

President's Message



Christopher J. Bouchard

Hello members,

I hope this letter finds everyone well and healthy during these uncertain times. A year ago, if you asked me, "what do you think the biggest challenge will be in your career," I can assure you that a pandemic would not have been on the list. WOW! The pandemic has added a whole new set of challenges to the work day, including daily health certifications, masks, hand sanitizer, disinfecting, social distancing and more, and that's all before we tackle all of the normal things crews need to go to work.

I want to take a moment to thank all the DPW staff in our cities and towns for everything that you have endured and adapted to during COVID19. It has been more challenging to complete the important work that we do such as trash / recycling, water, sewer, power, highway, parks, facilities, fleet maintenance and more, with less time and possibly reduced staff. We have a whole new set of guidelines to adhere to, while trying to stay safe from an invisible problem without a definitive fixed solution. Thank you to you and your staff for being on the front lines every day and adapting to something we could have never prepared for.

Let us not lose sight of the importance of infrastructure through the challenges of the pandemic. Now is the time to start thinking about how we can encourage and show our legislators and elected officials how important an increase to funding and a multiyear Chapter 90 Bond Bill will be in continuing to stabilize our economy. The State will always have some financial reason why they say they can't increase funding over multiple years, but it is important to point out that Chapter 90 gets spent with LOCAL IN-STATE BUSINESSES that employ RESIDENTS / TAXPAYERS. This will be spent repairing the 80% of the road miles of infrastructure that the cities and towns are tasked to maintain, resulting in improved infrastructure, jobs, and tax revenue all retained in our state. This is the true way to spur our own economy in Massachusetts. We also must stress the importance of a timely release of the funds so that we may bid and award contracts early in the spring, working within the short weather window that we have in Massachusetts to get quality work completed.

We have been working hard to develop a platform to request mutual aid for Cities and Towns - please keep an eye out for emails and check the <http://masshwy.org/> website for updates and information pertaining to how the mutual aid will work and when it will be officially rolled out.

It is hard to believe that we have lost a year's worth of workshops, meetings, golf events and the expo. While we are doing our best to maintain connections through remote meetings, the lack of in-person events has caused us to lose that peer interaction that is so helpful and beneficial to us. I encourage everyone to reach out to your neighboring communities and stay in touch with your peers; it is all too easy to get wrapped up in the day-to-day challenges we are all facing today. Talk about how it is going and how are they doing; sharing ideas about specific challenges may lead to solutions where you never thought you would find them.

The good news is, although the vast majority of 2020 has seemed like a snowstorm that never ends, the lessons of strength, innovation, resilience and adapting to challenges we never could have imagined is why we are PUBLIC WORKS STRONG. We WILL get through this TOGETHER! Stay safe and healthy.

Christopher J. Bouchard
President

Mass Highway Assn. / Tri County Joint Meeting

By Chris Bouchard, MHA President

Join us on November 10, 2020 for our virtual joint meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Session 1 will be an introduction to public works mutual aid and how it will work for cities and towns.

MA DOT and Baystate Roads will give brief updates on what they are doing during COVID and how they can help you.

Session 2 will be an introduction to Arc GIS online and how it can benefit cities and towns, big and small.

We look forward to seeing you at our first meeting since the winter meeting in February. I would like to thank the MHA and Tri County Boards for collaborating on this virtual meeting. This is something neither organization has done before, and a special thanks to Baystate Roads for hosting this virtual meeting.

41st New England Public Works Expo

The 41st New England Public Works Expo was another casualty of Covid-19. The Board waited until late August to make the cancellation decision with the hopes that we would be able to hold the show as planned. Vendors were given the choice of full refund or roll over until next year.

We know that it is important for vendors to meet face to face, and that will not be happening this year. We have created an Expo Vendor Service Directory that will be placed on MHA and NEPWE websites that lists the company name, contact, website and a description of products services of the participating Expo vendor. The Directory will be also eblasted to our entire MHA/Expo attendee email list soon.

We look forward to next year's Expo scheduled for September 15th and 16th 2021.

Annual Election of Officers

Because of Covid-19 and the cancellation of the Annual Meeting on May 7th, mail in balloting was extended to May 29th. The results of the 109 ballots cast were:

President (to serve one year) **Christopher Bouchard**, Town of South Hadley

1st Vice President (to serve one year) **Lisa DeMeo**, Town of Salisbury

2nd Vice President (to serve one year) **John Haines**, Town of East Bridgewater

Trust Fund Trustee (to serve four years) **Michael Valenti**, MHA Life Member

Director from Berkshire County (to serve 3 years) **Curt Wilton**, Town of West Stockbridge

MHA Awards 27 Scholarships for 2020

The Massachusetts Highway Association awarded 27 scholarships in 2020. It was disappointing that we were not able to honor these hard-working students in person at our Annual Meeting; however, the MHA Trustees did their work to evaluate all of the applicants and recommend the awards to the following students:

Emily Roberts (Aldo Bartlett Award), Anthony Crisafulli, Jacob Colson, Kristen Carriero, James Collins, Patrick O'Regan, Mia Russell, Julia Russell, Elsie Buckley, Shelby Scarborough, Samuel McGown, Mary Tonaszuck, Alexis Nastasia, Samuel Stencel, Alex Stencel, Micah Kashi, Julia Fitzgerald, Sarah Fitzgerald, Andrew Langley, Ian Noyes, Meghan McGonagle, Connor Woodsmall, Brandon Hooper, Brooklyn Pratt, Matthew Bagley, Elise Maynard and Kevin MacDonald Congratulations to all!

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Update

By Ariela Lovett, MMA Legislative Analyst

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Massachusetts state legislature voted to extend their formal legislative session beyond the customary July 31 deadline into early January 2021. A conference committee of State Representatives and Senators continues to deliberate House and Senate versions of a multi-billion-dollar transportation bond bill, with no final bill announced as of yet.

The House passed two large transportation bills in early March, including a \$300 million annual authorization for the Chapter 90 program, and proposals to raise new revenues to fund transportation infrastructure statewide. As the financial consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic deepened, both the Senate and the House reversed course on promises to increase funding for Chapter 90, and ultimately passed a FY21 Chapter 90 authorization at \$200 million in late June.

Despite advocacy efforts on the part of the MMA and the MHA, the legislature opted not to include long-term funding for the Chapter 90 program in the transportation bond bill still being debated. This bond bill would, however, reauthorize funding for MassDOT municipal grant programs including Complete Streets, Small Bridges, and a new Municipal Pavement Partnership program for locally owned, state-numbered routes, funding for which both groups have also advocated.

The MMA will be releasing shortly our biennial Chapter 90 survey, to be filled out by public works directors, highway superintendents, or their equivalents in all 351 cities and towns. The survey aims to capture the amount of Chapter 90 local road funding a municipality needs annually to maintain its roads in a state of good repair.

In 2018, the last time the MMA conducted the survey, nearly 70% of cities and towns responded. An aggregate calculation (including an estimated amount for each missing respondent) found that Massachusetts municipalities would need \$685 million annually to maintain their roads in a state of good repair.

The MMA uses the figures calculated from the Chapter 90 survey to advocate for increased local road funding with the state legislature and Governor's Administration.

A culvert and small bridge working group coordinated by MassDOT and the Division of Fish and Game recently released its final report

with recommendations to replace culverts and small bridges more quickly and cost-effectively with climate-resilient structures that can withstand storms, improve public safety, and protect and restore natural resources.

Both the MMA (by this author) and the MHA (by Tom Reynolds) were represented on the working group and helped craft the recommendations, with an emphasis on increasing grant funding and streamlining regulatory requirements. MHA President Chris Bouchard attended the launch event in Becket where the report was presented and the Governor's Administration announced \$800K in municipal culvert replacement grants.

The full report can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-culverts-and-small-bridges-working-group-report/download>.

Lastly, the MMA is hosting its Annual Meeting and Trade Show as a virtual event on Thursday and Friday, January 21 and 22, 2021. The Mass. Highway Association is sponsoring a workshop for municipal officials to learn about the MHA's new mutual aid initiative. More details about the conference and final workshop scheduling details can be found here: <https://www.mma.org/mma-annual-meeting-and-trade-show/>.

For more information about any of the topics covered in this article, contact MMA Legislative Analyst Ariela Lovett at alovett@mma.org.



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MHA Mutual Aid Update- Fall 2020

By David Desrosiers

The schedule to get the Public Works Mutual Program up and running has been pushed back by the Covid-19 pandemic. We were hoping to have everything fully up and running by now, but we are still a few months away. I will try to give everyone a quick update on where we currently stand.

Our committee is once again meeting in person. It was difficult to try to get everything done only with virtual meetings. The tablets have been purchased and issued to all County Mutual Aid Coordinators (CMAC's). The GIS online platform is being turned over to MassDOT. The team at GEODOT is helping us with refinements and a few additional features to help it work more efficiently.

We are scheduled to begin training the CMAC's with tabletop exercises in November. We hope to provide additional information to the entire MHA at the Joint Tri-County MHA virtual meeting scheduled in November. Additional training and information will be provided to the entire MHA membership in the near future. We will send notices through your county organizations. Look for them in the near future.

Environmental Partners Welcomes Conrad Leger!



EP is pleased to announce that Conrad Leger has joined its Leadership Team as the Director of Asset Management.

Conrad has over 15 years of diverse experience in transportation, stormwater and asset management, with a particular focus on right-of-way assets including pavement, ADA curb ramps, sidewalks, MUTCD signs, and underground infrastructure mapping.

Anyone familiar with Conrad and EP knows we are in complete alignment to service and partnership with our clients to meet those challenges. We could not be more pleased to have Conrad join the EP Team!" EP co-founder and CEO Paul Gabriel said.

Safety Corner

Compliments of Jennifer Tetreault of HazCompliance, LLC

Stop! It's Contagious....

This year has been a challenging year for safety. There is one safety topic which has dominated much of the 2020 workplace:

Covid-19. Aside from the respiratory illness this causes, there are other safety risks to address concerning Covid-19. Being in the safety field, our consultants were flooded with the race to train on hygiene and disinfecting practices. Protocols for worker rotation, temperature testing and determining general wellness were rampant. Pandemic Response Plans flew off the shelves. And people turned inward to themselves, focused on avoiding this high-risk virus.

Yet, the workplace still went on. And it still goes on. We are working the same tasks, performing the same jobs, though with added precautionary methods for a contagious virus. Our clients with whom we assist with managing safety- there was silence for months involving safety training or compliance with other safety topics. Did general safety take the third row?

My fear is that while we are trying to pull together to protect ourselves from one risk, we may be reducing the importance of safety for other risks. Furthermore, while focusing on protecting from the risk of Covid-19, we have turned so far inward that the social aspect of our jobs and work community are compromised. Whether it is split shift, or one man/one vehicle, or removing the lunch gathering spot- we have taken away some of the camaraderie and replaced it with more solitary working, combined with paranoia if a co-worker coughs.

The need for viral safety is imperative; there should not be a question about that. And it is acknowledged that during these unprecedented times, we all scrambled to stay focused on what needed to be done to flatten curves and stop the spread. As we now continue to balance pandemic safety within our workplace, let us not forget that many jobs in the industry remain inherently dangerous; a moving vehicle will still kill a person in a workzone, a trench can still collapse, and a cut-off saw can still maim the operator. And most importantly, let us not forget that safety is a community effort. An effort that requires us watching out for each other while we perform our daily jobs. A shelved attitude about safety can be contagious, especially from management. Please make workplace safety infectious again.

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“Stump the Instructor” A Weekly Series

Like all of you, Baystate Roads and the UMass Transportation Center are adjusting to new conditions at work and home. We are also exploring new ways to continue to support you in this time of social distancing. Over the next few weeks, we would like to hold a series of online “Stump the Instructor” sessions. Each week, we will select a discussion topic and present a 1-hour on-line jam session.

So far, we have had excellent discussions on Drainage, Drones, Chainsaws and Leading During a Pandemic. Please send mdsmith@umass.edu your Hot Topic ideas or if you are interested in speaking for a session.

Join Zoom Meeting Every Wednesday at 8:00AM (NEW time) and Follow Baystate Roads on Facebook or Twitter (@BaystateRoads) for Weekly Topics.

Sessions are recorded weekly, so visit: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/umtc/Stump-the-Instructor1.asp> to watch and show your crews any that you have missed.

Subscribe to the Baystate Roads Listserv

Baystate-roads-l Mailing List is an email message system to reach the municipal public works departments throughout the Commonwealth. We have seen an increase in usage during the COVID-19 situation. It provides a way that municipalities can pose questions and discuss topics among your public works peers.

The Baystate Roads Program Listserv is open to members of municipal highway departments throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as well as individuals from state and private agencies.

Subscribers can post a message to the listserv members by sending email to baystate-roads-l@engin.umass.edu.

To see the collection of prior postings to the list, visit the Baystate-roads-l Archives. (The current archive is only available to subscribers.) To subscribe, please follow this link: <https://list.umass.edu/mailman/listinfo/baystate-roads-lor> email donnelly@umass.edu

Online Trainings:

Snow and Ice Operations for Front Line Employees – Virtual Classroom

While all are welcome to attend regardless of their position with a DPW, **Snow and Ice Operations for Front Line Employees** is designed for plow operators and those who are directly involved in snow removal.

The course consists of two separate zoom sessions from 8:30 am -10:30 am. Both sessions need to be attended to receive Baystate Roads credit and certificate. Each session will be held on a Tuesday morning. The zoom link will be provided once you have completed the registration.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1613&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

Snow and Ice Operations for Supervisors– Virtual Classroom

Snow and Ice Operations for Supervisors is designed for those in a supervisory role. This course will cover much of the same material in *Snow and Ice Operations for Front Line Workers* but will include more technical information that management staff will benefit from.

The course will consist of three separate zoom sessions. All three sessions will need to be attended to receive Baystate Roads credit and course certificate. Each session will be held on a Thursday morning. The zoom link will be provided once you have completed the registration.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1617&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

Confined Space Training – Virtual Classroom

The Confined Space Training-Blended Learning is a new online format of the original course that includes self-guided modules, followed by a live Zoom meeting with the instructor. You will have three weeks to complete the self-guided portion prior to the live meeting.

This course will cover the new confined space standard for construction activities that OSHA issued effective August 2015 as well as the general industry standard, which have very similar requirements. It does not train your workers for entry rescue into a Permit-Required Confined Space, but it does cover all aspects of the standard and what is required including: General Requirements, Written Program, Written Permit, Attendant Duties, Entrant Duties, Entry Supervisor Duties, Emergency Procedures.

Following this self-paced portion, all participants will meet in an approximately 3-hour virtual live-stream Zoom session, where instructor Steve St. Laurent will cover:

- Review of Online Session
- General Requirements of Standard
- Permit Details
- More Definitions
- Atmospheric Fact Sheets: CO, Hydrogen Sulfide, Testing Procedures
- Application
- Rescue
- And a Final Q&A

Live Zoom Session (must complete online portion first): Zoom link in Module 8

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1610&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

Stormwater System Maintenance and Green Infrastructure Retrofitting in MA – Virtual Classroom

This MS4 inspired session will focus on providing firsthand experiences in different scale retrofit projects, completed or in process, by towns in Massachusetts. Attendees will learn about what challenges were faced, the why and how of the solutions chosen, what the benefits (expected benefits) are, and project costs. Projects being presented are on porous pavement, catch basins, and watershed work.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1612&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

MaPIT 3.0 – Virtual Classroom

MaPIT version 3.0 has rolled out with many new and updated features! This class is intended for any new or existing MaPIT users who currently use, or plan to use, the tool to initiate new highway projects, and to familiarize themselves with the new features. These features include:

- New interactive forms
- Targeted questions to establish a richer project scope
- Additional GIS layers to alert project proponent to new opportunities, risks, and areas of interest
- Dynamic alerts for potential permitting requirements, action items, and supplemental information
- Option to upload supporting documentation
- Better alignment with MassDOT scoring criteria

This class is intended to only instruct users on the Highway Project Workflows; MaPIT's ability to initiate Local Aid projects (such as Chapter 90, Complete Streets, and Small Bridge grant awards) will be deployed later this fall and additional training for those workflows will be offered at a later time.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1614&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

OSHA 10 Hour Construction Training – Virtual Classroom

The OSHA Outreach Ten Hour Construction Training Program provides training on the recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of workplace hazards. Classes also provide overview information regarding OSHA, including workers' rights, employer responsibilities, and how to file a complaint. All OSHA 10 Hour Construction Training is intended to cover an overview of the hazards a worker may encounter on a job site. Training emphasizes hazard identification, avoidance, control and prevention, not OSHA standards.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1619&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

Complete Streets 201 – Virtual Classroom

This virtual live instructor led training will provide an in-depth technical review of various Complete Streets design elements. Attendees will learn:

- Benefits of Complete Streets;
- Design guidance for people walking, biking, and taking transit;
- Methods to balance roadway users and apply flexibility;
- Complete Street Funding Program requirements; and
- Best practices for public engagement.

The course will be held over two, two-hour sessions held on back-to-back days. The elements discussed will be applied through a design exercise, that will include a 30-minute homework assignment between the first and second day. The following will be covered each day:

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/Course-View.asp?MODE=VIEW&clCourseID=1600&csCategory=230&cs-From=&csTo=&csKeyword=&csSortBy=2&clPageNumber=1&cl-ParentCategory=0>

Online Traffic Signal Warrants: How to Perform, Assess, and Satisfy the Requirements of Each

Included are 12 bite-sized modules, with recorded instructor clips, PowerPoint PDFs and other course resources, brief quizzes to assess your knowledge, a final assessment, and course certificate.

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to determine whether a traffic signal is warranted for a specific location, given the requirement of each of nine signal warrants and traffic data.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/ev.asp?MODE=&ID=4268>

Online FAA Remote Pilot Certification Test Preparation

This **UMTC self-paced online course** is based on a recorded presentation by Aviation and UAS industry experts and is geared toward individuals who wish to earn their FAA Remote Pilot Certification. Students will also learn about UAS Safety Management Practices that insurance companies and risk managers encourage.

This 9-hour course covers all required knowledge content areas of the FAA's Remote Pilot Test including: Regulations, The National Airspace System, Weather, Aircraft Loading and Performance, and Flight Operations. Upon completion, students should feel qualified to take the FAA Remote Pilot Test.

Course Objectives

- To prepare attendees with minimal UAS experience for the FAA Remote Pilot Test
- To introduce attendees to FAA requirements for drone operations as they apply to both private and public entities.
- To introduce attendees FAA Remote Pilot Regulations
- To highlight some of the most common safety practices for both current and potential drone operators.

Register: <https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/assnfe/ev.asp?MODE=&ID=4274>

County Association News

Barnstable County – Roby Whitehouse

Barnstable County Scholarship Charity Golf Event is scheduled to be held on June 7, 2021 at the Club at New Seabury.

Thanks to the support of the Barnstable County Public Works Association membership, more than \$17,000 in scholarships have been awarded to deserving students in 2020.

Barnstable County Public Works Association members have met remotely and plan to continue having remote meetings to keep the Public Works conversation moving.

Berkshire County – Curt Wilton

Like most, the Berkshire County Highway Superintendent's Association concluded its year with little fanfare and no news to report. As the COVID19 pandemic shut down the entire world, we are hopeful of getting back into our normal routines. Our 2021 events and dates have been set; let's hope we can stick to these dates with no pandemic cancellations. Please note, venues listed are subject to change.

April 22, 2021/ 1st Meeting/Workshop

June 18, 2021/ Annual Charity Golf Tournament

June 24, 2021/ 2nd Meeting/Workshop

August 26, 2021/ 3rd Meeting/Workshop

September 17, 2021/ Annual Equipment Show & Picnic, Hinsdale Volunteer Fire Grounds, Hinsdale, Ma.

October 28, 2021/ Annual Election of Officers Meeting and Scholarship Awards.

Essex County – Michael Hale

Newburyport

- SRTS project on High ST. - working with MADOT and contractor Pacella to install ADA ramps, curbing and sidewalks in the area of the high school.
- Working with the planning department on the PCB remediation area in the old shoreline rail trail corridor behind the WWTP regarding removal and backfill plus raising grade for rising tides.
- Sidewalk and paving project on Merrimac Street - one-mile paving and sidewalk rehab-upgrade/ install ADA ramps for crosswalks
- Completed roofing projects for Library and DPS Facilities

Salisbury

Despite the pandemic, there is a lot happening in Salisbury.

An \$18M sewer project on Lafayette Road was recently started, and a \$3M water main replacement project on Bridge Road is about to begin. Both of these projects have to be completed on schedule so that we stay ahead of a MassDOT paving project of Route 1.

Two different rail trails are wrapping up this fall. DOT is managing these and when done they will complete Salisbury's portion of the Boston-to-Borders Rail Trail network. In August, a new pedestrian bridge was set over Route 1. This will provide plenty of clearance for vehicles to pass under.



Town Buildings are now open to the public with appropriate COVID protocols.

We had a lot of new procedures at the beach over the summer regarding the comfort station.

Extra staff was hired, cleaning supplies purchased, and state sanctioned protocols were all put in place. This fall, construction begins on a much-anticipated new comfort station at the beach center.

Gloucester

Despite the pandemic, the City of Gloucester Department of Public Works, has stepped up their operational output as well as the number of capital construction projects. Seven months into the COVID-19 public health emergency, Gloucester's Public Works employees remain on the front lines, providing quality support to the residents and visitors of the city.

2020 has seen Gloucester Public Works tackle the following projects:

- Trask Street Neighborhood MassWorks Grant Utility Upgrade Project, a \$3.6 million dollar water, sewer, drain and street reconstruction project.
- Babson Water Filtration Plant HVAC upgrades, a \$950,000 project.
- Water Pollution Control Facility plant upgrades, a \$1.9 million dollar project.
- Sewer Pump Station FOG Project, addressing needed fats, oil and grease management at various sewer pumping stations, a \$1.6 million dollar project.
- Babson Reservoir Aeration Project.
- Phase 2 of Reservoir/Dam Intake Structure Upgrades, a \$2.25 million dollar project.
- Brier Neck Neighborhood Water Rehabilitation Project, replacement and lining of aged water infrastructure, a \$1.65 million dollar project.
- Gloucester High School Fieldhouse Project, complete reconstruction of the interior of the fieldhouse including, basketball court, practice courts, indoor track, bleacher system and scoreboard, a \$1.5 million dollar project.
- Hesperus Avenue Resurfacing Project, 2.8 miles of road resurfacing in the Magnolia neighborhood.
- Rogers Street Resurfacing Project, 1 mile in the heart of downtown Gloucester.
- Gloucester Harbor Master's Building Project, complete renovation of the Harbor Master's facility on historic Harbor Loop, a \$2.4 million dollar project.
- Gloucester Public Schools HVAC Evaluation and Repair Project, estimated at \$800,000, the City has teamed with Siemens to provide the staff and students a safe place to work and learn.
- Hazard Tree Mitigation Project, Public Works has teamed with Mayer Tree to improve safety and overhead utility reliability with the removal of hundreds of hazard trees citywide.
- Causeway Street and Overlook Avenue Watermain Relay projects, inhouse projects to improve reliability to the water distribution network.

The following are tentative dates scheduled for 2021 Essex County Highway Association events. Revisions to these dates will be posted on the ECHA website and via email notification.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Trade Show | Tuesday, May 11, 2021 (to be confirmed) |
| 2. Summer Meeting | Thursday, June 3, 2021 |
| 3. Golf Tournament | Monday, August 2, 2021 |
| 4. Fall Technical/Annual Meeting | Thursday, December 2, 2021 |

Norfolk-Bristol-Middlesex – Robert Cantoreggi

After a 48-year career, Needham DPW Director, Rick Merson retired last month, leaving a legacy among the ranks of the Town's Public Works department and his colleagues, who praised him for his collegial, optimistic attitude.

Working his way up through the ranks, which included managing both the Town's Sewer & Drain Division & the Engineering Division, Merson was promoted to DPW Director in 1992. The town was transforming after a building boom following World War II and new single-family homes and subdivisions required the Town to invest in its infrastructure. Merson set in motion a set of master plans and/or game plans for the community for the water, wastewater, drain, and road systems and over time, was able to get all departments in Needham to take a combined systems approach for infrastructure improvements.

In 2013, a Natick DPW employee was killed while repairing a water main break and the trench that he was working in caved in. For the last decade, Merson has worked with other DPW directors to draw attention to the inherent dangers DPW employees encounter daily.

Rick has been a longtime member of many organizations, including New England APWA, where he also served as President. In addition, he has received numerous awards and was recognized at American Public Works Associations "Top Ten Leaders."

A legacy of gratitude

Professional career accolades are one thing; but Rick's family life is even more impressive. In 1983, he and his wife, Jan, adopted twin girls. Diagnosed with cerebral palsy, Melissa and Sarah Merson were the size of newborns at 7-months old. Prior to the twins' arrival, Jan and Rick traveled to Dallas to meet with their foster-parents who taught the new parents how to care for children with special needs. The twins pretty much became their whole life. A few years after the twins arrived, Rick and Jan welcomed two biological children -- in 1989 and 1992 with the birth of their son, Shea Michael, and daughter, Maura Kathleen.

As if "two homegrown and two rentals," were not enough, Merson would joke, he and Jan volunteered to be foster parents, helping care for almost 40 children over a period of 10 years with the help of loving family members.

That Rick Merson, now a grandfather, was able to devote so much time to his family while serving as a 48-year stalwart at the Needham DPW is remarkable; but he won't describe it to you like that. He would say, "Given the kind of business I am in, I was able to spend the time I was able to spend with [my family] when I could, which was a little more flexible sometimes because I am pretty much on duty 24/7. The other side to that is that there were times when there were weather events and tragedies like hurricanes or major storms that I needed to be there for." "It's just kind of the way I am built. I didn't take the job home with me; and I didn't have a situation where I took home into work," Merson would say. "Overall, it's been a fair balance, and I am grateful [to my family], first and foremost, for them being able to support all of the stuff I have been able to do."

Plymouth County – John Haines

Like most organizations and associations, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to keep the Plymouth County Highway associations members from gathering in our typical fashion; at our monthly business meetings, annual equipment show and charitable functions.

It is more important than ever that we remember what is at the core

of our associations, the relationships we develop over years. No one has exemplified that more than Tom Reynolds. Tom retired in August, after nine years as Director of Public Works for the town of Marshfield. Tom's career in public works spanned 39 years, beginning at the Braintree Parks and Recreation Department. Over those years Tom worked for Mass DOT, Braintree DPW, East Bridgewater DPW and Marshfield DPW. Tom's commitment to public service was not limited to public works, Tom also served multiple terms on the Board of Selectmen in Braintree and as Chairman of Braintree Municipal Light. Tom has served and continues to serve on numerous boards and committees throughout the public works community from the APWA to MWRA. Tom is a Past President of the Mass Highway Association and current President of the Plymouth County Highway Association. I imagine "retirement" for Tom will only provide him a greater opportunity to continue to build upon those relationships.

Tri-County – Rob Colson

During the summer, Tri-County voted to extend the terms of its officers and director to September 30, 2020. By July 28, the committee had chosen the following nominees: President - Marlo Warner (Greenfield); Vice President-Michael McManus (Holyoke); Secretary-Roger Bisbee (Williamsburg), Treasurer-Dave Loring (Westfield), and Hampden County Director (3 year term until 2023) Bill Sperrazza (Wilbraham). Ballots were mailed out and votes were counted by Joe Pipczynski and Mike Parsons on September 9, which resulted in all nominees being elected and taking office effective October 1, 2020.

We had a successful Golf Outing on August 20, 2020 at the Southampton Country Club and we will be back there again next year.

Congratulations to Greg Nuttelman on his new position as the Town of Easthampton's Director of Public Works, where he had been interim Director. Before that, he worked in Easthampton's Water Division since 2016, and with the City of Northampton prior to Easthampton.

A Tri-County - Mass Highway Joint Meeting Committee consisting of Dave Desrosiers, Rob Colson, Mike McManus, Marlo Warner and Matt Smith met with Mass Highway Association President Chris Bouchard on October 13, 2020 to discuss topics for a virtual Tri-County Mass Highway Joint meeting on November 10, 2020.

John R. Morrell the long time Highway Surveyor in Monson MA has announced his retirement for November 14th. John has served Monson for 52 years, 39 years as the Highway Surveyor and 13 years prior as a Heavy Equipment Operator.



John's position was unique in that it was one of the few remaining DPW positions that are elected rather than appointed. He was elected to and served 13 three-year terms!

John was an active supporter of the Tri-County and MHA Associations and we will miss his involvement. Congratulations on your retirement, John.

The 2021 Tri-County meeting dates are as follows

Winter Meeting - March 18, 2021

Annual Meeting - June 3, 2021

Summer Golf Outing - August 19, 2021

Joint Meeting with Mass Highway Association - November 18, 2021

Hope we all stay as healthy as we can and have a great rest of the year.

Continued on next page

Worcester County – Scott Crisafulli

We are wishing everyone health and safety in these unusual times. Unfortunately, we have had to cancel all our events for 2020 but are working on and looking forward to a much better 2021.

Board Member Matt Stencil from the town of Sutton has been voted President of WCHA for the 2021 season. Congratulations Matt and we look forward to a great year. Past President Scott J. Crisafulli, Highway Surveyor for the Town of Milford, has been re-elected to another term on the WCHA Board of Directors. Congratulations Scott, we are looking forward to working with you.

Our past President Sean Divoll has decided to leave his DPW Director position for the town of Oxford and will be the new DPW Commissioner for the Town of Marlboro. Congratulations Sean and wishing you the best of luck in your new endeavor.

It is with a heavy heart I am announcing the passing of Past President Larry Bombara. Larry was the first DPW Director for the Town of Uxbridge and retired after a 23-year career. He also belonged to many Associations including Mass Highway Association. We thank Larry for all his contributions to WCHA; he will be sadly missed.

REMINDER TO ALL MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS...

We would like to remind all Municipal Officials that in July of this year, UCANE sent a copy of their 40th Annual Industry Directory on a USB Flash Drive to all Mass. Highway Association members.

Included in the Directory is a list of all UCANE members, including utility contractors, environmental firms, service companies, equipment, and material suppliers in the New England Region's water & sewer construction industry, and their contact information and cell phone numbers. There is also an extensive and detailed listing of companies, including an alphabetical and cross-reference index, which easily matches companies with specific business categories.

Most importantly, there is an EMERGENCY SERVICES section which provides 24/7 contact information for UCANE members who perform off-hour Emergency Work!

Also included is relevant Safety information including updated MassDOT Drug Testing information; OSHA's Crane and Derrick Standards; Field Responsibility; Competent Person; Record Keeping; Excavator (Counterweight) Swing Protection; Fall Protection (Construction Sites); MSDS Access; Drug Free Workplace; Asbestos/Lead/Silica Standards; Respiratory Protection; Emergency Planning; Recordkeeping and OSHA's Reporting Requirements; and State and Federal Posting Requirements.

In addition, OSHA's Construction Industry Digest is included in its entirety.

MHA and UCANE members have a great working relationship in an effort to solve legislative problems that affect both contractors and Municipal Officials as well as other important industry issues, and we ask that you consider doing business with UCANE members whenever possible. To request an additional electronic copy of their Industry Directory, you can contact the UCANE office at 617-471-9955 or visit their website at www.ucane.com.



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Newsletter update

This Fall 2020 Newsletter is being distributed digitally only and is also on the MHA website at masshwy.org. If you are a member of MHA and not receiving the newsletter, please contact the editor, Bill Elovirta, at bille@msn.com with your email address. All advertisers have a link to their websites. Please support our advertisers. All news items should be sent to your MHA County Director or direct to the editor. The next issue will be distributed in the Spring of 2021.

Annual Mass Highway Charity Golf Tournament

The Mass Highway Charity Golf Tournament committee has recommended that the board does not proceed with the 2020 tournament because of Covid-19, according to tournament chairman, Ryan Bartlett. The 2021 tournament is scheduled to be held on August 17th at Brookmeadow Country Club in Canton MA.

Driver Skills and Safety Training Event (aka Snowplow Rodeo)

By *Chris Bouchard, Chair*

The 2020 event was cancelled due to COVID-19 as was the national finals in Colorado. We will take the winter to see how we can make changes to help grow this event. The date for the 2021 event is scheduled for July 14, 2021. Stay safe and healthy and we look forward to seeing you at the event in 2021.

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Lawrence E. "Larry" Bombara, 70, died at home on Sun. Sept. 20, 2020.

Born in Webster, MA in 1950, he was the son of Joseph R. and Margaret M. (Madden) Bombara and lived in Douglas all his life.

Besides his loving wife of 47 glorious years Jeanne (Forget) Bombara; he leaves his daughter Pamela Johnson and her husband Kurt; 2 precious grandchildren Natalie and Emily Johnson; his brother Dennis M. Bombara and his wife Sarah; and several nieces and nephews.

One of Larry's proudest moments was organizing a group of his public works family from New England and traveling to Bay Saint Lewis to help rebuild after the Hurricane Katrina aftermath.

A woodworker, a boater, a traveler best described Larry along with his passion to throw a party for family and friends.



Thomas R. Cummings, of Holbrook, passed away peacefully on October 25, 2020 at the age of 83. Tom worked as the DPW Superintendent for the Town of Holbrook for 58 years before retiring in 2012. He enjoyed trips with his wife, Terry to all over New England to the county fairs and especially their annual trip to the Fryeburg Fair. They spent

weekends antiquing until their interest turned to owning racehorses which they did for many years. He was especially proud of his home – the Three Twins Farm. Most of all, he loved spending time with his grandchildren and never tired of asking them what they were doing and catching up on their lives.

Massachusetts Highway Association Appreciation Awards

The Massachusetts Highway Association recently presented the 2020 annual Appreciation Awards to those who have helped the organization.

- **Francis Granger Award:** Scott Crisafulli
- **John Kiley Vendor of the Year Award:** Mike Myers, TEC
- **Past President Award:** Dave Desrosiers
- **MHA Appreciation awards:**

Neil Andres

JC Marketng

Todd Korchin

Jim McGonigle

Ed Urbansky