



# Town of Great Barrington

## Town Manager's Office



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*Liz Hartsgrove*  
Town Manager

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## Report to the Select Board

To: *Great Barrington Select Board*

From: *Liz Hartsgrove, Town Manager*

Meeting Date: *November 17, 2025*

### 1. TOWN OPERATIONAL UPDATES

- a) In addition to my recent arrival as Town Manager, several additional hires have officially joined Team GB. I am pleased to welcome **Deena Gilbert as HR Director, and Kate Van Olst as Conservation Agent; and welcome back Tate Coleman as Director of Public Transportation.** These positions provide very different but critical functions within the municipality and region, both internally and externally, and I am very excited to have them part of our team.
- b) I would like to remind the community that next week, **Town buildings will be closed on Thursday November 27<sup>th</sup>** to celebrate Thanksgiving and will resume normal hours on Friday November 28<sup>th</sup>. Any departments experiencing staffing shortages on Friday necessitating office closure will post notice on their webpage by Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup>, signage on their physical public facing space and have an out of office reply on their emails notifying of their return date. I encourage members of the public to look on the website for information specific to their needed service.
- c) It is **Licensing Renewal Season**, for most, if not all, business licenses issued by the Select Board and Board of Health. 2025 licenses expire at 11:59pm on December 31, 2025. I encourage all businesses to make sure they have submitted all their annual paperwork and completed inspections sooner rather than later to ensure the transition from 2025 to 2026 is seamless for their operations, and allows town staff the proper time to assist.

### 2. COMMUNITY SERVICE UPDATES

- a) With the Holiday Season approaching, I wanted to remind the community there are a number of town departments and buildings that accept donations, including:
  - **Health** Department has been working with The Berkshire Diaper Project to host a diaper donation bin, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Town Hall.
  - **PD** at the Station provides a year-round 24 hours a day drop off for toys, clothing, and food, in addition to their participation of Toys for Tots.

- **Mason Library** has begun collecting shelf stable food and hygiene products for People's Pantry and will be collecting at least through the end of the calendar year. Donations can be dropped off anytime during open hours. There are bins near the Dresser Ave and Main St entrances.
- **Transfer Station and DPW Highway building** provides a flag collection drop off.

### **3. GRANT UPDATES**

- a) I wanted to congratulate PD Ex. Assistant Cara Becker for obtaining a **\$25,000 grant** from the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to assist with strengthening several key initiatives such as:
- **Traffic Safety Enforcement:** Increased patrols focused on speeding, distracted driving, and impaired driving in high-traffic areas.
  - **Pedestrian Safety Operations:** Crosswalk enforcement details, visibility campaigns, and education on safe crossings for pedestrians and drivers.
  - **Bicycle and E-Mobility Safety Education:** Programs focused on safe and lawful operation of traditional bicycles, e-bikes, and electric scooters, including helmet use, speed limits, and proper roadway positioning.
  - **Public Awareness Campaigns:** initiatives using social media, schools, and local media to educate residents about traffic safety and e-mobility laws.

Residents can follow the department's Facebook page, Instagram, and the Town of Great Barrington website for updates on upcoming safety programs and enforcement efforts.

### **4. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES**

- a) A reminder to all residents and business owners, that as of November 15<sup>th</sup> the **Winter Parking Ban** is now in effect until April 1<sup>st</sup>, between the hours of 1am and 6am for all Town roads. Violations may result in fines and towing of the vehicle at owner's expense for impeding snow removal. Two electronic message boards have been placed around town to help remind drivers of the ban. In addition to the Winter Parking Ban, all businesses should remove items from town sidewalk such as chairs, tables and signage.
- b) Separate from the Winter Parking Ban, and as in years past, **Seekonk Cross Road will be closing for the winter** to protect road integrity, starting next week until roughly June, depending on weather conditions.

### **5. PUBLIC WORKS UPDATES**

- a) DPW has been actively working with MBI, Spectrum and Verizon to transfer and elevate low hanging wires on **Blue Hill Road**. I am happy to report that as of last week, MBI has completed their work of moving their fiber, Verizon has completed a temporary correction, and Spectrum is queued for their portion of work to be completed this week creating a near 100% completion of this issue being achieved

prior to the official start of winter. I would like to thank DPW for their ongoing efforts to manage coordinating the project to completion.

- b) MassDOT will be holding a 25% Design public hearing for the superstructure replacement project of **Bridge No. G-11-014**, which spans **State Road (Routes US 7/ST 23) over the Housatonic River**. The meeting will be on **Wednesday November 19<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm** at the GB Fire Station. For more information, please visit [www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events](http://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events)

## **6. HOUSATONIC WATER UPDATES**

- a) I met with Donna Jacobs and Art Blumenthal of Housatonic Filtration Initiative to discuss collaborative opportunities to help GB property owners, who are HWW customers, access available information and financial resources, including the State issued ARPA funds awarded to the Town in 2024 aimed to provide customers in GB financial relief with the installation of water filtration systems, purchase of bottled water or laundry cleaning costs incurred.

To date, approximately \$170,000 of the original \$250,000 funding remains unspent, and the availability of those dedicated State APRA funds is set to expire by November 2026. A recommendation will be presented to the Select Board for your discussion and consideration, at your December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

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