with individual members to be referred to as "select board member(s)" or "members of the select board(s)", and said Select Board shall have all the powers and duties of a board of selectmen as set forth in the General Laws or any special act applicable to the Town including but not limited to the power to prosecute, compromise or defend suits for or against the Town and employ counsel at any time if, in its judgment, the interest of the Town so require

**Submitted by:** Citizens' petition

**Recommendation:** The Board of Selectmen supports this article

**Summary:** The adoption of gender-neutral pronouns has become prevalent over the past 50 years. We use neutral pronouns more and more in our everyday life. The word “man” is no longer synonymous with “person,” and the use of gender-neutral language is standard practice. Over 30% of Massachusetts municipal boards are using gender-neutral designations with many new towns voting for change this year. The impact is big and the cost is miniscule!

**MOTION MADE** by Arden Sonnenberg that the Town vote to amend the bylaws of the Town of Sterling by deleting the words “Board of Selectmen” or “Selectmen” in each place they appear and inserting in their place “Select Board”, and by adding a new section titled “Select Board”, and further, to authorize the Town Clerk to assign such numbering as is appropriate to bring said bylaw into conformance with the existing codification; said bylaw to take the following form:

**SELECT BOARD**

There shall be a Select Board composed of three (3) members elected for terms of three years each. The Select Board shall have all the powers and duties of a Board of Selectmen for purposes of General Laws and any special acts, bylaws, rules or regulations applicable to the Town of Sterling, including but not limited to the power to prosecute, compromise or defend suits for or against the Town and employ counsel at any time if, in its judgement, the interest of the Town so require. For all official business of the Town, the board previously referred to as the Board of Selectmen shall hereinafter be referred to as the Select Board, with individual members to be referred to as "select board member(s)" or "members of the select board(s)" and board titles referred to as Chair, Vice-Chair, and Clerk.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 31. Veterans Ceremony – Citizens petition**

Motion Made by Charles Morris that the Town vote to require all organizations discharging rifle volleys on Veterans Day or Memorial Day, shall only include veterans as defined under Massachusetts Law, M.G.L. c4, sec. 7, cl 42, for the purpose of discharging rifle fire.

Organizations wishing to include non-veterans in a group or firing detail, for the purpose of discharging weapons on Veterans Day or Memorial Day, shall reimburse the Town of Sterling for all expenses associated or incurred with either event in which non-veterans are included.

**Majority vote required, motion does not pass as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 32. Transfer Portion of 7 Sunset Drive for Purposes of Conveyance**

**MOTION MADE** by Arden Sonnenberg that the Town vote to transfer the care, custody and control of a portion of that property located at 7 Sunset Drive, being Assessor’s Parcel 157-51, described in a deed recorded with the Worcester South District Registry of Deeds in Book 13525, Page 306, as shown on the sketch plan filed with the Town Clerk, from the Board of Selectmen for drainage purposes, and to the Board of Selectmen for general municipal purposes and purposes of conveyance, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to convey said property on such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate, including reserving such easements as the Town may require, and to execute such documents as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of this article.

Amendment made by Dick Sheppard, Sterling Board of Assessors, that no curb cut shall be allowed from this split lot on Sunset Drive. This shall also apply to the rear lot at Pleasant View Drive or any lots on Hilltop Drive. There shall be no attempt to sub-divide the slit lot into smaller sections.

The Moderator noted that this amendment is non-binding.

**Motion to amend passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**Motion on amended article requires 2/3 vote does not pass as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 33. Apply Stabilization Fund to Stabilize the Tax Rate**

**MOTION MADE** by Todd Chapman that the Town vote to transfer \$300,000 from the Stabilization Fund, to stabilize the tax rate.

**Motion passed by 2/3rds as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 34: Annual Town Election**

Motion Made by John Kilcoyne to adjourn the Annual Town Meeting, only to reconvene on Monday June 29, 2020 for the purpose of conducting the Annual Town Election, and then to dissolve.

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

# FY21 OMNIBUS BUDGET

## Level Funded Expenses

(From June 22, 2020 ATM Warrant)

	Account Number	Description	FY21 Dept Request
1		<b>ACCOUNTANT</b>	
2	01135-51100	ACCOUNTANT SALARY	30,877.00
3	01135-57000	ACCOUNTANT EXPENSE	10,961.00
4		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>41,838.00</b>
5		<b>ADA COORDINATOR</b>	
6	01196-51200	ADA COORDINATOR STIPEND	1,500.00
7		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>1,500.00</b>
8		<b>AGRICULTURAL</b>	
9	01177-57000	AGRICULTURAL EXPENSE	750.00
10		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>750.00</b>
11		<b>ANIMAL INSPECTOR</b>	
12	01250-51100	ANIMAL INSPECTOR SALARY	3,400.00
13	01250-57000	ANIMAL INSPECTOR EXPENSE	900.00
14		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>4,300.00</b>
15		<b>ASSESSOR</b>	
16	01141-51100	ASSESSOR STIPEND	4,500.00
17	01141-51200	ASSESSOR WAGES	50,066.00
18	01141-57000	ASSESSOR EXPENSE	79,580.00
19	01142-57000	ASSESSOR REVAL	0.00
20		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>134,146.00</b>
21		<b>AUDIT</b>	
22	01136-57000	AUDIT EXPENSE	21,500.00
23		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>21,500.00</b>
24		<b>BOARD OF HEALTH</b>	
25	01510-51100	BOH STIPEND	309.00
26	01510-51110	BOH SALARY	69,625.00
27	01510-51200	BOH WAGES	62,242.00
28	01510-53000	BOH WACHUSETT HOME HEALTH CARE	0.00
29	01510-53001	BOH MONTACHUSETT PUBLIC HEALTH	3,200.00
30	01510-57000	BOH EXPENSE	5,730.00
31	01510-57001	BOH KIOSK	2,900.00
32	01510-57002	BOH PRINTER/COPIER	655.00
33		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>144,661.00</b>

<b>34</b>		<b>BOARD OF SELECTMEN</b>	
<b>35</b>	01122-51100	SELECTMAN STIPEND	4,500.00
<b>36</b>	01122-57000	SELECTMAN EXPENSE	7,750.00
<b>37</b>	01241-57001	SEALER OF WEIGHT & MEASURES EXPENSE	1,200.00
<b>38</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>13,450.00</b>
<b>39</b>		<b>CONSERVATION</b>	
<b>40</b>	01171-51200	CONSERVATION AGENT WAGES	26,933.00
<b>41</b>	01171-57000	CONSERVATION COMMITTEE EXPENSE	1,000.00
<b>42</b>	01171-57001	CENTRAL MASS STORMWATER COALITION	5,000.00
<b>43</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>32,933.00</b>
<b>44</b>		<b>COUNCIL ON AGING</b>	
<b>45</b>	01540-57000	SENIOR CENTER OPERATIONS	19,112.00
<b>46</b>	01541-51200	COA WAGES	204,969.00
<b>47</b>	01541-53000	COA HOME CARE	400.00
<b>48</b>	01541-53001	COA TITLE VII NUTRITION AND WHEAT	4,300.00
<b>49</b>	01541-57000	COA EXPENSE	16,050.00
<b>50</b>			
<b>51</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>244,831.00</b>
<b>52</b>		<b>CULTURAL COUNCIL</b>	
<b>53</b>	01542-57000	CULTURAL COUNCIL	3,550.00
<b>54</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>3,550.00</b>
<b>55</b>		<b>DPW</b>	
<b>56</b>	01422-51100	DPW SALARY	77,440.00
<b>57</b>	01422-51110	DPW BOARD STIPEND	1,800.00
<b>58</b>	01422-51200	DPW WAGES	659,394.00
<b>59</b>	01422-52000	DPW STREET LIGHTS	16,132.00
<b>60</b>	01422-52700	DPW HYDRANT RENTAL	0.00
<b>61</b>	01422-52900	DPW TRASH PICKUP	620,000.00
<b>62</b>	01422-52901	REGIONAL RECYCLING	4,809.00
<b>63</b>	01422-52902	LANDFILL MONITORING	16,500.00
<b>64</b>	01422-57000	DPW EXPENSE	322,420.00
<b>65</b>	01422-57001	DPW EQUIPMENT LEASE	29,692.00
<b>66</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>1,748,187.00</b>
<b>67</b>		<b>DPW SNOW &amp; ICE</b>	
<b>68</b>	01423-57000	SNOW & ICE EXPENSE	211,000.00
<b>69</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>211,000.00</b>

<b>70</b>		<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>71</b>	01178-57000	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE EXPENSE	27,000.00
<b>72</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>27,000.00</b>
<b>73</b>		<b>EXTENSION SERVICE</b>	
<b>74</b>	01690-57000	EXTENSION SERVICE	510.00
<b>75</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>510.00</b>
<b>76</b>		<b>FACILITIES</b>	
<b>77</b>	01192-51100	FACILITIES SALARY	34,215.00
<b>78</b>	01192-51200	FACILITIES WAGES	24,000.00
<b>79</b>	01192-57000	FACILITIES EXPENSE	96,981.00
<b>80</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>155,196.00</b>
<b>81</b>		<b>FINANCE BOARD</b>	
<b>82</b>	01131-51100	FINANCE BOARD STIPEND	0.00
<b>83</b>	01131-57000	FINANCE BOARD EXPENSE	280.00
<b>84</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>280.00</b>
<b>85</b>		<b>FIRE-EMT</b>	
<b>86</b>	01220-51100	FIRE CHIEF SALARY	112,390.00
<b>87</b>	01220-51200	FIRE WAGES	691,817.00
<b>88</b>	01220-51500	FIRE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STIPEND	10,000.00
<b>89</b>	01220-57000	FIRE EXPENSE	176,500.00
<b>90</b>	01220-57001	FIRE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EXPENSE	1,500.00
<b>91</b>	01220-57002	FIRE EQUIPMENT LEASE	0.00
<b>92</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>992,207.00</b>
<b>93</b>			
<b>94</b>		<b>FIRE-AMBULANCE</b>	
<b>95</b>	01231-51100	AMBULANCE CHIEF SALARY	13,073.00
<b>96</b>	01231-51200	AMBULANCE WAGES	440,810.00
<b>97</b>	01231-57000	AMBULANCE EXPENSE	91,500.00
<b>98</b>	01231-57002	AMBULANCE LEASE	0.00
<b>99</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>545,383.00</b>
<b>100</b>		<b>HISTORICAL COMMISSION</b>	
<b>101</b>	01670-57000	HISTORICAL EXPENSE	2,500.00
<b>102</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>2,500.00</b>
<b>103</b>		<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	
<b>104</b>	01152-57000	HUMAN RESOURCE MERIT	5,000.00
<b>105</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>5,000.00</b>



<b>106</b>		<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>	
<b>107</b>	01155-57000	IT EXPENSE	145,548.00
<b>108</b>			
<b>109</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>145,548.00</b>
<b>110</b>		<b>INSPECTIONAL SERVICES</b>	
<b>111</b>	01241-51100	BUILDING INSPECTOR SALARY	64,541.00
<b>112</b>	01241-51101	INSPECTION WIRE INSP SALARY	0.00
<b>113</b>	01241-51102	INSPECTION PLUMBING INSP SALARY	11,149.00
<b>114</b>	01241-51103	INSPECTON GAS INSP SALARY	6,132.00
<b>115</b>	01241-51200	BUILDING INSPECTOR WAGES	30,769.00
<b>116</b>	01241-57000	INSPECTION EXPENSE	5,500.00
<b>117</b>			
<b>118</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>118,091.00</b>
<b>119</b>		<b>INSURANCE-BENEFITS</b>	
<b>120</b>	01910-59020	INSURANCE-BENEFITS	1,492,766.00
<b>121</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>1,492,766.00</b>
<b>122</b>		<b>LEGAL SERVICES</b>	
<b>123</b>	01151-53000	LEGAL SERVICES	61,000.00
<b>124</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>61,000.00</b>
<b>125</b>		<b>LIBRARY</b>	
<b>126</b>	01610-51100	LIBRARY SALARY	90,797.00
<b>127</b>	01610-51200	LIBRARY WAGES	249,974.00
<b>128</b>	01610-57000	LIBRARY EXPENSE	133,807.00
<b>129</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>474,578.00</b>
<b>130</b>		<b>MEMORIAL AND VETERANS DAY</b>	
<b>131</b>	01699-57000	MEMORIAL AND VETERANS DAY	5,600.00
<b>132</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>5,600.00</b>
<b>133</b>		<b>MODERATOR</b>	
<b>134</b>	01114-51100	MODERATOR STIPEND	500.00
<b>135</b>	01114-57000	MODERATOR EXPENSE	150.00
<b>136</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>650.00</b>
<b>137</b>		<b>OPEN SPACE</b>	
<b>138</b>	01179-57000	OPEN SPACE EXPENSE	1,500.00
<b>139</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>1,500.00</b>
<b>140</b>		<b>PLANNING</b>	
<b>141</b>	01175-51100	PLANNING STIPEND	1,500.00

142	01175-51200	PLANNING WAGES	21,116.00
143	01175-56310	MRPC EXPENSE	2,850.00
144	01175-57000	PLANNING EXPENSE	1,597.00
145		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>27,063.00</b>
146		<b>POLICE</b>	
147	01210-51100	POLICE SALARY	148,885.00
148	01210-51200	POLICE WAGES	1,394,725.00
149	01210-57000	POLICE EXPENSE	105,575.00
150	01210-58500	POLICE CRUISER	52,000.00
151		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>1,701,185.00</b>
152		<b>POLICE-ANIMAL CONTROL</b>	
153	01249-51200	ANIMAL CONTROL WAGES	25,119.00
154	01249-57000	ANIMAL CONTROL EXPENSE	4,000.00
155		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>29,119.00</b>
156		<b>POLICE-DISPATCH</b>	
157	01215-51200	COMMUNICATION WAGES	281,353.00
158	01215-57000	COMMUNICATION EXPENSE	103,397.00
159		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>384,750.00</b>
160		<b>RECREATION</b>	
161	01630-51100	RECREATION SALARY	57,877.00
162	01630-51200	RECREATION WAGES	45,469.00
163	01630-57000	RECREATION EXPENSE	28,100.00
164		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>131,446.00</b>
165		<b>TOWN ADMINISTRATOR</b>	
166	01129-51203	ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SALARY	80,000.00
167	01129-51100	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SALARY	85,680.00
168	01129-51200	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WAGES	58,220.00
169	01129-51201	OPERATIONS MANAGER WAGES	46,314.00
170	01129-51202	TOWN PLANNER SALARY	76,470.00
171	01129-57000	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR EXPENSE	50,475.00
172	01129-57001	COA SENIOR WORKOFF PROGRAM	15,000.00
173	01129-57002	TOWN PLANNER EXPENSE	7,600.00
174		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>419,759.00</b>
175		<b>TOWN CLERK</b>	
176	01161-51100	TOWN CLERK SALARY	64,260.00
177	01161-51200	TOWN CLERK WAGES	44,342.00

\*See Article 1  
as amended

178	01161-52000	TOWN CLERK TRAINING	2,300.00
179	01161-57000	TOWN CLERK EXPENSE	11,000.00
180	01162-51200	ELECTION WAGES	15,480.00
181	01162-57000	ELECTION EXPENSE	14,765.00
182		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>152,147.00</b>
183		<b>TREASURER/COLLECTOR</b>	
184	01145-51100	TREASURER/COLLECTOR SALARY	77,188.00
185	01145-51200	TREASURER/COLLECTOR WAGES	102,068.00
186	01145-57000	TREASURER/COLLECTOR EXPENSE	62,166.00
187		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>241,422.00</b>
188		<b>VETERANS</b>	
189	01543-57000	VETERANS EXPENSE	20,000.00
190	01543-57700	VETERANS BENEFITS	36,000.00
191		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>56,000.00</b>
192		<b>WORC COUNTY RETIREMENT</b>	
193	01910-59060	WORCESTER COUNTY RETIREMENT	933,159.00
194		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>933,159.00</b>
195		<b>ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS</b>	
196	01176-51200	BOARD OF APPEALS WAGES	0.00
197	01176-57000	BOARD OF APPEALS EXPENSE	5,000.00
198		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>5,000.00</b>
199		MUNICIPAL OPERATING BUDGET	<b>10,711,505.00</b>
200			
201		<b>DEBT SERVICE</b>	
202	01710-59000	DEBT - LONG TERM PRINCIPAL	420,000.00
203	01750-59010	DEBT - LONG TERM INTEREST	93,935.00
204		SBAB REIMBURSEMENT	0.00
205	01751-59010	DEBT - SHORT TERM INTEREST	0.00
206		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>513,935.00</b>
207	<b>Article</b>	<b>WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DIST</b>	
208	01300-57000	WACHUSETT RSD MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION	12,089,494.00

<b>209</b>	01300-57001	WACHUSETT RSD ABOVE NET MIN CONTRIBUTION	0.00
<b>210</b>		WRSD VOCATIONAL SCHOOL OUTPLACEMENT (Trans & Tuit)	78,318.00
<b>211</b>		WACHUSETT RSD TRANSPORTATION	0.00
<b>212</b>		WACHUSETT RSD DEBT SERVICE	0.00
<b>213</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>12,167,812.00</b>
<b>214</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>MONTACHUSETT REG. SCHOOL DIST</b>	
<b>215</b>	01301-57000	SCHOOL MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOC TECH	905,635.00
<b>216</b>		DEBT AND INTEREST - BUILDING PROJECT **	0.00
<b>217</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>905,635.00</b>
<b>218</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>OPEB</b>	
<b>219</b>	01910-59060	OPEB	25,000.00
<b>220</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>25,000.00</b>
<b>221</b>	<b>Article</b>	<b>Reserve Fund</b>	
<b>222</b>	01132-56900	RESERVE FUND	0.00
<b>223</b>		<b>Department Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>224</b>			
<b>225</b>		<b>Total Including Schools / OPEB /Resv Fund</b>	<b>24,323,887.00</b>

***END OF 2020 TOWN MEETING MINUTES***

## FINANCIAL REPORTS

### Board of Assessors

#### Fiscal Year 2020 Assessments and Property Tax Revenue Summary

<u>Property Class</u>	<u>Levy %</u>	<u>Valuation by Class</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>
Residential	87.2530	1,030,240,705	16.81	17,318,349.41
Commercial	3.9693	46,867,695	16.81	787,843.68
Industrial	5.0371	59,475,600	16.81	999,785.20
Personal Property	3.7406	44,167,255	16.81	742,450.32
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>100.0000</b>	<b>1,180,751,255</b>		<b>19,848,428.60</b>

### Valuation and Tax History

<u>Fiscal Yr</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Total Valuation</u>	<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>	<u>Change%</u>
2020	16.81	1,180,751,255	3,738	19,848,429	2.078
2019	17.27	1,118,184,473	3,738	19,311,046	4.077
2018	17.54	1,057,836,729	3,736	18,554,456	4.393

### Abstract of Assessments

<u>Property Class Code &amp; Description</u>	<u>Accts</u>	<u>Class Valuation</u>	<u>Avg. Value</u>
101 Residential Single Family	2,540	922,945,100	363,364
102 Residential Condominiums	179	45,000,300	
Miscellaneous Residential	21	7,959,300	
104 Residential Two Family	92	27,276,300	
105 Residential Three Family	6	2,546,900	
111-125 Apartments	8	2,916,500	
130-132 & 106 Vacant Land	356	18,361,200	
300-393 Commercial	73	39,764,400	
400-452 Industrial	108	59,099,600	
501-552 Personal Property	147	44,167,255	
600-821 Chapter 61, 61A, 61B	186	2,923,600	
012-043 Mixed Use Properties	21	7,414,800	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,738</b>	<b>1,180,751,255</b>	
Exempt	272	139,565,600	

### Assessors' Account for Exemptions and Abatements

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY2020</u>	<u>FY2019</u>	<u>FY 2018</u>
Assessors' Overlay	\$120,930.94	\$104,322.01	\$95,894.00
Charges through 6/30	\$77,494.37	\$79,403.02	\$102,165.92
Overlay Balance as of 06/30/2019			\$189,740.59
Potential ATB Liability			\$0.00

### New Growth Revenues

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Added Valuation</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>New Revenue</u>
2020	10,004,172	17.27	172,773
2019	11,296,483	17.54	198,140
2018	18,662,254	18.03	336,480

## **Finance Committee**

The following is the Finance Committee's report and budget recommendation for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020.

As part of the Finance Committee's budget deliberations, the Committee recommended an entire town budget of \$24,604,914, a 2.06% increase over the previous year. This year the budget continued to consolidate the school budgets of both districts, Wachusett Regional and Monty Tech, although they remain as separate warrant articles. We believe that the budget presented was both prudent and fiscally responsible.

One particular item of note is, with the Finance Committee's support, the Town instituted a longevity and merit step increase plan that enables our employees to advance in their respective job grade via steps based on their years of service to the Town. Employees eligible for step increases must achieve satisfactory performance evaluations each year. This plan rewards employees for their job performance and allows the Town to be competitive when filling current and future employment positions. The cost of this plan in fiscal 2020 was budgeted at \$67,291.

Other budget areas to draw your attention to are the following:

- **School District Assessments**

The Wachusett Regional School District increased their overall assessment by 2.99% to \$11,683,458 while the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District increased their assessment by 2.58% to \$835,106.

- **Capital Requests**

After careful consideration and review of capital requests from all departments, the Committee recommended approval of a capital budget of \$1,256,208 to be funded from a combination of our Capital Investment Fund, certified free cash and ambulance receipts. This is consistent with our stated "pay as you go" strategy and goal of minimizing year to year tax bill increases. It is also reflective of our commitment to maintain municipal services, protect town assets, and support capital needs while guarding the town's financial position. Funding the town's capital needs is a challenge each year and the Finance Committee and Capital Committee work collaboratively to meet these needs now and into the future.

- Capital Fund

It was recommended that in order to fund the town's capital budget for FY 2020, a portion of the funds come from the Capital Investment Fund. That amount was \$502,623. These funds were to be used to repair the Butterick building roof and replace windows, improve the 1835 Building septic system and install a fire sprinkler system, and resurface the multi-purpose court at the West Sterling Park. The Capital Fund Committee approved the Finance Committee's request for these funds. The Committees jointly recommended appropriating \$50,000 to the Capital Investment Fund from certified free cash in the coming year. In addition, \$97,467.45 was recommended to be "recaptured" from prior years unused warrant articles and inactive accounts and transferred to Capital. The Capital Investment Fund had a balance of \$3,649,712 as of June 30, 2020.

- Other Post-Employee Benefits (OPEB)

The Town of Sterling provides postemployment medical benefits to town retirees and their covered dependents commonly referred to as OPEB. As such, the liability to fund these benefits in the future is estimated using an actuarial valuation. Based on these calculations, Sterling has a substantial unfunded liability. Funding part of this large and growing liability with current contributions is a prudent step which will strengthen the Town's financial position in the future.

The Finance Committee recommended appropriating \$159,000 to be added to an investment account already established to fund this liability. As of March 31, 2019, the balance in this account was \$468,346.

We would like to thank the voters, departments, boards and committees for their contributions and continued support of our efforts to provide a balanced budget to meet the needs of the town.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Town of Sterling Finance Committee

**TOWN OF STERLING**  
**REPORT OF THE TREASURER/COLLECTOR**  
**TAX COLLECTIONS - December 31, 2020**

<b>Real Estate Taxes</b>	<b>Taxes Committed</b>	<b>Abate/Exempt</b>	<b>Transfer to Tax Title</b>	<b>Collections less Refunds</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Levy of 2021	\$14,701,448.30	\$49,715.02	\$0.00	\$9,651,256.20	\$5,000,477.08
Levy of 2020	\$19,122,567.20	\$77,733.94	\$0.00	\$18,856,503.07	\$188,330.19
Levy of 2019	\$18,634,872.85	\$70,318.75	\$89,517.05	\$18,462,818.52	\$12,218.53
Levy of 2018	\$17,865,191.08	\$89,709.40	\$133,995.40	\$17,641,486.28	\$0.00
Levy of 2017	\$17,113,786.30	\$80,977.28	\$87,155.63	\$16,945,653.39	\$0.00
Levy of 2016	\$16,760,234.35	\$91,773.67	\$90,035.90	\$16,578,424.78	\$0.00
Levy of 2015	\$15,576,819.78	\$55,401.16	\$69,080.96	\$15,452,337.66	\$0.00
Levy of 2014	\$15,005,223.52	\$58,478.46	\$129,228.60	\$14,817,136.53	\$379.93
Levy of 2013	\$14,586,299.93	\$55,500.37	\$124,619.44	\$14,406,180.12	\$0.00
Levy of 2012	\$14,339,236.77	\$59,784.49	\$96,665.40	\$14,182,786.88	\$0.00
Levy of 2011	\$14,077,243.42	\$75,384.60	\$83,838.00	\$13,918,020.82	\$0.00
Levy of 2010	\$14,082,290.52	\$60,062.05	\$68,711.35	\$13,953,517.12	\$0.00
Levy of 2009	\$14,116,679.40	\$51,584.01	\$58,470.21	\$14,006,625.18	\$0.00
Levy of 2008	\$13,461,501.69	\$44,339.99	\$39,432.99	\$13,377,728.71	\$0.00
Levy of 2007	\$12,709,130.84	\$43,202.82	\$30,136.98	\$12,635,791.04	\$0.00
Levy of 2006	\$12,567,052.89	\$52,248.07	\$36,848.81	\$12,477,625.70	\$330.31
Levy of 2005	\$11,416,727.35	\$35,263.94	\$46,155.08	\$11,335,038.39	\$269.94
					<b>\$5,202,005.98</b>

<b>Personal Property Taxes</b>	<b>Taxes Committed</b>	<b>Abate/Exempt</b>	<b>Collections less Refunds</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Levy of 2021	\$358,744.25	\$287.54	\$2,436.37	\$356,020.34
Levy of 2020	\$742,451.56	\$1,146.97	\$739,245.43	\$2,059.16
Levy of 2019	\$727,334.61	\$1,439.36	\$722,772.69	\$3,122.56
Levy of 2018	\$731,389.21	\$3,208.06	\$725,583.01	\$2,598.14
Levy of 2017	\$768,382.98	\$580.53	\$765,208.27	\$2,594.18
Levy of 2016	\$799,941.37	\$1,479.13	\$795,825.96	\$2,636.28
Levy of 2015	\$727,451.88	\$2,182.96	\$722,681.16	\$2,587.76
Levy of 2014	\$722,268.09	\$3,670.85	\$715,969.83	\$2,627.41
Levy of 2013	\$604,838.65	\$8,928.11	\$591,168.34	\$4,742.20
Levy of 2012	\$592,766.33	\$9,140.67	\$583,328.30	\$297.36
Levy of 2011	\$538,892.36	\$10,300.06	\$528,409.80	\$182.50
Levy of 2010	\$455,688.60	\$6,989.49	\$448,331.17	\$367.94
Levy of 2009	\$422,388.42	\$39,637.34	\$382,564.91	\$186.17
Levy of 2008	\$372,158.68	\$5,216.71	\$366,809.99	\$131.98
Levy of 2007	\$307,746.94	\$966.10	\$306,660.55	\$120.29
Levy of 2006	\$301,777.76	\$787.52	\$300,884.55	\$105.69
Levy of 2005	\$352,972.23	\$947.97	\$351,989.08	\$35.18
				<b>\$380,415.14</b>



### TAX COLLECTIONS - December 31, 2020

Motor Vehicle Excise	Taxes Committed	Abate/Exempt	Collections less Refunds	Balance
Levy of 2020	\$1,567,999.90	\$34,281.17	\$1,446,049.41	\$87,669.32
Levy of 2019	\$1,546,649.52	\$40,661.28	\$1,488,333.39	\$17,654.85
Levy of 2018	\$1,503,072.10	\$40,113.79	\$1,458,160.32	\$4,797.99
Levy of 2017	\$1,465,357.67	\$44,288.02	\$1,418,198.98	\$2,870.67
Levy of 2016	\$1,356,733.43	\$35,875.95	\$1,318,347.36	\$2,510.12
Levy of 2015	\$1,280,992.50	\$26,775.89	\$1,251,831.81	\$2,384.80
Levy of 2014	\$1,252,073.05	\$27,581.89	\$1,222,516.58	\$1,974.58
				<b>\$119,862.33</b>
<b>Taxes Liens/Tax Title</b>				<b>\$479,375.44</b>
<b>Tax Foreclosure</b>				<b>\$90,803.71</b>

### DEBT - JUNE 30, 2020

Project	Year	Bond Matures	Rate	Original Bond	FY20 Interest	FY20 Principal	Balance
School Renovation	2006	2/15/2020	4.00%	\$9,365,000.00	\$39,600.00	\$990,000.00	\$0.00
Library Renovation	2011	6/15/2021	3.00%	\$455,000.00	\$3,600.00	\$45,000.00	\$45,000.00
Police & Fire Stations	2011	6/15/2021	3.00%	\$1,580,500.00	\$12,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$150,000.00
Fire Station	2005	5/15/2025	4.00%	\$1,950,000.00	\$23,797.50	\$95,000.00	\$475,000.00
Water Tank Land	2011	6/15/2020	3.00%	\$44,000.00	\$200.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Water Tank	2011	6/15/2021	3.00%	\$798,500.00	\$6,400.00	\$80,000.00	\$80,000.00
Water Disinfecting Plant	2004	2/1/2021	5.25%	\$451,269.00	\$1,750.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
Water Mains	2005	5/15/2025	4.00%	\$660,000.00	\$7,515.00	\$30,000.00	\$180,000.00
Water Well and UV #1	2007	7/15/2027	2.00%	\$806,740.00	\$7,660.50	\$41,352.00	\$362,349.00
Vault	2013	6/15/2020	2.80%	\$205,000.00	\$700.00	\$25,000.00	\$0.00
Fire Truck	2015	4/15/2020	3.00%	\$560,000.00	\$4,400.00	\$110,000.00	\$0.00
Senior Center	2015	4/15/2035	3.00%	\$2,530,000.00	\$71,337.50	\$130,000.00	\$1,880,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$178,960.50</b>	<b>\$1,736,352.00</b>	<b>\$3,207,349.00</b>

## TRUST FUNDS - DECEMBER 31, 2020

ACCOUNT	PRINCIPAL	AVAILABLE FUNDS
	Non-Expendable Funds	Expendable Funds
Jacob Conant - Fuel Fund	\$2,200.00	\$3,563.29
Emily Wilder - Fuel Fund	\$1,500.00	\$2,810.28
Clarissa A. Freeman Fund	\$5,000.00	\$2,814.84
Martha Roper Fund	\$500.00	\$1,224.01
Albert Farwell Fund	\$1,000.00	\$884.40
Henry Stephenson Fund	\$2,000.00	\$4,218.67
Alba Coffin Fund	\$1,000.00	\$1,698.89
TPA Trust for the Needy	\$0.00	\$1,877.29
John Houghton Needy Women	\$52,664.36	\$8,389.54
Butterick Library	\$11,000.00	\$353.06
Eli Kilburn Library	\$3,250.00	\$268.74
Conant Library	\$500.00	\$10.46
Waite Library	\$3,000.00	\$251.58
Putnam Library	\$2,000.00	\$165.75
W C Kendall Library	\$500.00	\$82.11
Charles Place Library	\$2,450.00	\$213.33
Edward Conant Library	\$1,200.00	\$130.16
Madaline Miller Library	\$1,000.00	\$85.37
Helen Houghton Library	\$5,726.87	\$219.78
June Williams Library	\$76,198.95	\$3,116.61
Allen Library	\$0.00	\$260,009.58
Flower Fund	\$4,530.00	\$6,435.69
Eli Kilburn Park Fund	\$1,300.00	\$1,873.20
Fannie Stevenson Park Fund	\$1,000.00	\$1,751.24
Perpetual Care	\$260,181.58	\$38,421.11
Florence Houghton Tree	\$3,434.46	\$5,023.89
Rosamond D. Fanning Scholarship	\$1,000.00	\$235.14
Butterick School Fund	\$10,000.00	\$498.94
Conant High School Scholarship	\$15,000.00	\$689.01
Iacobucci Scholarship	\$5,300.00	\$1,075.44
Maria Houghton Scholarship	\$52,664.36	\$1,588.70
Wachusett Area EMS	\$0.00	\$170,450.92
Cultural Council	\$0.00	\$6,221.50
George & Mary Gibbs Recreation	\$5,000.00	\$4,661.57
Conservation	\$0.00	\$9,219.68
Chocksett Crossing	\$0.00	\$41,607.54
OPEB	\$0.00	\$713,533.60
General Fund	\$0.00	\$956,413.13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$532,100.58</b>	<b>\$2,252,088.04</b>

### CAPITAL & STABILIZATION FUNDS -December 31, 2020

Stabilization Fund	\$600,078.76
Capital Stabilization Fund	\$3,459,096.08
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,059,174.84</b>

## BOARD, COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS



# Town of Sterling

### ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

135 Leominster Rd., Sterling, MA 01564

Phone: 978-422-7331

In 2020, the Town of Sterling had just under 400 animal control calls come in through our dispatch center. This total does not include follow up phone calls to residents for unlicensed dogs or any other necessary phone calls.

The following statistics represent the incidents that I, as Animal Control Officer, was involved in throughout this past year:

Dogs at Large.....	110
Nuisance .....	29
Hit Dogs/Cats by Vehicles .....	4
Feral/Stray Cats .....	30
Dog/Cat Bites Sterling residents.....	19
Farm Animal Calls.....	18
Wildlife Calls.....	133 (35 more than 2019)
Dead Animals Picked Up.....	5
General questions .....	14
Court Cases .....	0

The Town of Sterling licensed 1470 dogs in 2020, which is down from the 1550 dogs licensed in 2019. The COVID-19 Pandemic is believed to be the reason for this decrease. One of the issues caused by the pandemic was expired rabies vaccinations, as veterinarians were limiting the number of clients in their facilities. Veterinarians were also booking appointments two or three months out for clients. Without updated rabies certificates, dogs could not be licensed by law. The Town of Sterling extended the licensing deadline from April 15th to the end of June before late fees and citations would be issued. Numerous residents were laid off from their jobs, causing financial hardship which I tried to accommodate. However, some citations were issued near the end of the year (November/December), in an effort to get the remaining unlicensed dogs licensed for 2020.

Over the past several years, the Town of Sterling has offered two rabies clinics per year, one in the spring and one in the fall, at the VCA Sterling Animal Hospital. These clinics are open to all towns and are held indoors from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Both clinics have been very successful and both will continue on a yearly basis. In October of 2020, we held our first rabies clinic outdoors from 12:30 to 3:00pm, due to the state guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic. The rabies clinic went very well, administering a total of 50 Rabies shots without any problems. In March of 2021 we will hold our spring rabies clinic, also outside due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, I will continue to assist the residents of Sterling in any way I can to help them understand the animal control by-laws. I also hope to get more dogs licensed in 2021 before the April 15th deadline. I plan on achieving this goal by doing even more advertising than I usually do, sending out more press releases and exploring the use of social media. Having more licensed dogs in Sterling is helpful in an emergency situation. During a crisis, if a dog is licensed and wearing its ID tag, it is much easier to obtain important information about the animal. Another method that helps in emergencies is having more animals with microchips. Animals can get lost when there is an emergency so having an animal's microchip number makes it easier for me to locate the owner.

On October 4, 2017, I passed the Massachusetts Animal Fund Animal Control Officer Core Competencies Certification Course in Chelmsford Massachusetts. This three-day course covered topics from state laws to hands on training. In 2012 the law was passed that all animal control officers must be certified by the state of Massachusetts. In order to keep that certification, other courses are required to be taken during each calendar year totaling a certain number of credits.

In 2020, to keep my certification, I attended webinars, in place of in-person courses because of the COVID-19 pandemic. My original certification was in May 2005 through the Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts. My second certification was in 2007 through the National Animal Control Officer Association. The National Animal Control Association course was 40 hours, and the Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts course was 96 hours, providing me with 136 hours of educational and beneficial information.

On October 4, 2012 I attended a seminar at Tufts Veterinary School of Medicine in North Grafton pertaining to the changes to chapter 140 (state law) for animal control officers. It was an all-day seminar and I was granted a diploma. On October 16, 2014, I took a training course through Central Massachusetts Disaster Response Team (CMDART). This means that I am trained to respond to a man-made or natural disaster

in Sterling/Central Massachusetts. We also had a shelter simulation at the First Church in Sterling on October 19, 2014 which went very well. In 2016, I took a few different courses pertaining to large animals. This training showed me how to handle a horse, cow or any other large animal that goes down.

A goal I have for 2021 is to take additional seminars and courses throughout the year to improve my education, which will not only be beneficial to me but will benefit the Town of Sterling as well.

I want to thank all the Veterinarians and Staff at VCA Sterling Animal Hospital for all their support and help with these rabies/microchip clinics. I would also like to thank the following town departments for their assistance and support throughout the year: The Town Clerk's office, The Sterling Police Department and Dispatchers, The Fire Department, The Animal Control Advisory Board, The Board of Health, The Light Department, DPW, and all other Town Departments. I look forward to being your Animal Control Officer for 2021, making positive changes to the town of Sterling's animal community.

Respectfully submitted,

Louis Massa  
Animal Control Officer  
Town of Sterling

## **Town of Sterling 2020 Annual Report Board of Health**

Massachusetts Boards of Health are responsible and have statutory obligations under Mass General Laws, for state and local regulations, disease prevention and control, health and environmental protection, and promoting a healthy community. The main purpose of the Board of Health (BOH) has been to enforce Title 5 of the State Environmental Code, which is the minimum standard for the design and installation of subsurface disposal systems for sanitary sewage in the Town of Sterling. In addition, the Sterling Board of Health has issued supplemental regulations to the Title 5 Code (Sterling Board of Health Subsurface Disposal Regulations) as well as to local Well Regulations. The intent of these regulations is to protect and improve the public health and welfare of the citizens.

The Sterling Board of Health consists of a three-member board that meets the second Thursday of each month in the Butterick Municipal Office Building at 1 Park Street. The Department consists of the Health Agent, David Favreau and the Associate Health Agent, Kathleen Nickerson who, between them, handle the day-to-day activities. Additionally, Louis Massa performs the duties of the Animal Inspector, Robert Moore is an additional Food and Septic Inspector and Elaine Heller manages the Board Meeting Minutes. Everyone may be reached through the BOH office at 978-422-8111 X2305.

In January 2020, Donna Clark, Chairperson, resigned for personal reasons. Cathie Martin was appointed as interim Chairperson. Thanks go out to Donna for her Service from May 2011.

In 2020, all operations of the Sterling Board of Health were carried out as required. Results from all permits and licenses issued include the witnessing of 70 percolation tests, 140 deep hole tests (soil testing), 131 Title 5 inspections, 60 food establishment inspections, 1 pool inspection, 2 camp inspections, 10 samples taken from the public beach for water testing and inspections, etc. Animal inspections in 2020 associated to rabies consisted of 47 (12 cats and 35 dogs) quarantines for possible rabies...all negative; and no barn inspections due to Covid19 but there were no issues in 2020 with stables. In addition, the BOH is also responsible for responding to nuisance complaints and housing complaints that amounted to 40 complaints in 2020.

Actual Permits/Licenses issued by the Board of Health for 2020 were Camp Permits 2; Septic Construction Permits 71; Food Establishment Permits 32; Stable Permits 29; Funeral Home Permit 1; Septic Hauler Licenses 14; Septic Installer Licenses 46; Pool Permits 1; and Private Well Permits 3.

With the Pandemic of Covid19 upon us, there were many more complaints (about 100) pertaining to the virus along with a corresponding number of questions regarding the guidelines put out by the State of Massachusetts and how they were interpreted. In addition, the BOH is working diligently through the State to become a distribution clinic for the Town of Sterling.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Public Health Emergency Preparedness is a major part of the Board's responsibilities, working alongside the Fire Department, the Police Department and DPW to be prepared for emergency situations, which have a health-related component. There were a number of related activities in 2020:

- The Board of Health is host to Massachusetts Department of Public Health regional assets: a satellite phone for emergency communications and an AM Advisory Radio Station. The latter is housed in the Emergency Operations Center at the Fire Station. This equipment is made available if requested by other local boards of health.
  - The satellite phone capability is tested quarterly.
  - The AM Advisory Radio station is tested as well. It can be used to transmit emergency or advisory information to the public during emergency or public safety incidents. It broadcasts on AM radio channel 1670 (MHz).
- The Sterling Board of Health has a cache of pet crates and a pet-shelter set-up kit from the PHEP Coalition (Public Health Emergency Preparedness). The supplies are housed with the Sterling Fire Department and can be used when an emergency pet shelter is needed near a human shelter. Details of the cache have been shared with the Animal Control Officer and Animal Control Advisory Board.
- Sterling public health volunteers participated in deployment call-down drills with the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps, operated out of Hubbardston and the Worcester Regional Medical Reserve Corps out of Worcester.
- The Wachusett Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) operates out of Hubbardston and serves 17 communities in Northeastern Central Massachusetts. WMRC

volunteers serve a vital role by assisting their communities with ongoing public health needs. This is accomplished through community health profiles that identify needs, developing educational programs, providing screening clinics and working with the local health officials as a resource for public health initiatives that they may target as important to their specific community. The role of the healthcare community in disaster preparation is to identify resources applicable to physical, social and psychological effects of a disaster, to identify population groups that are at the greatest risk during a disaster, to provide disaster education in advance of the event, and to take responsibility for the health of the community following a disaster. Part of our role in disaster planning is to support community disaster planning, assist in determining community health hazards, and assist to determine existing measures and resources that aid and reduce the impact of a given hazard. The WMRC members are not the planners, they are a resource for the planners with volunteers who have been screened for skills and credentialed per MRC guidelines.

Health professionals (current, retired, or otherwise employed) and others with backgrounds such as clerical, childcare, legal, accounting, clergy are invited to join our MRC to use their skills in many areas such as Clinical Medical Services, Counseling/Social Services, Education, Food and Board Services, Financial Assistance, Administration, Advisory Boards, and as a Legal Consultants to help the organization to grow and shape its future to meet the needs of the communities of north Worcester County.

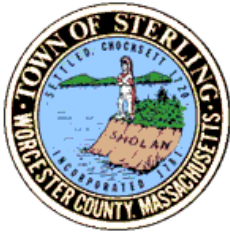
- Some staff, board members, and volunteers participated in the following events, trainings and exercises:
  - Participate in monthly meetings of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition Steering Committee and serve on ad hoc committees.
  - Participant in organizational meetings of Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps
  - Because of the COVID-19 pandemic in-person courses were not held:
- Flu shots were provided by CVS at the Senior Center for 148 seniors/employees and public safety personnel.
- The Board of Health conducted a drive-through drill to prepare for a clinic event that requires a drive-through scenario. Photo is on the next page.





*November 2020: Drive-thru vaccination drill at Houghton School parking lot. Participants include Sterling Board of Health, Sterling Fire Department, Sterling Police Department, various West Boylston agencies and boards, members of Community Emergency Response Team and Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps. Planners from the Region 2 Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition observed our arrangements. Photo by Jamie Terry*

Sterling Board of Health



# **Town of Sterling**

## **Conservation Commission**

1 Park St, Butterick Municipal Bldg- Room 207

Sterling Massachusetts 01564

Tel 978 422 8111 ext 2321

Email [mmarro@stering-ma.gov](mailto:mmarro@stering-ma.gov)

### **Annual Report For 2020**

Respectfully Submitted By: Barbara Roberti, Michael Pineo, Sue Valentine, Steve Pavlowich, Scott Michalak, Connor Emsley, Brianna Smith, Christopher O'Neill, associate member, and Matthew S. Marro as Agent

The Sterling Conservation Commission is a seven-member municipal authority dedicated to the protection of Sterling's Wetlands and other natural resources. The Commission enforces the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act MGL. Ch 131 s 40 as amended. The Commission processed Notices of Intent, request for determinations as well as pursued enforcement and continued its efforts on storm water regulation. The onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic has presented challenges to serving the public, however, the commission has implemented emergency procedures to continue to serve the public in a seamless manner.

The Commission also was active on other agencies as well with members serving on the Earth Removal Board, The Open Space and Recreation Committee and the Chapter 40 B review Committee. The Commission works hand in hand with the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Commission has provided technical assistance with the Planning Board in regulation review.

The Commission's office agent also conducted site inspections for building permit applications and compliance inspections for existing conservation permits. The agent is also providing technical assistance in grant applications and implementations of awarded grants and is implementing an awarded grant for an accessible trail and the placement of accessible picnic tables at Passive and active recreational facilities throughout the town of Sterling.

The Conservation Commission, in 2020, continues it's planning for the implementation of a trails system to promote the use of the land in a manner consistent with the goals of

open space and recreation and is pursuing a second phase of trails work in the Swett Hill/Hall Ave area.

The Commission has enacted prior forest stewardship planning with the goal of managing conservation-controlled forest land for ecosystem health and examination as a sustainable source of some revenue via Timber harvesting. Planning and bidding for lumber management at the Commission property at 19 rear Hardscrabble Road, Hall Ave and Park Street due to be implemented for calendar year 2021. This has been facilitated by the retention of Gary Gouldrup, certified forester to aid the commission in planning and bidding. The Park Street area was severely damaged during the ice storm of 2008 and the harvesting will also result in clean-up of storm damage and re-establishment and enhancement of the trail network.

The Commission looks forward to another productive year in working towards the continued implementation of the open space plan and the implementation of its recently completed forest stewardship plan.

## **Council on Aging 2020 Annual Report**

2020 was the year of the pandemic. It was also the year we found new ways to remain true to our mission to maintain the health and well-being of the Sterling seniors and to assist them in maintaining their independence.

On March 16th, we suspended all recreational and social programming and focused on providing essential services to our population. These services included meals on wheels, home delivered and grab & go meals, grocery shopping, pharmacy pickups, toilet paper deliveries, check in calls, transportation services and outreach services. Our Senior Center was always staffed and a live person always answered our phone.

Outreach services were complicated by the inability to conduct the usual home visits and office visits. We were concerned about the isolation, especially for our more vulnerable and those with dementia and their caregivers. We were concerned about unmet needs. Staff and volunteers went to work calling all seniors 70 and above and younger seniors who may have needed assistance. By the end of the year, 1170 seniors were provided with outreach services that included well checks, telephone assurance, application assistance, case management, home care referrals, health benefit counseling, medical equipment loans, assistance with food pantry, SNAP benefits, fuel assistance and more.

The Massachusetts stay at home advisory for older adults continued through June. By July, the Senior Center began outside exercise programs at Peg's Pond and social / recreational programming on the covered patio. By limiting the number of participants and strict adherence to mask wearing, social distancing, COVID screening of participants and good hand hygiene, these activities continued safely through the end



of October. Plans were made to transition programming indoors, but COVID transmission numbers soared through the fall. Essential services such as the Elder Keep Well Clinic and Foot Care Clinic continued indoors. All exercise, recreational and social programming continued on remote platforms or was suspended for the winter. 935 seniors participated in our programming in 2020.

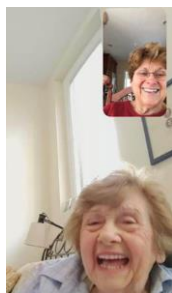
To the extent possible, the Senior Center sought to recreate our traditional events with COVID restrictions. Muffin Mondays at the Center became an outreach program to bring needed socialization and fun to seniors at their doorsteps. Traditional dinners became grab and go meals serving more than we could ever serve inside! Our annual classic car



show became a rolling rally featuring over 50 classic cars cheered on by spectators who lined the streets. Our flu clinic became a drive-through clinic with the assistance of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) monitoring traffic flow. Our Halloween party became a drive-through event with a



no-touch candy chute. Our holiday concerts were taped and played on SLCT. We ended the year with a New Year's Eve appetizer grab and go.



The Senior Center was keenly aware of the vast divergence of technology interest and abilities within our population. Zoom, online grocery orders, pharmaceuticals by mail order were new and necessary options for many. Family, community and Senior Center support provided the tools to help interested seniors navigate these platforms. The Center recognized the segment that did not embrace this technology, and utilized phone contact and print media through our newsletter to provide vital information.

Our volunteers have always been the backbone of our organization and this year was no exception. 115 individuals provided over 5300 hours of service in the kitchen, delivering meals on wheels, delivering our



home cooked lunches, answering our phones, and assisting with events, friendly phone visiting and programs. When masks were recommended, our volunteers cut and sewed and found alternatives for hard-to-find elastic. Masks for men, women and children were donated and distributed at a fever pitch. The Senior Center extends a heartfelt thank you to all of the volunteers who participated this year. We would like to give special recognition to those in the kitchen where physical distancing was challenging.



The COA/MART accessible vans operated daily Monday through Friday throughout the year utilizing strict COVID sanitation and screening procedures. 1878 rides were provided in 2020 primarily to medical appointments, grocery stores and pharmacies. With the permission of MART, vans were also used to transport goods such as food pantry, meals, pharmacy items, groceries and durable medical equipment. Our electric car was also used to deliver meals and goods.

The COA Board worked with the Director to support strong COVID safety guidelines throughout the year. The support, recommendations, and guidance of the Board was invaluable in determining how to move forward each month. Although the Friends of Sterling Seniors (FOSS) were stymied in their fundraising efforts due to COVID, they continued to support the Senior Center. Gracious contributions allowed them to fund some programming as well as several of the grab and go efforts such as the Veterans Day Luncheon.

In addition to the program services already mentioned, the following programming was also offered during March - December of 2020:

Exercise: Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, Line Dancing, Senior Strong, Going Steady Balance Class, Pickleball.



Health Promotion: Elder Keep Well Clinic, Flu Clinic, Foot Care Clinic, SHINE Counseling, Durable Medical Equipment Loans, Parkinson's Support Group, Caregiver's Support Group.

Nutritional Support: Meals on Wheels, Home Delivery and Grab and Go Options for Congregate Lunch for Those Needing Assistance with Food Preparation, Special Event Grab and Go's, Food Pantry Delivery, Grocery Shopping Assistance, Free Pepperidge Farm Bread Pickup, Application Assistance for SNAP and Food Pantry.

Recreational / Social / Educational Programs: Bingo, Knitting and Crocheting, Armchair Travel, Dull Men's Club, History Club, Book Club, Ukulele Club, Art Classes.

Newsletter: 12-page monthly color publication was mailed or emailed to all Sterling Seniors on a monthly basis. In April a one-page flyer was substituted to provide timely, print information.

The Council on Aging / Senior Center would like to thank all the various organizations and businesses that partnered with us throughout the year: Sterling DPW, Sterling Fire Department, Sterling Police Department, Conant Library, Recreation Department, Board of Health, FOSS, Wachusett Rotary, Veterans' Services, Grange, Garden Club, Sew What Club. The Center would also like to thank all our local farmers, big and small, who donated fresh produce and more throughout the growing season, and all the residents who generously gave donations to support our meals program.

In closing, the Senior Center was the recipient of incredible support from too many to mention! We are extremely grateful and hope that we have demonstrated our gratitude in the way we have served our community.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Veronica Buckley, Director  
Sterling Senior Center



**Sterling Cultural Council**  
**One Park Street**  
**Sterling, MA 01564**

*Where Art & Culture Meet the Community*

## **Annual Report**

The Sterling LCC strives to fund applications which will bring cultural events to as many residents of Sterling as possible. To this end, the council attempts to fund a broad spectrum of applications which appeal to people of different ages and interests. No applications to the Sterling LCC for individual performances or events will be considered if the applicant has not contacted a local organization who agrees to sponsor the event. A letter of support from a local sponsor must be included in the application.

The Sterling Cultural Council (SCC) is the local extension of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) and is responsible for administering grants to fund cultural activities that benefit Sterling and local residents. The SCC is comprised of 7 members appointed by the Select Board of Sterling. In the past, the majority of the Council's responsibilities were accomplished between December and January. The Sterling Cultural Council meets and operates within the guidelines established by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

This will be modified this year because of COVID. We are awaiting further instructions from the MCC. For the year 2021, we have not received any Grant Applications to date (the deadline date has been extended to 14 December 2020); the funding from the State is unknown and the Town of Sterling contribution. As a rule, total funding does not meet the need for full funding of the programs. We were able to support the Sterling requests, but not all.

We have consistently received applications from: The Conant Public Library, Sterling Senior Center, Sterling Recreation Department, Sterling Community Theater, F. G. Houghton Elementary School.... in past years. All of these organizations provide Sterling residents, of all ages, with the opportunity to experience the arts; music, theater, lectures, art exhibits, etc. In addition to these organizations, we also received applications from other towns that may benefit Sterling residents as well as surrounding towns.

This year it is our intention to add additional events to further boost the interest in the Arts in our community.

Respectfully submitted: Rosanne Mapp, Chair; Diane Ulmer-Pedersen, Secretary; Peg Spaulding, Treasurer; Beth Stephenson, Member; Sarah Jordan, member; Patricia Ward, Member; Judith Doherty, Member



## **Department of Public Works**

**We herewith submit our 2020 annual report of the Department of Public Works.**

**HIGHWAY** – Town vehicle repairs, roadside cleanups, patching, sweeping, brush cutting, drainage maintenance, plowing and sanding was performed during the year as our budget allowed. If you know of a particularly serious maintenance situation, please call the Department of Public Works at (978) 422-6767.

**CEMETERIES** – There were 24 new lots sold and 28 burials in 2020. Normal maintenance as required was performed during the year. Brush and dangerous tree removal continued.

**PARKS** – All athletic fields were maintained.

We would also like people to know that there is a permanent basketball court and volleyball court at Sholan Park. You must bring your own basketball and volleyballs to use these facilities.

**STICKERS FOR SHOLAN PARK** – Any resident wishing to use this facility **must** stop by the Recreation Department and pick up a sticker or permit. They will only be available at the Recreation Department during their hours of operation. You will need your car registration and if you have a leased car, proof of residency.

**SANITATION** – Trash collection went well, with few complaints. We are currently picking up trash at well over 600 households each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. A reminder to the residents, if your pick up day falls on a holiday or is cancelled due to a snow storm, all pick ups will be delayed by one day. **Please refer to your trash and recycling information brochure mailed to your residence for the holiday schedule.** If you have any problems with your pick up please contact Casella Waste System at 1-888-532-2735.

**RECYCLING** – The drop-off recycling center at The Department of Public Works closed permanently July 1, 2015. Residents are encouraged to utilize the Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycle Center listed below.

**RECYCLING – Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycle Center –** Location is 131 Raymond Huntington Highway, West Boylston, MA. P.O. Box 593, Holden, MA 01520 For hours/days of operation please refer to Wachusettearthday.org site or call 978-464-2854.

On July 1, 1999, we began a curbside recycling program. It has been moderately successful. We strongly encourage all residents to utilize this service because doing so saves the Town a significant amount of money in tipping fees.

If you have any questions on recycling, stop by or contact the Department of Public Works Office at (978) 422-6767 Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**WATER** – Total Water Sales: \$ 1,173,004.35

There were 20 new services added this year making a total of 2454 customers who are presently being served.

**TREES** – Normal maintenance was performed during the year, taking down dead or dying trees and trimming as our budget allowed. If you have a roadside tree that may need attention, please let us know.

In closing, we would like to thank the staff of this department for their efforts towards making the town a safer and better place to live.

Chairman, Gregg Aubin

Vice Chairman, Deane Day

Clerk, Blaine Bershad

Paul Lyons, Superintendent

## **Sterling Economic Development Committee**

As with just about every Board, Committee and Town department the year 2020 was a challenging journey for the Economic Development Committee.

The Committee's mission, when formed in 2012, was to seek and attract new businesses. The intent was to include commercial, industrial as well as agricultural. The goal was, and still is, not just to attract new but support and retain existing entities.

Limited outreach to existing businesses had been possible. However, we managed to eke in one more business forum before all 'in person' activities were brought to a halt in March. Several Town departments participated in the forum. Representatives from several businesses were in attendance. Questions, as well as suggestions, were fielded by members of the Building, Zoning, Master Plan and Planning Board.

Consequently, another look at Zoning issues became a priority. The EDC worked closely with our Town Planner to continuously review, revise existing zoning by laws to be presented to the taxpayers. We carefully discussed and re-evaluated those that may be potential impediments to attracting new business.

In particular, we are looking to accurately define the aquifer in the Route 12, Chocksett and Pratts Junction Road area. Not having this aquifer more appropriately defined has limited business to what we deem, our premier Industrial Area.

Our efforts to energize our business community continued, though in somewhat paltry fashion due to COVID 19. That being said we remain committed to:

- advocating for Sterling and its assets which we highlighted in a brochure
- promoting existing businesses and their commitment to Sterling with a recognition program
- highlighting properties to the proper authorities for nuisance violations as well as potential health hazards
- soliciting new business to fill our downtown properties
- soliciting new business for our industrial areas
- supporting a more robust Farmers Market
- working with the Master Plan Committee to complete the Town's antiquated plan

The Committee believes the ambiance and appearance of the Town itself is important when attracting, not just business, but the families those businesses may bring as well.

To that end we involved ourselves in several potential community enhancements.

- we continue to support the efforts for our Downtown Revitalization
- 'when deemed safe, the EDC will again support 'Sterling Clean Up Day' which is an opportunity for all to show their pride in the Town. Trash bags, gloves, signage and maps will be provided to all that would aid and abet in the effort.
- when deemed safe to gather, the committee will support another day/weekend to 'Celebrate Sterling' it's businesses and assets.
- with the idea that our newly renovated 1835 building could be a revenue source as well as a cultural attraction, the EDC financially supported the replacement of flooring on its' first floor.
- Beach Beautification at Sholan Park continues to be in the works. Funding at the 2020 Town Meeting allowed for designs for the 'first step' drainage issue. When complete we can move forward with rehabilitation of this gem with grant monies from the State.
- When speaking of 'beautification' we would be remiss if we didn't highlight some of our blights. As a Committee we gathered and revisited a list of abandoned, dilapidated properties and encouraged our Zoning Enforcement Officer to seek remedies. There was some success but more work needs to be done.

As a Committee we are more than appreciative of the funding the taxpayers have afforded us. Fortunately, we have a Town Planner that has been diligent in attaining grants for all that we do, and intend to do, in the future.

As we move forward, we anticipate needing 'matching funds' for some of those grants. However, with the current economic trends we will be reducing our budget for the 2022 fiscal year. We are adopting a 'tightening of the belt' mentality for the time being just as our businesses have had to do.

For Sterling to have a robust economic base we need to continue to support and recognize all of our businesses in industrial, commercial and agriculture arenas.

Let's keep them in Sterling and in business!

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Patacchiola chairman  
Michael Pineo vice chair  
Keith Cordial treasurer

Richard Maki member  
Paul Cathcart member  
Maureen Cranson BOS Rep.

## **The Sterling Fair Committee**

For the Sterling Fair Committee, 2020 was the year of 'No Fair'. Unfortunately, due to the Covid pandemic, we had to cancel the 2020 Sterling Fair. This was a very difficult decision, and a decision that caused a lot of disappointment and some tears for the Sterling Fair Committee. However, the hard-working volunteers that make up the Fair Committee did not just give up; instead they decided to sell buttons and t-shirts and hold a 'virtual' Fair.

The buttons and t-shirts for 2020 had a theme of a lamb and a piglet wearing face masks, and the masks were inscribed with the words "No Fair 2020". Underneath the lamb and piglet were the words "See You In 2021". These buttons and t-shirts were sold with great success at the Sterling Farmer's Market, the Sterling Recreation Department's Town Concerts, and at local businesses. We owe much gratitude to the Fair Committee members who spent many hours selling these items.

The 2020 virtual Sterling Fair was held on the weekend that would have been the normal Fair, and many youths in the community showcased their arts and crafts via the Sterling Fair's website. This virtual Fair was a tremendous success with many great entries. Again, we owe much gratitude to the Fair Committee members who spent many hours making the virtual Fair triumphant.

Our buttons and t-shirts said, "See You In 2021", and that is what the Sterling Fair Committee is hoping – to see all of you at our 2021 Sterling Fair. Planning is well underway for 2021, and we are hoping that we will be able to safely hold the Fair. As always, we welcome anyone who would like to join our all-volunteer committee. We have needs for volunteers during the weekend of the Fair and year-round. If interested, please contact us at [www.sterlingfair.org](http://www.sterlingfair.org)

Respectfully submitted,

*Doug Downey*  
Sterling Fair Committee Chair

**Annual Report for 2020**  
**Sterling Fire Department & Fire Department Ambulance**  
**Sterling Emergency Management Agency**

I am pleased to submit the annual report for the Sterling Fire Department and Sterling Emergency Management Agency for calendar year 2020.

**The Department**

The Sterling Fire Department is a combination department with both fulltime and on-call personnel. Currently the department has eight fulltime personnel including the fire chief, an administrative assistant who manages the office, ambulance billing, incident reporting and scheduling inspections. We have a fire prevention and code enforcement lieutenant who works weekdays, four firefighter / paramedics who work alternating 24-hour shifts and a firefighter / paramedic that works four 12-hour day shifts. This position was added in August 2020. In addition to our fulltime staff, there are thirty-two on-call and per-diem personnel that provide response to the community throughout the year based on their availability with job, school, and family commitments.

We operate out of a single fire station built in 2005, located in the center of town. Our response apparatus includes; a command vehicles, two engines, one aerial ladder, one rescue, two advanced life support ambulances, one paramedic intercept vehicle, three forestry trucks, a boat, and three support trailers for hazardous materials, off road ATV, and emergency management response. We also have members that respond as part of the Fire District Regional Dive Team and Technical Rescue Response Team. Sterling is a member of Mutual Aid Fire District 8 which encompasses 33 cities and towns within Central Massachusetts.

**Mission Statement**

The Sterling Fire Department is committed to providing the highest level of public safety services for our community. We protect lives and property of our residents and visitors through fire suppression, emergency medical response, disaster management, fire prevention and public education.

**Vision Statement**

Deliver a quality, high level service to our customers. Promote the personal and professional growth of our members. Minimize the impact of loss through our

prevention efforts including; inspections, code enforcement and pre-fire planning. Provide public safety education to our community and promote the health and safety of our citizens. Work seamlessly with our public safety partners.

### **Emergency and Service Calls**

Fire Department personnel responded to a total of 1,793 incidents (*calls for service*) in calendar year 2020. This was an increase of 307 incidents compared to 2019. Of this, 1,246 incidents were medical emergencies (ambulance only), and 547 incidents were fire/service-related incidents. The department responds to a variety of incidents including, medical emergencies, alarm investigations, brush fires, carbon monoxide investigations, motor vehicle accidents, chimney fires, structure fires, mutual-aid and service calls including house and vehicle lockouts. Our department responds mutual aid to our bordering communities, and we are fortunate to receive mutual aid from these same communities for fires, car accidents and medical emergencies as needed.

This year we saw a unique difference in the way we responded to medical emergencies because of Coronavirus pandemic. Crews were required to don N95 masks, eye protection and gowns in addition to their normal requirement of protective gloves. This sometimes added several minutes to initial patient contact. As a result of the responder's diligence, very few members contracted the virus – compared to some departments who lost entire shifts, due to being exposed. Sterling was very fortunate to stay well stocked with the necessary PPE required to protect our staff and being able to effectively decontaminate personnel, equipment, and the fire station throughout the pandemic.

In addition to incident response, there are many hours spent conducting training. Training took on a bit of a different look in 2020, compared to the normal in-person training on the first, second and third Wednesday's of the month. We held several training sessions virtually in addition to being able to perform some socially distant live skills training. This does not include the special skills training that our paramedics are required to attend as well as our dive and tech rescue team members who participate in specialized skills training throughout the year.

Due to the pandemic, we saw a drastic reduction in providing Fire and EMT details that support emergency response. Typical details include sporting event coverage, like Pop Warner Youth Football, firework shows and other special events detail coverage, including the primary safety response for the annual Sterling Fair.

Additional staffing is provided throughout the year for weather events, such as snowstorms, thunderstorms, and other severe weather threats, like the derecho we experienced this past summer.

### **Permits and Inspections**

The Fire Department Inspection and Code Enforcement Bureau is headed by Lieutenant Thomas Kokernak. 2020 proved to be a challenging year due to the pandemic and modifications had to be made locally and statewide to try and limit exposure. Fortunately, early in the year, the town invested in an online permitting system that paid dividends and allowed that process to continue functioning. As a result, the department issued 790 permits in 2020. We were able to resume on-site inspections in July. Inspection types include smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, oil burners, oil tanks, LP gas tanks, tank removals, blasting, and fire suppression systems. Many of them require a minimum of one site visit to confirm that the work has been done properly and installed per fire and life safety codes, and to verify the equipment operates safely. In addition to daily permit inspections, annual inspections are conducted at commercial and industrial sites as well as annual liquor license inspections completed in conjunction with the building inspector.

Any questions regarding permits, fees, or for scheduling an inspection call the fire department business line or access the information on-line via our website.

### **Fire Prevention and Public Safety Education**

Fire prevention and public safety education continues to be a large priority of the department and unfortunately this program took a big hit with the closing of the schools due to the pandemic. As a result, our team, coordinated by Firefighter Charlie Baker and Firefighter Fil Santos were unable to complete the program for our grammar school and pre-school children. Normally, the department conducts several educational programs supported by the S.A.F.E. (**S**tudent **A**wareness of **F**ire **E**ducation) program. In addition to the educational programs conducted in the elementary and pre-schools the department also provides station tours, site visits, Public Safety Weekend at Davis' Farmland, and other public safety events as requested. In 2020 many of those initiatives were replaced with birthday parades throughout the town.

### **Community Service Activities**

2020 also saw a decrease in community service activities that our department members and volunteers from our C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team) assist with.



These activities include medical standby and rehabilitation for road races, the Berkshire to Boston Bike Ride, and other community and civil functions. Several members of the department are certified to teach Community C.P.R., first aid and Stop the Bleed programs. Hopefully all of this can resume once everyone is vaccinated and healthy again.

### **Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

The largest percentage of fire deaths in the home occurs at night while people are asleep. Therefore, a working smoke alarm can provide an early warning that can make the difference between life and death. A smoke alarm should be part of an overall home fire safety strategy that also includes preventing fires by adopting fire safe behavior and developing and practicing a home fire escape plan. In a fire, escape time may be very limited. Therefore, escape plans are a critical aspect of a home fire safety strategy. Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms have been required since March of 2006. What is Carbon Monoxide (CO)? **Carbon Monoxide** is a colorless, odorless and tasteless poison gas that can be fatal. **CO** can be produced when burning fuels such as gasoline, propane, natural gas, oil or wood. **CO** is the product of incomplete combustion. If you have fire, you have **CO**. A **carbon monoxide detector** is a device that detects the presence of the **carbon monoxide (CO)** gas to prevent **carbon monoxide** poisoning.

Special consideration should be given to the fact that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors do have effective lives to them – like a car battery. It is recommended that a smoke detector be replaced every ten years and a carbon monoxide detector every five to seven years. Requirements for replacing your detectors can be found on our website or the manufacturers website of your detectors.

If you do not currently have a working smoke or carbon monoxide detector in your home and would like information on obtaining or installing them in your home, please contact the fire department.

### **Emergency Management**

Emergency Management continues to play a vital role in town, especially with the continued challenges of weather-related, Homeland Security, and most recently managing the pandemic events. Often our emergency management functions are activated because of severe weather, but this year we found ourselves working with state and federal partners securing personal protective equipment for public safety personnel and managing grants and reimbursements to support those functions.

One of our most active missions within emergency management is that of our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The CERT Program, managed and coordinated by Assistant Emergency Management Director Jim Emerton, educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact our area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and through conducting exercises, CERT members can assist others following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members consist of a group of volunteer citizens including; students, teachers, retirees, ex-military, engineers, and business professionals. The team trains and responds on a regional level along with volunteers from Boylston, Holden, and West Boylston.

In addition to a regional CERT team, Sterling continues to be part of a Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC) along with Boylston, Holden, and West Boylston. The South Wachusett Regional Emergency Planning Committee has representation from all four communities and represents the major disciplines of emergency planning working closely with M.E.M.A. (Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency) regarding hazard mitigation.

### **Social Media Notifications**



To keep our citizens informed, the fire department issues posts of department training, incident response, and important information notifications through social media utilizing Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It is important to us that the citizens we serve see the things that we do.

### **Fire Department Website**



[www.sterlingfd.net](http://www.sterlingfd.net)

The Fire Department website is administered by Lieutenant Thomas Kokernak. The website is linked to several sources of real time information. Please visit our website to learn more about the Sterling Fire Department, our history, our equipment or as a reference to fire codes and regulations. This is where you will also find the links to our online permitting systems.

## **Be Ready**



Plan to protect yourself and your family. Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan: how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact one another; how you will reunite with each other; and what you will do in different situations. For additional reference on personal and family preparedness you can log in to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

## **Closing Narrative**

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Sterling Fire Department for their continued commitment and dedication to the department and the community. We are fortunate that our firefighters, EMT's and Paramedics are committed to providing dedicated service to our community and are well-trained and outstanding at what they do. The citizens of Sterling should be proud of our dedicated responders.

We are lucky to have strong and valuable working relationships with all the public safety departments in town and as a result work seamlessly at major incidents that occur. Several times throughout the year, incidents will require several of the public safety departments to work in a coordinated manner to manage the issue at hand.

On behalf of the entire department, I would like to thank the residents of Sterling for their continued support of the fire department and its mission. Because of your support, we're able to maintain the apparatus and equipment that is vital to our emergency response. In June, voters were gracious in approving an additional fulltime firefighter paramedic to join our ranks and in August, Steve Brosque joined us fulltime. Steve was previously a call firefighter paramedic and worked fulltime in Northborough for many years. We were also approved for a major capital expense to replace our mobile and portable radios. Communications is a vital component of our job and the new radios brings us within federal compliance and now allows all Sterling Public Safety Agencies (BOH, DPW, Fire, SMLD, and Police) the ability to communicate with each other – for the first time ever.

We continue to maintain a strong on-call firefighting and E.M.T. force that is well trained and ready to respond to your needs in addition to our fulltime staff. To continue do this effectively, we need people who are willing to join the department and

be trained as on-call personnel. Our success is based on the dedication and commitment of our call members who respond to incidents over and above their fulltime jobs and family commitments. Many of our call members have moved on to become fulltime firefighter's, emergency medical technicians and paramedics. This is a true testament to the dedication and training of our members.

In 2020 I was proud to attend the Firefighter Recruit Graduation of Firefighter Paramedic Erin Cullinane and Firefighter EMT Conner Wilbur. We also added three additional call firefighter paramedics to the call force, who are fulltime in other communities, Daniel Gaudette, Katie Goulding, and Allyson Rothenberg. And finally, we added two additional EMT's to the call roster, Emily McNamara, and Emily Todorov, both who have family members on the department.

The Sterling Fire Department is located at 5 Main Street in the center of town. The station is staffed 24-hours a day and general business hours are from 8:00AM to 4:00PM Monday through Friday's.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy 2021!

Respectfully submitted,

David C. Hurlbut, Jr.

*Fire Chief / Emergency Management Director*

## **Historical Commission**

The Sterling Historical Commission is continuing to advocate for the historical preservation of Sterling. Unfortunately during this year we saw the destruction of two buildings within the Sterling Historical District. In addition, the Sterling Inn may also be demolished, if a new developer is not found. The commission is always saddened by the loss of any historic landmarks.

On a more positive note the restoration of our town cemeteries through collaborative work with the DPW and town administrators has made headway. Needed tree maintenance in the cemeteries has been ongoing and will continue to make our cemeteries safe and beautiful public areas. Drainage problems in the cemetery will be continued to be addressed to protect the Chocksett cemetery. A boy scout eagle project lead by Aidan Schnare, Troop 1 (with support from Troop 189) went a long way to preserve the Chocksett cemetery. The project uprighted and re-supported the bases of about 220 headstones.

In the upcoming year we will continue our emphasis on the restoration of our town's cemeteries with the continued support of the townspeople and town leaders. A presentation by the Graveyard Girls is being scheduled for 2021 to educate the public on the importance of cemetery preservation and Sterling's place in American history.

Over the year, the commission has endorsed strengthening agricultural preservation, updating historical inventories of properties and cemeteries at the Sterling Masterplan meetings.

The Sterling Historical Commission is utilizing the West Sterling Schoolhouse as our office, during the implementation of repairs to the building. The preservation of this important town building has been supported by an art show planned for June 2021. A grant from the town cultural commission has been awarded for presenting this show. The DPW removed overhanging trees that threatened the Schoolhouse building.

Despite setbacks in this Covid year, the Sterling Historical Commission has strengthened their resolve to preserve the town's rural character with improved planning and funding.

## **Housing Initiatives Committee**

Formerly known as the Affordable Housing Committee, the Housing Initiatives Committee is appointed by the Select Board and is charged to explore options for creating more affordable and varied housing opportunities and options in Sterling. Under the provisions of Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws, municipalities are limited in their ability to restrict or prohibit the construction of housing developments that are classified as affordable. However, municipalities may, under the law, gain some control over this process by creating and implementing housing production plans.

Sterling's Housing Production Plan (HPP) was endorsed by the Town and was approved for a period of 5 years by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development in October 2019. The HPP is a community's proactive strategy for planning and developing affordable housing and can give Sterling, which has less than Chapter 40B's 10% threshold, more control over comprehensive permit applications as long as it is making steady progress in producing affordable housing on an annual basis, giving Sterling a position to more effectively manage the siting and construction of affordable housing units in our community.

Since that time, the Committee has been pursuing the Plan's recommended actionable strategies. In 2020, Sterling received a District Local Technical Assistance grant for assistance to amend the accessory apartment bylaw to allow for more housing options and to draft a bylaw to allow development on noncomplying lots that can be counted towards the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory. The Committee hopes to present these bylaw amendments at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

The Committee would like to thank former Committee member Angela Grattaroti for her involvement and efforts prior to her resignation and to Town Planner Domenica Tatasciore for her support, expertise and ongoing assistance.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Patrick Fox, Chair  
Diana Baldarelli  
Robert Protano  
Weymouth Whitney



## **Annual Report**

### **Governance**

Sterling citizens elect a 6-member Board of Trustees to govern the town free public library, as outlined in Massachusetts General Law, with two members elected to a three-year term each year in rotation. The trustees meet the second Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

In June, Lisa Akerson and Heide Martin were elected to the Board. At their July meeting, the Board elected Michael Glavin as Chair and Sara Petullo as Secretary.

Marion Mahar, elected to the Board in 2014, served as chair for six years, and Karen Leclerc, appointed in 2018 to fill an interim vacancy and elected in 2019, both retired from service to the town. Marion and Karen were dedicated champions of excellent library service to the public, and their contributions are truly appreciated.

### **Mission**

The Conant Free Public Library provides residents with broad access to library materials for enrichment and enjoyment in an environment welcoming to everyone. The library offers space and opportunities for people to gather and connect, knowledgeable and friendly staff to help, and the tools to grow and thrive in an increasingly digital world.

The library works from a Long-Range Plan formulated by a citizen committee. After conducting visits to other libraries, holding focus groups of town members, and conducting surveys, the Committee presents the plan to the Board of Library Trustees for adoption.

### **Services**

As usual, the library began 2020 offering books in print, recorded books, popular movies and full-season TV series, along with high-speed Internet (direct and wireless) - all at no charge. To speed internet access, the library installed solid-state drives on all public computers. The library also offered copy, fax, and printing services to the public for a small donation and scanning at no fee. A "Hot Spot" where people could send documents wirelessly to the printer from a computer or hand-held device was also available to the public.

In February, an average of 185 people a day visited the library to browse the collection, read a paper by a sunny window, or come to story time or a night-time program for adults. By the end of March, the pandemic hit Sterling, and town buildings were closed to prevent the virus's spread. During this time, library staff attended online trainings, continued routine office work, and ordered and processed new materials.

In April, library staff began to work one at a time in the building and remotely to promote online services, with phone or online support on how to access books, audiobooks, magazines, movies, and TV series from home. Staff also funneled Town-related information such as the Sterling Trails Guide and maps with guidelines on safe use and links to online programs for all ages.

Angela Cote, Youth Services librarian, ran weekly Facebook story times so children could see a familiar face and have a routine to make life seem a bit more normal. The sessions were made available online for 24 hours to comply with copyright laws. She also continued her monthly Parents Night Out Book Group on Zoom.

Kristen Dietel, Head of the Sterling Recreation Department, connected with Angela to run a Bear Hunt, encouraging people to place stuffed animals or pictures in windows so families could search for them from their cars.

Staff members identified people they thought did not have internet access or were sight impaired and called to offer home delivery of new or quarantined books and audiobooks. The library consulted with members of the Select Board and the schools to ensure all families with school children who wished to have internet access did have it. Staff members searched for the best resource and offered an online program on how to begin homeschooling for parents interested in that possibility.

The staff member in charge of technology researched how to boost the library's internet wireless connection to the parking lot and installed a new Mesh system to provide a stronger signal and greater security. The Friends of the Library also donated several thousand dollars to purchase more downloadable books and downloadable audiobooks, which are more expensive than physical books.

The Board of Library Trustees focused on re-establishing services to the public while paying close attention to the State and our local Board of Health guidance. By the end of March, the library still had a 5% increase in circulation even though it was closed for two weeks, in part because of the promotion and growth of online materials usage.



At the end of April, staff members returned to the building following the procedures set by the Governor's Committee and began preparing for quarantining of materials and the best method to provide curbside delivery of library materials, as well as home delivery to Sterling addresses. In May, the library reopened the book drop and began the quarantine and processing of all the returned books. Then they cleared the holds shelf and began delivering those materials to Sterling residents. On June 1, the library started curbside pick-up, and home delivery by request.

At first, book returns outstripped requests, but that soon changed. As call volume increased, the library added another phone line, and the Friends of the Library funded an updated phone system. The library began routinely supplying more than 5,000 books, movies, and TV series a month through curbside, home delivery, and downloads.

In June, Angela Cote announced her family would be moving to Georgia in July. She had become a beloved member of the community and set a high bar for Youth Services in Sterling.

At the beginning of August, Lizzy Gagliardi started as Head of Youth Services. Like every staff member, she started answering phone calls for books and movies, filling new paper bags with the materials, and placing them out for pick up or delivery.

She also ran the weekly Facebook Story Time, Parent's Night-Out Book Club, and started Craft Kits To-Go. The library soon was supplying over 200 a month.

As always, members of the public can go to [www.sterlinglibrary.org](http://www.sterlinglibrary.org) for online access to library services at any time. Patrons can order or renew books and movies and download e-books, e-audiobooks, magazines, and videos.

While the Governor's orders dictate caution, members of the public can also call the Library at 978-422-6409 Monday through Thursday 10 to 6 to order books, audiobooks, movies, and TV series for pick up or delivery. Staff members will create Browsing Bags tailored to a patron's interest if unsure of what to read next, and Book Bundles for children based on age and interests.

When returning to normal, the Library is open 10 to 8 Monday through Thursday and 10 to 3 Saturday and 10 to 1 Saturday from Fourth of July to Labor Day.

## Annual Benchmarks

### Library Cards

At year-end, Sterling had 5,089 active library cardholders – more than 62% of the town.

### Programs

The library held 430 programs (initially in-house, then remotely) for all ages, with a total attendance of 4,656.



In February, Youth Services was able to repeat their Mobile Mini Golf event, a nine-hole mini-golf course set up inside the library running through all three floors.

The 2020 Remote Summer Reading Program had 199 active participants. Every young person participating received their own specially selected book provided by the Friends of the Library. The Friends also donated funds so that each child received a gift or gift certificate from a weekly drawing, which was purchased from local businesses whenever possible.

The 100 Books of Summer program ran remotely with the Kiwanis Club of Worcester's backing, and each participant received a special journal to record the books they read, along with, a stamp, a set

of stickers, and a sheet with 100 circles to keep track of their numbers.

In October, the Senior Center, Recreation Department, Fire Department, DPW, and Library ran a Drive-By Halloween Program at the Library, Butterick Building and Senior Center parking lots with buildings decorated, and staff members and volunteers in costume, distributing gift bags.

The library's regular adult programs included weekly knitting groups, twice-monthly coloring groups, monthly book clubs, and a monthly cookbook club, with special programs at least once a month.

Remotely, the library continued a number of the regular programs for adults on Zoom and added special Children's programming for all ages on Zoom and regular weekly story time on Facebook.

### **Circulation**

In 2020, a total of 87,588 items circulated to the public, and library users downloaded 9,407 E-books in print or audio for a total of 96,995 items. Members of the public accessed the library's databases 51,167 times. Our consortium of 147 libraries, CW MARS, reported that once again, over 1 million electronic materials circulated system-wide.

While the building was closed to the public, the new furnishings were delivered and installed throughout the library. A bequest from Charles Allen funded the improvements. The Trustees and Staff can't wait to welcome everyone back inside to enjoy their town library.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Board of Trustees of the Conant Free Public Library

Michael Glavin, Chair

Matthew Scannell

Sara Petullo, Secretary

Heide Martin

Albert J. Carlin

Lisa Akerson

Patricia Campbell, Library Director

Alex Grebinar, Assistant Director

## Master Plan Committee



The Master Plan Committee (MPC) is appointed by the Select Board whose mission is to guide the creation and development of the Sterling Master Plan, which was last updated in 1962. The Committee consists of members representing various boards as well as volunteer individuals. Its vision statement is as follows:

"Sterling is a community that values its natural beauty, agricultural history and 'can do spirit'. We envision a sustainable future that protects our Town legacy, purposefully promotes growth and development and encourages community engagement to enhance the quality of life for residents of all ages and abilities."

Earlier this year, Sterling was awarded a District Local Technical Assistance grant from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission to write the Circulation/Transportation chapter and the Town contracted with them to complete both the Housing and Open Space & Recreation Master Plan Chapters. Annual Town Meeting approved the procurement of funds for the Master Plan creation. The Town contracted with VHB, a Massachusetts-based land use and engineering consultant company, to undertake the remaining required Master Plan chapters. It is anticipated that the final document will be finalized in late 2021. The MPC holds televised monthly meetings, hosted by VHB, that are open to the public. In the Fall, VHB conducted its first public survey and the MPC hosted an interactive public meeting via Zoom that consisted of live polling featuring topics covering all the required chapter topics. See the word cloud, below, from one of the meeting's posted question, "What one word describes Sterling's greatest economic challenge?"



Having a Master Plan puts Sterling in a better position when seeking monies and grants from the State. Projects and wish lists are abundant and financial aid is always welcome so to ease the burden on the taxpayer.

It is important to note that all those involved in developing this 'map to our future' are volunteers and the Committee continues to work very closely with Sterling's Town Planner who is the project manager for the Master Plan.

The Master Plan Committee would like to extend its gratitude to former members Dick Maki, Charlie Conroy, Angela Grattaroti and Marion Larson.

Respectfully submitted:

Patty Page	Chair and Land Use Chapter Co-Chair
Chuck Plaisted	Vice Chair and Open Space & Recreation Co-Chair
Liz Pape	Clerk and Land Use Chapter Co-Chair
Blaine Bershad	Services & Facilities Co-Chair
Keith Cordial	Economic Development Committee Representative
Carl Corrinne	Planning Board Representative
Maureen Cranson	Select Board Co-Representative
Robert Dumont	Services & Facilities Co-Chair
Jim French	Natural & Cultural Resources Co-Chair
John Kilcoyne	Select Board Co-Representative
Rose Koven	Natural & Cultural Resources Co-Chair
Jed Lindholm	Circulation/Transportation Chair
Robert Protano	Housing Chapter Chair
Julie Rusch	Economic Development Chapter Chair
Erin Sikorski	Open Space & Recreation Co-Chair

## Planning Board

To the Honorable Select Board and the Citizens of Sterling:  
The Planning Board consists of the following members:

Carl Corrinne (Chairman)  
Patty Page (Vice Chairman)  
Kirsten Newman (Clerk)  
Rob Protano  
John Santoro

The Planning Board wishes to thank Carl Corrinne, Val Pruneau and Rob Protano for stepping up in early 2020 to fill the vacancies on the Board after the abrupt resignation of Russell Philpot, David Shapiro and Craig Miller as well as the administrative assistant Betty Kazan. A special congratulations to Carl Corrinne, Rob Protano and Kirsten Newman for their election to the Board in June 2020 to officially fill the vacancies.

The Board is supported by Town Planner Domenica Tatasciore.

The responsibilities of the Planning Board consist of reviewing and endorsing Approval Not Required (ANR) plans, Site plan Reviews, various Special Permits and development/review of various zoning bylaw amendments.

The Board approved five (5) Site Plans which resulted in 32,614 square feet of commercial space. See below for approved plans:

<b>Address</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Square Footage</b>
35 Redemption Rock Trail	KK Realty Trust	1,212 square feet
9 Chocksett Road	EBAN Realty Trust	9,680 square feet
333 Redemption Rock Trail	NEADS, Inc.	5,500 square feet
146 Pratts Junction Road	Gagnon Equipment	15,000 square feet
145 Redstone Hill Road	Davis Dairy, Inc.	1,222 square feet

The Board endorsed five ANR plans (Approval Not Required under Subdivision Control Law) plans which resulted in five new residential lots. All lots were located on Justice Hill Road and/or Upper North Row Road.

Members Carl Corrinne, Rob Protano and Patty Page are also members of the Master Plan Committee. The Master Plan Committee is in the process of updating the Town's Master Plan that is almost 60 years old! Having Planning Board representation on the Master Plan Committee ensures continued progress on updating the Master Plan.

(Please see the Master Plan page for more information.)

Zoning Bylaw Amendments Reviewed and Public Hearings held:

- In February, a public hearing was held for proposed zoning amendments relative to Article 2.4.5 Display Setback (Signage), Article 3.1 Signs and Article 2.3.1 Table of Uses Earth Removal, Article 5 Definitions, and Article 6.2 Board of Appeals
- In March, a public hearing was held for proposed zoning amendment relative to Article 6, Section 6.4 – Site Plan Review. This was a citizen’s petition seeking to include abutter notification for all site plan applications.
- In September, a public hearing was held for proposed zoning amendments relative to Earth Removal/Quarrying in Article 2, Section 2.5.1 and Article 3, Section 3.3.2 and Article 5 - Definitions; and Town Center and Mixed Uses in Article 2, Section 2.3.1.A and Article 5 Definitions. The hearing for these amendments was opened on March 25, 2020 and continued to date/time certain.
- In October, a public hearing was held for proposed zoning amendments relative to Article 4, Section 4.6 – Aquifer and Water Resource Protection District; Rate of Development - Article 4, Section 4.3 & Table of Contents Update; Subdivision Phasing – Article 4, Section 4.3A & Table of Contents Update; Site Plan Review – Article 6, Section 6.4 & Table of Contents Update; Free Standing Uninhabited Buildings - Article 2, Section 2.5.4.; Groundwater Protection Districts – Article 2, Section 2.1.1. & Table of Contents Update; Use Regulations - Article 2, Section 2.2.1.; and Rezone 13 parcels, located on the southerly side of Dana Hill & Legg Roads, from Performance Zone 1 to Commercial zoning district.

The acceptance of roadways indicates all conditions of approval have been satisfactorily completed and the roadways were constructed to Town standards. Redstone Heights Subdivision’s Chad Lane was the only road accepted at the 2020 Town Meeting.

## **Sterling Police Department & Dispatch Center**

The defining issue of 2020 was undoubtedly, COVID-19. It affected every aspect of the way we operated during the year. Masks and gloves replaced bullet proof vest as our most crucial piece of equipment. Meticulous disinfecting individual work spaces and police vehicles became the routine at shift changes.

COVID-19 also caused the elimination or modification of many of the events we participate in annually. The Sterling Fair, Memorial Day Parade, Veterans Day Parade, all were cancelled. We were forced to eliminate RAD classes and all our internal trainings were shifted to a remote platform. We missed the interaction we have every year with the students, staff and the schools.

In an effort to bring some normalcy and excitement to the many who could not participate in birthday events, graduation ceremonies etc., we participated in countless personal parades and celebrations. We hope this activity brought some sense of happiness and or excitement to the honorees.

Every year in my annual report I express my appreciation to the dedicated officers, dispatchers and support staff for what they do throughout the year. This year I do so with extreme pride in all of them. Without exception, they all came to work, day in, and day out facing the added hazards of exposure to COVID. With everything shutting down around us, courts, schools, etc. our personnel came in to work every day responding to the needs of our residents.

As this report is being written, a vaccine is being rolled out. There seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel and we look forward to returning to a sense of normalcy.

Our staff remained stable this year with few exceptions. Full-time dispatcher DiPietro resigned to attend a police academy and part-time dispatcher Benjamin Dame was selected to fill the vacancy left by DiPietro.

### **Personnel Training**

Maintaining a stable work force is beneficial for many reasons; not the least of these is the ability to train individuals on various topics and take advantage of that advanced training in future years. Some of the training topics covered during 2020 were:



Critical Incident Management as it relates to Opioids, instructor training for active shooter response, Alzheimer and Dementia response, Crime Scene Management, Taser Instruction, AED and CPR certification, Traffic Incident Management, Domestic Violence Intervention, Animal Rescue, Gas Leaks, Diving-Drowning Incidents, Hostage Incidents, Introduction to Intelligence, Crowd Incident Management, Election Poling Laws, Public Records Laws, Cold Exposure Training, Preventing Harassment and Discrimination, Longevity in Law Enforcement, Health and Wellness Instructor, Crowd Management for Police Commanders, Dispatcher guide to Robbery, Larceny, Theft response, Explosion Incident Management, Excited Delirium and Agitated Chaotic Events.

The above listed trainings were in addition to the officers mandated in-service training on State mandated topics, our annual weapons qualification on the .45 caliber handgun, issued shotgun and rifle and less lethal weapons Taser and chemical spray.

### **Grants**

We were very successful in obtaining grants this year. We received \$34,401 from Executive Office of Public Safety to assist with funding the dispatch center. These funds are used to defray some of the cost personnel overtime cost and equipment. Additionally, we received \$14,255.60 to assist with training the staff and maintaining certification.

We obtained a COZVID mitigation grant of \$12,586.65. These funds were used to purchase Personal Protective Equipment as well as a electrostatic cleaning fogger, and other cleaning equipment. The funds are also used to pay for the additional time used to disinfect the station and vehicles.

We obtained a Traffic Safety Grant in the amount of \$12,000 from the Executive Office of Public Safety Highway Division. These funds will be utilized during five mandated state wide mobilizations to enforce targeted and specified motor vehicle violations. A portion of those funds will also be used to purchase an additional electronic speed board sign.

A grant obtained for passenger protection in the amount of \$2,444.50 and a tablet was used to purchase child safety seats.

A technology grant was awarded in the amount of \$31,381 to our department. This will be used to upgrade out digital fingerprint reader and equipment to enhance roadway safety.

## **Investigations and Calls for Service**

We had a 4.5% increase in calls from 2019, an increase from six thousand one hundred and seventy (6,170) to six thousand four hundred and fifty two (6,452).

We investigated two hundred and fifty two incidents, a partial list of those:

Forcible Rape	1
Forcible Fondling	1
Aggravated Assault	4
Simple Assault	18
Intimidation	5
Arson	1
Breaking and Entering	6
Shoplifting	1
Theft from Building	7
Theft from Motor Vehicle	3
Theft of Motor vehicle parts	1
All other Larceny	12
Motor Vehicle Theft	3
Counterfeiting	2
False Pretenses	14
Impersonation	14
Wire Fraud	2
Identity Theft	1
Embezzlement	2
Vandalism	12
Drugs Narcotics	5
Statutory Rape	2
Pornography	1
Weapon Law Violations	1
Disorderly Conduct	1
DUI	4
Drunkenness	2
Liquor Law Violations	5
Trespass	4
All Other Offenses	28
By-Law offenses	89

While we made one less in custody arrest this year compared to last, we had a twenty-one (21%) increase in the number of people who were referred to court on criminal charges (52). We attribute the reason for this that the courts were closed for a period of time during the pandemic. Many of the individuals arrested had multiple charges.

### **Custodial Arrest**

Assault on Family Member	9
Traffic By law offenses	5
Restraining Order Violations	2
OUI	4
Warrants	6

### **Operations**

The center of all activity in the police station is the dispatch center. Our state of the art dispatch center is staffed by highly trained and dedicated people. The four full-time dispatchers aided by a staff of seven part-time dispatchers are required to maintain certification in emergency medical dispatching and take a minimum of sixteen hours of annual training.

In addition to the previously listed increase in calls for service that were answered by the dispatch center, we also saw a significant increase in 911 calls. This year we answered four hundred and thirty three (433) or twenty-six percent (26%) increase from 2019.

Another area that saw an increase in activity was in firearms permit processing. This year we processed two hundred and seventy-six, an increase of twenty three from last year.

On a positive note, we had a 6% reduction of traffic crashes from last year. Redemption Rock Trail and Leominster Rd are the two roads with the highest number of crashes. We have been in contact with various agencies looking to make improvements on these roads.

Some new or updated equipment that was put into service during the years were; All new defibrillators and auxiliary equipment along with Naloxone carrying kits (Narcan) were placed in every patrol vehicle.

A more comfortable bullet resistant vest carrier was put into service and many of the officers are taking advantage of that.

We placed into service our first Hybrid police vehicle.

Due to the Covid-19 we did not issue any solicitation or door to door permits.

As 2020 comes to a close we are not sorry to see it go as it has been a difficult year. In addition to the pandemic and all that came with it, we watched our chosen profession that we have all dedicated our lives to be assaulted on various fronts. Fortunately, here in Sterling we still have the support of the vast majority of the community.

Additionally, our entire department is keeping Detective David Johnson in our thoughts and prayers as he and his family are dealing with a serious medical condition that has required him to be out of work. We look forward to David coming back to us in 2021.



Sincerely,

Gary M. Chamberland  
Chief of Police

## The Recreation Department Report: Highlights for 2020

Throughout the year the Recreation Department has remained committed to its mission of providing affordable, quality recreational programs that enhance the quality of life for all residents. This year with Covid-19, our year looked a little different.

We improved some features at various facilities this year with the help of local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, and wonderful resident volunteers. With modifications of some existing activities and the introduction of virtual classes Sterling Recreation was able to provide some normalcy to our residents.

The community had an opportunity to participate in over twenty programs which were provided year-round and are self-funded. Child oriented programs included, basketball, cooking, music, science, swimming lessons, sewing, yoga and skiing/snowboarding. Adult residents had the opportunity to participate in pick-up leagues and fitness classes. The community came together over music at the Summer Band Concerts and at the Town Beach.

One of our longest running programs, Sterling Rec Basketball, had over 200 players. Again, for the 2019-2020 season we reached out to area programs to help provide our female teams with a little more competition. We are very fortunate to have so many wonderful coaches who volunteer their valuable time and expertise. Our after school programs were short lived, but we were able to Cook up some treats and discover some Science Mysteries. Adults had the continued opportunity to participate in exercise programs virtually that were offered until late spring, such as several types of yoga, basketball, and weight training. Bruins fans were able to take advantage of the opportunity to get tickets to a game versus the Edmonton Oilers.

The Recreation Department was able to offer with great success the *Summer Concert Series 2020*. This event offered town residents the opportunity to gather safely and enjoy music, family and the beautiful summer evenings. Residents were very creative in the way they gathered with family to keep them safe while enjoying this well attended town tradition. ***Sterling Lancaster Cable*** filmed many of the concerts and ran them on the local cable channel for viewers to enjoy all year long. In addition, the Sterling Recreation Department received a grant for \$1,300.00 from ***The Sterling Cultural Council*** for the Summer Concert Series 2020. The Cultural Council is committed to building a central place for the arts, sciences, and humanities in the everyday lives of communities across the Commonwealth.

We were lucky enough to see one of our most popular programs, the Summer Lake Program, still able to provide, with modifications, summer fun to our younger residents. We had to limit our registration, but were still able to run a 3 hour sampler of our usual summer camper experience. We also provided separate swim lessons by swim level, which were very well attended. Our Recreation Tennis program was able to expand by an additional week this summer giving our younger players and opportunity to gather safety and work on their skills.

As always, we are extremely thankful for the support of the community and the dedication of the many volunteers who give a helping hand in numerous ways. This year we welcomed a new tree at Memorial Park, thanks to Eagle Scout Liam Martin. Rishi Krishana repaired and painted the softball dugouts at Griffin Road for his Eagle Scout distinction and Eagle Scout Luke Boardman completed several beautiful picnic tables for the Town Beach that feature inlayed checkerboards. Brownie troop 64816 planted bulbs in front of the Butterick Building that will provide some beautiful color come spring! Girl Scouts, Rowan O'Connor and Katherine Smith, completed two beautiful benches for the tennis courts at West Sterling. Fellow members of their troop built picnic tables for behind Chocksett Middle School. We are so proud of all our active young adults that help to make Sterling a wonderful place to live!

We appreciate the time and dedication of other town departments, program instructors, summer staff, lifeguards, volunteer ski chaperones, volunteer basketball coaches, school administrators, school custodians, and sponsors. With this network of supporters we are able to provide top notch events for the community. Close to 1,600 individuals participated in the Recreation Department's events and programs in 2020, and we thank you for your constant support throughout the year.

The Recreation Department will continue to work to improve the quality of Recreational facilities, programs, and services. Your feedback is important to us, please contact the Recreation Department at 978-422-3041, e-mail [recreation@sterling-ma.gov](mailto:recreation@sterling-ma.gov) or stop in at our office currently located at 1 Park St. For listings and descriptions of programs and events, visit the web site: [SterlingRec.com](http://SterlingRec.com) or [sterling-ma.gov/recreation](http://sterling-ma.gov/recreation)

**Respectfully submitted,**

Jo-Ann Cummings - Chairperson Recreation Committee

Heidi Grady

Mark Hryniewicz

Andrew Parker

Bonnie Pulda

Glenn Donaldson

Deidre Shapiro

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL  
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT  
2020



**MONTY TECH**

A High School Education For Those Who Want More

1050 Westminster Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420  
[www.montytech.net](http://www.montytech.net)

As I reflected on the 2019-2020 school year, and considered what might be included in the 2020 Annual Report, I was reminded of the progress and accomplishments made by our students and staff, during an incredibly challenging time. While each year at Monty Tech is exciting and includes many “firsts”, traditional instruction ended abruptly in 2019-2020, and students and instructors were forced to turn to technology to watch, learn and collaborate. The all-important hands-on learning was not possible because of the unexpected pandemic, and so for the first time ever, our vocational instructors relied solely on their creativity, their understanding of instructional technology, and their technical skills to carry them through the end of the year. Our academic teachers collaborated to create lessons and assessments that would effectively measure learning in a remote setting, and explored countless apps and platforms to increase engagement. Students who looked forward to events like SkillsUSA competitions, prom and graduation, grappled with disappointment and the unknown, and Guidance Counselors worked diligently to reach out to students who were now more isolated from their peers than ever before. To say 2019-2020 was challenging may be an understatement, but to disregard our progress as an educational community would be a disservice to everyone who worked so hard to serve our students. While the traditional school year may have been abbreviated, so many incredible achievements were recognized in this historic year.

A project more than 7 years in the making, the Monty Tech Veterinary Clinic, opened and began providing affordable veterinary care to pets in need, across our district. Routine wellness care visits, affordable medications and vaccinations, diagnostic services, primary care surgical services, stable urgent care, compassionate end of life care, and dentistry services were delivered by our talented Veterinary Medical Director, Dr. Kayla Sample. Students worked in the new state-of-the-art clinic, learning techniques and gaining knowledge that align with veterinary assistant programs across the Commonwealth. In fact, Becker College has recognized the Monty Tech Veterinary Science program for its rigor and content, and has offered qualified program graduates up to 13 college credits. Further, relying on the school’s trusted model of school-to-business partnerships, a unique collaboration between Monty Tech and VCA has resulted in co-op placements for Seniors in the program.

In August 2019, Monty Tech accepted a \$384,257 award from the Massachusetts Skills Cabinet. This award provided funding to update technology and equipment in two shops: Health Occupations and Automotive Technology. Health Occupations students worked and learned in updated shop facilities, to include new hospital beds and lifts, as well as new diagnostic equipment to train students in the proper procedures for testing for cholesterol, blood sugar, lead, lung volume, and more. In addition, the program received state-of-the-art virtual dissection technology, bringing lessons in anatomy and physiology

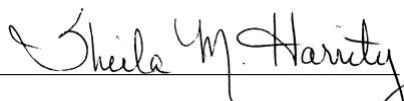


to new heights. This equipment, provided by Anatomage and most often found on college campuses, immediately engaged students, bringing a deeper level of knowledge and understanding to students as they explored the human body and its complex systems.

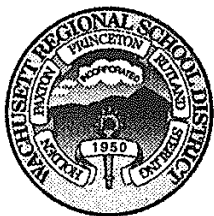
Students in the Automotive Technology program were introduced to an all-new simulation lab, that now includes the latest technology in trainers and simulators aligned with NATEF standards. The shop was updated to include new automotive lifts, floor jacks, engine stands, chargers, an air table, and a redesigned tool crib with all new hand tools. Further, in 2019-2020, in partnership with Snap On Tools, instructors rolled out a more sophisticated technical training program and increased opportunities to earn all-new diagnostic credentials, validating their experience and ability to diagnose and service today's computer-controlled vehicles. With new curriculum, technology and the addition of NC3 Automotive Diagnostic Certifications to the program, our Automotive Technology program graduates will enter a competitive workforce poised for success.

Students who attend Monty Tech have chosen a high school experience unlike any other. While completing all of the same high school requirements of students enrolled in a traditional, comprehensive high school, our students are also learning a valuable trade – skills they will carry with them for a lifetime. In the most challenging times, our students are called upon to demonstrate creativity, innovation and technical skill proficiency, and though face-to-face instruction may have been interrupted, their achievements continued. On behalf of our talented educators and administrators, who remain focused on delivering the highest quality academic and vocational-technical education possible, I am delighted to present the District's 2019-2020 annual report to you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sheila M. Harrity". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Sheila M. Harrity, Ed.D., Superintendent-Director



## *Wachusett Regional School District*

*Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling*

February 2021

Dear Residents of Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, and Sterling,

As I write this annual message, I want to begin by thanking all members of our community for their patience, understanding, cooperation, tolerance, and resilience, particularly since March of 2020. I do not believe anyone could have predicted the impact COVID-19 would have on the Wachusett District, the Commonwealth, the country, or the world, but I believe as we all work through this together and we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel, the collaboration and teamwork shown will help guide us in our eventual return to "normal."

The 2020-2021 school year has been one like no other. As you know, our schools were abruptly closed on March 13, 2020 with no return date certain. Remote instruction began at that time and continued through the rest of the spring and well into the current school year. Hybrid in-person instruction began for those students who wished on January 19, 2021. The "soft reopening" of schools has been exciting for staff and students, and I am very proud of our Wachusett community for the relatively seamless transition. Due to the unique circumstances, there were a few more than usual school reopening challenges that needed to be addressed and navigated, but with cooperation from all parties, I am pleased to report the matters needing attention were handled appropriately and efficiently. Students learning remotely from home or in-person in schools, with blended learning happening regularly, will continue for the remainder of this school year. I am confident that whatever challenges the coming months may present, the education of all Wachusett students will continue to be outstanding thanks to our talented and dedicated teaching staff. The resilience and resourcefulness our teachers have shown over the last 10 months has been remarkable.

This year, we were able to expand our 1:1 Chromebook program to include all students in grades 6 - 12. This initiative has been phased in over the past 4 years, beginning with the current senior class who were issued the very first 1:1 Chromebooks when

they began their freshmen year. The 1:1 Chromebook deployment for all high school students was completed in the fall of 2019. With the unexpected reliance on remote teaching and learning this school year, we moved as quickly as possible to expand the program to include grades 6 - 8.

As we have done over the past several years, the District and Member Town officials held the annual Budget Roundtable on January 7, 2021. This meeting is the opportunity to discuss key budget issues associated with the upcoming fiscal year. Even though this year's Roundtable was virtual, it was well attended by town representatives, officials from the state, members of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee, and community members interested in learning more about the budget process. Though budget development has been delayed this year due to the pandemic as well as the state's FY21 budget approval being later than usual, we are working with our Member Towns, on behalf of all constituents, to develop an annual budget appropriation that will address the needs of Wachusett's students and staff. As I have shared numerous times in the past, I am grateful to our state representatives for their continued support of increased funding for all schools in the Commonwealth.

For the third consecutive year, the five towns that comprise the Wachusett District supported a budget that permitted us the opportunity to increase support for our students. We very much appreciate the support of the Member Towns, and we look to continue forward progress, including focusing on the social and emotional health and wellbeing of our students in the coming school year.

I would like to thank all parents/guardians, teachers, staff, and community members for their continued support and dedication to the education of the children in the Wachusett Regional School District. We must continue to work together to provide our students with a quality education that will prepare them for success in the future.

Sincerely,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

**Sterling Municipal Light Department**

50 Main Street

Sterling, Massachusetts 01564-2135

Tel: (978) 422-8267

Fax: (978) 422-8054

[www.energysterling.com](http://www.energysterling.com)

## **2020 Annual Town Report**

Respectfully submitted is the one hundred and Tenth report of the Sterling Municipal Light Department (SMLD).

Instead of ending my annual report thanking those who supported us throughout the year, I would like to start our 110<sup>th</sup> year report with a tremendous ***thank you*** to all the essential personnel throughout the town of Sterling. The year 2020 was a year we will never forget. The Covid-19 Pandemic, the Biden vs. Trump presidential election and even Tom Brady in a different uniform. While we operate with limited staff and realized the roles that each member plays, we felt the importance to close our office building to public access to minimize the exposure of the Covid-19 virus to our staff. I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding through this difficult time.

### ***NEW LOGO***

The SMLD Board of Commissioners recognized that our logo with the mascot of an Indian and the use of that image was becoming a focal point with some groups because of the insensitive nature they felt it was being portrayed. Although our logo with an Indian boy with a bow and arrow had served us since the early 1970's, we felt it was time for an update. Working with JC Marketing Associates we went through many ideas until the logo you see below was unanimously approved by our Board and staff. During 2021 you will see us transition to our new logo on our vehicles and the signs at our facilities.



## **STAFF CHANGES**

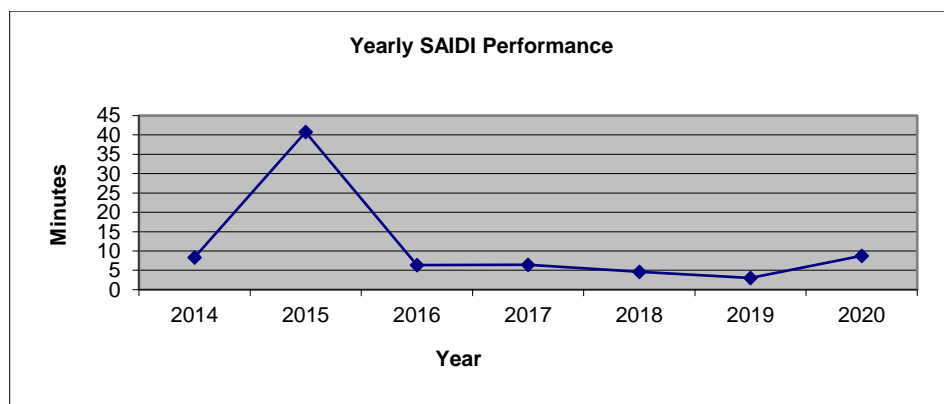
In 2020 there were some changes to our staff. In January Christine Arsenault, our Staff Accountant retired after serving us for 20 years. We truly miss her kind nature, attention to detail and willingness to always help where needed. Our best wishes to her in her retirement. As her replacement we hired Karl Lewis in February as Staff Accountant. Karl is a CPA who brings extensive knowledge and experience to the Department. In March we saw the retirement of our Lead Lineman Brian Foley. Brian had many years as a lineman in public power industry and 13 years of which he served at SMLD. His kind nature and willingness to always lend a hand made him many friends in the Sterling community. We had one lineman resign to take a position with a larger IOU out of state. We hired two new Apprentice Lineman who both display great mechanical aptitude and will begin linemen training classes in early 2021.

## **POWER**

**As of December 31, 2020, the SMLD's customer base has 3,904 accounts** 3,490 Residential, 7 Large General Service (LGS), 131 Medium General Service (MGS), 275 Small General Service (SGS), 1 Wholesale and 1 Streetlight.

A total **of 62,855,244 kilowatt hours (kwhrs) of electricity were sold** during the calendar year 2020. This represents an increase of 571,315 kwhrs from calendar year 2019. Sterling's hourly peak demand was 12.698 MW set in July of 2020.

The SMLD uses reliable indices to monitor the performance of our distribution system and measures our response time to system interruptions. The 2020 **Average Service Availability Index (ASAI)** of electricity for Sterling residents was 99.998%. The 2020 **Customer Average Interruption Duration Index (CAIDI)** numbers represent the average time required to restore service to a customer per sustained outage was 61.2 minutes.



We have been able to mitigate any transmission increases with the use of our battery storage systems by using locally produced (and stored) solar energy from the ***E.H. Perkins*** on Wiles Road, as well as our ***Community Solar with Storage Project*** on Chocksett Road. To date, these facilities combined have provided us with ***39,177,134 kwhrs*** which is enough energy to ***power all the average residential customer's homes in Sterling for two years.***

The ***1 MW Community Solar Project*** with 1mw/2mwhrs of energy storage was the first of its kind in Massachusetts and is fully subscribed by over 400 Sterling residents who receive 25% of their energy needs from this facility. The rate payers in Sterling share in savings generated by using the batteries to avoid transmission costs.

### ***ENERGY STORAGE***

Our ***Battery Storage Projects*** continue to provide tremendous benefits to our customers. Besides the resiliency value it was designed to provide, in just four years of operation we have saved over \$1.5 million dollars in avoided transmission cost,

### ***OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT***

In 2020 the SMLD Operations installed 36 new poles and pulled 27 old poles. We responded to 3 different motor vehicle accidents involving SMLD poles. The SMLD crews replaced 1900' of overhead primary bare wire with tree wire protection covered wire. This helps in reducing incidental outages, caused by tree or wildlife contact. We replaced 1260' of primary underground cable due to life span, cable faults or emergency motor vehicle accidents. In 2020 an additional 15,208' of primary underground cable was added due to new residential homes, developments or commercial buildings being built in Sterling. We installed 40 new meters and 17 new transformers throughout the SMLD distribution system totaling 4,080KVA or 4.08MVA. The SMLD has started deploying our new EATON AMI metering system that will benefit not only the rate payers but the Light Department as well. Unlike our older original AMI system that only worked with meters. Our new AMI system will allow the SMLD to tie into the radio RF system with capacitor banks and reclosers. This helps the Department by giving us the ability to expand the Distribution SCADA (System Control and Data Acquisition) system. This brings the SMLD one step closer to a "Smart Grid" style system, that can reduce outage restoration times and limit the number of exposed areas in the event of a major outage. In 2019 the SMLD installed 6 new capacitor banks, as well as upgrading the 8 existing locations that have all received new Capacitor Bank controls. These capacitor banks and controls will improve the quality of the power delivered with programs that have them operating on VAR (Volt-Ampere Reactive) settings that will turn on and turn off based on the parameters

settings of those specific locations and the downstream load. The SMLD has continued with the LED floodlight Conversion in 2020 and has converted a total of 114 of the 202 floodlights in town to 85watt LED contributing to better lighting at lower cost. It is expected to take about one more year to convert all floodlights to 85watt LEDs. When complete, this will reduce our stock from a high of 32 different types of lights and wattages of bulbs to only 3. The SMLD has also continued to change URD or cul-de-sac lights to LED as well.

We have changed 67 of the 71 URD or cul-de-sac lights throughout the SMLD distribution territory. We will continue to work on the secondary handhole box replacements in certain underground developments. The older style flush mount (sub-surface) handhole boxes are being replaced with above ground secondary pedestals. The new style pedestals allow cables to be attached to upright busbars inside the pedestal. The benefits to the upright busbars are getting the service connection point out of the bottom of the handhole and water, this reduces the deterioration of the cables and connectors that service the house or handhole. This will also allow for better trouble shooting capabilities and quicker restoration times in the winter months when flush mounts are frozen underneath snowbanks. In 2021, the SMLD Operations Department will continue to prioritize tree trimming, system hardening, safety and reliable electrical system. ***The SMLD continues to provide high system power and quality, as well as maintaining excellent customer satisfaction.***

### ***FIBER PROJECT***

In 2020, upon completion of the 72-strand fiber in and around the center of Sterling made possible by a ***\$150,000 Community Compact IT Grant received by the Town of Sterling***, we also installed a 432-backbone fiber from the Shrewsbury town line to the Leominster town line in Sterling. The fiber was placed along Route 140, Muddy Pond Road, Worcester Road, School Street, Leominster Road, Chocksett Road, Pratts Junction Road, Leominster Road. This will provide internet service to the Municipal buildings, Fire, Police and the DPW and will also provide improved communication capability to the radio towers, as well as access to SMLD equipment and renewable power supply assets. This new access to higher bandwidth will provide greater speeds and tremendous savings to the town with a 4.6-year payback.

### ***NEW WIND PROJECT***

***The Berkshire II 4.8MW Wind Project*** began operation in December of 2019 and is located alongside the existing 15MW Berkshire I Project on Brodie Mountain. These projects are owned by the Berkshire Wind Cooperative that is made up of 14

Massachusetts Municipal Light Departments. The SMLD's ownership is 5.3 % of the carbon free energy output from both projects.

## ***2 LEOMINSTER ROAD OPERATIONS BUILDING RENOVATIONS***

The renovations at our 2 Leominster Road Operations building are complete. Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic we were able to get the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor addition closed in, rough wiring and insulation were completed. The students from the Monty Tech Industrial class prepared parts of the building for sheetrock while the Monty Tech Masonry class installed a new front bay window, installed three new large windows along the north side of the building and prepared the rear of the building for window replacements before they had to leave the project due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout spring and into late summer of 2020 the line crew of SMLD worked to complete the interior work alongside with local contractors that were brought in to help complete the building. New mini-splits were installed and plumbing installation was completed. In late summer we were able to complete the siding and trim and final inspection was received in November 2020.

## ***AWARDS***

The most important award that we received in 2020 was the ***safety award***. For the tenth consecutive year the SMLD had ***no workers' compensation claims or lost time***. This not only lowered our workmen's compensation insurance premiums but also qualified the SMLD to receive the ***American Public Power Safety Award***. This award recognizes the Public Power Utilities across the country who achieves this milestone. Our improved safety record and reduced premiums also provide additional savings to our ratepayers.

## ***POWER SUPPLY***

In effort to diversify our power resources and stabilize purchased power costs, we buy electricity through fixed contracts and the open market. These costs reflect the generation and delivery of electricity to the Town of Sterling. There are many circumstances beyond our control that make the cost of electric energy fluctuate, such as, periods of peak power demands during extreme temperatures, unexpected plant shutdowns and spikes in fuel prices. Changing costs are triggered by unpredictable events from the fluctuating fuel commodity markets to global unrest. Natural gas prices have declined over the last few years, but we remain challenged with the uncertainty of the delivery during cold spells. Energy produced from natural gas has risen from 5% in 2000 to over 50% in 2019. Legislation is under consideration that will



require 80% renewables by 2050. This will be accomplished by using renewables such as solar and offshore wind projects as well as new hydro power that is being brought down from Canada. We support the reduction in carbon emissions and will continue to monitor this legislation and projects to be sure they are in the best interest of the Sterling ratepayers and that it does not supersede local control.

Our transmission and capacity costs continue to rise even while energy prices decline. The driver behind these costs is a combination of things; the capacity market in New England that does not provide the lowest possible rate to the consumers and the continued build out of transmission lines with projects running 34% over budget with no recourse. At the same time, transmission owners are receiving large returns (between 11-14%) on their multi-billion-dollar investments in transmission line upgrades in New England. The SMLD along with other municipal light plants and associations continue to contest these charges in Washington with our Legislators and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

As a result of these meetings various bills were filed that did bring some relief as the returns were lowered from 11.4% down to 10.54%. We will continue to contest that the returns be closer to the industry average of 9.2%.

### ***POWER PORTFOLIO***

***Our power portfolio is 71% carbon free.*** We receive ***hydro power*** specifically from ***Baltic Mills***, Mechanicsville Hydro, ***Energy Stream Hydro*** and ***Public Authority State of New York Hydro (PASNY)***. In 2019 ***over 30%*** of our power was received from ***renewable energy sources*** that includes the ***Berkshire Wind Project*** in Western MA, the ***Hancock Wind Project*** located in Hancock ME and the ***Princeton Wind Project*** on Wachusett Mountain in Princeton, MA.

### ***Solar Projects In Sterling***

- ***E. H. Perkins Project*** is a 1 MW solar array located on Jewett Road
- ***Wiles Road Project*** is a 2-mw solar array
- ***Origis Energy*** 1 mw solar with storage project on Chocksett Road.

We also receive power from the ***Millstone III Nuclear Plant*** in Millstone Connecticut and the ***Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant*** in New Hampshire. Other sources of our power supply come from the ***MMWEC Stony Brook*** Plant (combined cycle units I & II) and the ***Carbolon Generating Facility*** in Sterling.

***WE CONTINUE TO OFFER THE FOLLOWING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO OUR RESIDENTS***

- HELPS Home Energy Audit (no cost to residents)
- Energy Star® Rebate Program, [www.munihelps.org](http://www.munihelps.org)
- Electric Vehicle Rebates / Charging Rate
- Kill-A-Watt™ Electricity Usage Monitor
- TESCO Surge Arrester
- Customer Data/Billing Portals
- Multiple Payment Options
- EV Chargers
- Virtual Peaker Residential Demand Response Program.

***OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/CONTRIBUTIONS SANCTIONED BY THE SMLD LIGHT BOARD***

- Our Annual Open House normally held the 3rd Thursday in June.
- Installed LED holiday lights on the Town Common.
- Annually we Install pole, cable and lighting needed to power the Sterling Fair (not 2020).
- Provide funds for annual inspection and maintenance for all town owned generators.
- Offer the round-up program to our customers to benefit the Sterling Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N-2-N) Program. Since the program began in June 2014, your generous contributions have raised over \$17,000.00 for the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Fund.
- Work with the Energy Committee providing funding for energy efficiency projects in Municipal Buildings including LED lights that use up to 67% less energy to operate.
- Installed a new generator and power cables at the Senior Center.

***SMLD CHANGES IN 2020***

**Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI).** In 2008 using the Mueller Systems, we began installation of the first AMI system in the region. However, over the past years the system has experienced complications and started to fail. Mueller Systems indicated they were shifting away from supporting the electrical metering system and will only be supporting the water metering systems. We then partnered with Groton Electric Light Department on an RFP to replace the Mueller AMI system. After review of the eight systems that responded to our RFP, three were brought in for presentations and interviews. Eaton Industries was the vendor of choice and in April 2020 our agreement

was signed for \$675,616.00. This system will return \$375,000 in software support savings over a 15 year term. In June of 2020 the communication equipment (some communicating through our new fiber backbone) and 3,940 new replacement meters were ordered. In December 2020 we began the ***Meter Replacement Program***. Thank you to all our customers for their patience as work through this meter change-out project,

**Tree trimming services continued throughout 2020.** By using a ***competitive bid process*** for tree trimming the work is ***primarily performed by outside contractors***. Additional tree trimming is also performed by the ***SMLD line crew that involves a 5-year rotating cycle*** in areas that we see an increased growth or system problem.

**Utility Scam.** Be aware of utility scams that continue taking place in our area. Scammers are making calls after business hours at night and throughout the weekends. They identify themselves as a “utility” and demand that a payment be made over the phone or the service will be disconnected. ***Do not make a payment to this request.*** Hang up and call our office at 978-422-8267 (Mon. - Thurs. 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fri 7:30 to 11:30 am) or call the Sterling Police Department at 978-422-7331. Also, if anyone stops by your home claiming to be an SMLD employee and you do not have a pre-arranged appointment, ***do not let them in.*** All SMLD employees have photo I.D.’s and will only be at your home for a scheduled appointment. Again, call our office or the Sterling Police Department if this incident should occur.

Residents who rely on life supporting medical equipment should contact our office to be put on our ***Power Priority List***. This list is shared with our Police and Fire Departments for follow up in emergency situations.

We thank the DPW personnel for their assistance throughout the year by providing maintenance to our vehicles and assisting us during roadway excavations.

We thank the Water Department for their contribution in lowering our peak power demand by shedding loads during peak periods. This helps to reduce our transmission costs which benefits all ratepayers.

We would also like to thank the Police, Fire and Dispatchers for their continued support throughout the year. While most of the work by your departments is performed behind the scenes, it does not go unnoticed. Standing by to keep our crews safe at accident

sites, monitoring our crews while out on trouble calls or keeping our communication equipment operating at peak efficiency all contribute to the safety of our employees and for that we are most grateful.

Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Hamilton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sean Hamilton  
General Manager

For the Sterling Municipal Light Board Members:

Joseph Curtin, Chairman  
Brian Pierce, Vice Chairman  
Eric Darlington, Clerk

## **Town Planner**

I am pleased to submit my second annual report as Sterling's Town Planner. I provide professional land use assistance to land owners, applicants, developers, engineers and attorneys in addition to providing support to the Planning Board, the Economic Development Committee, the Master Plan Committee, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the and Housing Initiatives Committee.

I undertook substantial research and writing for proposed zoning amendments (see Planning Board report for a comprehensive list) that were deferred from Town Meeting warrant due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that these proposed amendments will be on the warrant at the Town's 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

This past year has been especially busy; aside from my project management duties for the Sterling Master Plan, the following technical assistance and grants were awarded:

- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Plan. The MVP Planning Grant from the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs was awarded to Sterling to develop a strategy plan for resiliency planning and climate preparedness. The Planning Grant portion of this program concluded in November 2020 and I will be commencing the process to secure the Action Grant portion in 2021.
- District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant. The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) awarded Sterling two DLTA grant projects this year; one is for the creation of the Circulation/Transportation Master Plan chapter and the second is for the drafting of recommended action items from the Town's Housing Production Plan.
- Massachusetts Downtown Initiatives grant. This grant from the MA Department of Housing and Community Development will assist Sterling revitalize its town center and will provide design guideline recommendations to retain its historic integrity.
- Complete Streets. This grant from the MA Department of Transportation categorizes a Complete Street as one that provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes (walking, biking, transit and vehicles) for people of all ages and abilities. In May 2020, the State approved Sterling's Tier 1 Policy Statement and granted funds to undertake the program's required Tier 2 Prioritization Plan which will subsequently allow Sterling to be eligible for project funding.

- MassDOT Shared Streets & Spaces grant. This was the inaugural year for this new grant from the MA Department of Transportation that awarded Sterling with two quick launch/quick-build projects for improvements to sidewalks, curbs, streets, parking, and outdoor dining and commerce. Sterling's pilot projects included the sidewalk on Boutelle Road and the numerous town center improvements.
- Community Development Block Group (CDGB) Microenterprises grant. This multi-town grant from the MA Department of Housing and Community Development, with the Town of Webster as the lead community, will provide grants to businesses defined as microenterprises.
- Planning Assistance grant. This grant from the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and through MRPC, will provide the development and implementation of land use regulations.

I participated in numerous professional development opportunities to keep up to date on new and innovative planning concepts in addition to learning about the most current case law.

Sterling's strength is its people. I hope to meet more of you this upcoming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Domenica Tatasciore, Town Planner

# **Wachusett Greenways 2020 Annual Report**

## **Navigating through Covid Times**

In 2020, Wachusett Greenways focused on safely navigating trail activity during the Covid-19 pandemic. This year the community especially benefitted from the Mass Central Rail Trail. Some trail users found this accessible, close to home, treasured resource for the first time. Wachusett Greenways is grateful to every trail user who is wearing a mask and distancing on the trail.

## **26 Years of Connecting the Community through Partnerships**

From the beginning, the Wachusett Greenways team has shared the mission to welcome everyone to enjoy the outdoors through trails in our region. This year Wachusett Greenways attained 26 years of connecting the community as an all-volunteer nonprofit partnership of community supporters, town and state government, local foundations and businesses. In 2020, the board continues working to ensure that the Mass Central Rail Trail is accessible. The board is focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion on the trail, in its board, among its volunteers and in its projects.

## **Trail Stewardship with Amazing Volunteers**

WG concentrated on stewardship of the Mass Central Rail Trail throughout this year of distanced contact. Dedicated volunteers were fundamental for trail maintenance. Very small teams, masked and distanced, carried out mowing, tree removal, brush cutting and drainage clearing. WG volunteers with special machinery completed some trail erosion and parking lot repairs. WG added several granite benches to the MCRT. Community and school groups, which WG relied on in prior years, will be a wonderful support when they resume volunteering in the future. Some town DPWs experienced staff reduction making them less available to participate with heavier trail maintenance.

## **Partner Town Support**

Wachusett Greenways thanks the citizens, select board members, town administrators and managers of our regional towns for their support for the Mass Central Rail Trail. In 2020, the towns, Barre, Holden, Oakham, Paxton, Princeton, Sterling and West Boylston, contributed toward Wachusett Greenways annual operating expenses. Despite the pandemic, some Towns still participated with mowing and special maintenance projects.

## **Key East-West Commonwealth Corridor**

Commonwealth agencies and other groups continue to construct more of the 104 mile MCRT between Northampton and Boston. In the central region, WG and our partners

are working to complete the remaining ten miles of the central 30-mile section of this multi-use trail, for recreation, transportation and health. In 2020, Wachusett Greenways advanced construction on the Mass Central Rail Trail with grant support from the DCR Recreational Trails Program and the new MassTrails Program. The WG partnership with the DCR Watershed Division continued. We completed MCRT reconstruction in Holden for the connector section between River Street and Manning Street including the addition of an accessible-grade bypass. WG progressed on construction of the 0.8 mile section in West Boylston along old Pleasant Street between Route 140/Beaman Street and Prescott Street.



Manning to River stone dust paving

MCRT projects now underway for 2021 and beyond include surface restoration in West Boylston between Thomas Street and I-190, new construction of the 1.9 mile section in Holden from Mill Street to Princeton Street, replacement of the bridge in Sterling at the Quag/West Waushacum and reconstruction of the trail for accessibility in Rutland at Whitehall Road. Another future set of MCRT projects, which WG is planning, includes reconstruction in Holden between Manning Street and Route 31 at Mill Street with accessible grades and constructing the missing link in Rutland at Miles Road.

### **Events on Hold**

Trail events were on hold during the 2020 pandemic, as Wachusett Greenways awaits a safer time to gather. Wachusett Greenways cancelled the scheduled May annual meeting, intended to celebrate WG's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Finally, in December, WG held a small virtual annual meeting. When gatherings can occur in the future, we anticipate celebrating a Wachusett Greenways landmark birthday at the Mass Central Rail Trail.



## Think Positive!

Just as 2020 closed, on January 16, 2021, Eric Johansen passed away. Wachusett Greenways benefitted from Eric Johansen's support from the beginning in 1994, and he continued to encourage making the Mass Central Rail Trail and open spaces accessible to all. Eric was a powerful inspiration and encourager for the whole community. His 'Think Positive' (thumbs up) sticker on the pink bumper of his red 'EJ's Painting' truck was the cue to return his big smile and wave as we passed. He took time to build up EVERYONE, and he offered his enthusiastic leadership and humble support for a wonderful variety of community services.

## Every Wachusett Greenways Donor Counts!

Thank you to each supporter who contributed to Wachusett Greenways in 2020. New



donors and loyal members are key. The total number of donors for the year reached 860 including 49 new members. Donors came from 128 different towns and 22 different states.

Wachusett Greenways welcomes every member. In addition, Wachusett Greenways has three special Mass Central Rail Trail Funds: 1) MCRT Construction Fund, 2) Edward P. Yaglou MCRT Maintenance Fund, 3) MCRT Stewardship Endowment Fund. Donors are invited to designate their gifts to any of these funds to help complete the trail, carry out regular maintenance, and protect the trail for the future.

You are invited to contribute at [www.wachusettgreenways.org](http://www.wachusettgreenways.org) or by mail at Wachusett Greenways, P.O. Box 121, Holden 01520. A gift in *any* amount counts you as a member, and you will receive the *Wachusett Greenways* guide, which includes a map for the regions' trails and greenways. Volunteers are welcome.

Wachusett Greenways Board of Directors:

Colleen Abrams, Chair	Troy Milliken, Treasurer
Christy Barnes	Mike Peckar, Secretary
Richard Barry	Christopher Ryan
Stephen Chanis	

## Zoning Board of Appeals

To the Honorable Select Board and the Citizens of Sterling:

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) has the authority to hear appeals of the Zoning Enforcement Officer, to grant Variances when zoning requirements cannot be met, and to grant Special Permits based on use where required by Sterling's Protective Bylaws.

In 2020, the Zoning Board of Appeals received 8 petitions.

January	81 Chace Hill Road (Cont.)	40B – 16 units/8 Bldgs.	Continued*
	12 Industrial Drive	Variance – small quantity generator	Withdraw w/o prejudice
	5 Pine Woods Lane	Extend cell tower Special Permit	Granted
	14 Clemence Avenue	Special Permit to extend garage damaged by fire	Granted
March	81 Chace Hill Road (Cont.).	40B	Continued*
May	9 Malvern Hill Road	Request to Extend Variance	Granted
July	3 Redstone Hill Road	Special Permit for Accessory Apartment	Granted
August	3 Michael Lane	Special Permit for Commercial Kennel	Granted
September	Northgate Meadows	Modification of Comprehensive Permit	Continued*
	3 Trinity Avenue	Special Permit to rebuild after 2 years & Variance for front yard setback	Granted
October	Northgate Meadows	40B Modification	Continued*
	163 Princeton Road	Special Permit for Accessory Apartment	Granted
November December	Northgate Meadows	40B Modification	Continued*

\*Both 40B projects (Comprehensive Permit/affordable housing) spanned over the course of several months of hearings.

This past year the Board has been working on a number of proposed zoning amendments. Specifically, those related to the Signs, Earth Removal and the Table of Principal Uses.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fox, Chairman  
Diana Baldarelli, Clerk  
Joseph Curtin, Vice Chairman

Jerry Siver  
Matthew CampoBasso  
Charles Conroy, Alternate