

## Town of Auburn, Massachusetts

Julie A. Jacobson  
Town Manager



### Community Message January 5, 2021

2020 was wrought with many challenges, heartaches and unprecedented “firsts”, most brought on by the global public health pandemic. We thank those on the front lines of the battle against Covid-19, including those essential workers in both the public and private sectors, and we remember with sadness those who lost their lives to this relentless virus.

As we enter 2021, Town administration wishes peace, happiness and good health to all in the Auburn community in the new year. The battle against Covid-19 will continue in 2021, but there is hope on the horizon with the vaccine deployment underway. Town administration will continue to provide critical and important services to the residents and businesses of Auburn, even if the methods of delivery are not considered traditional. New and creative mechanisms for delivering services in Auburn developed last year include the Drive Through Kiosk, the Service Window in the Treasurer/Collector’s Office, and the Outside Drop Box. Coupled with on-line permitting and licensing options, in-person meetings by appointment, and access to town employees by phone or by appointment will enable residents, businesses and taxpayers to conduct their municipal business while keeping them, as well as our employees, safe during the pandemic.

Covid-19 positive cases continue to climb across the country. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as of yesterday, January 4, 2021 has affected 20,558,489 persons in the United States since January 21, 2020. Of the more than 20 million Covid-19 positive cases in this country, 350,664 persons have died. In Massachusetts, there have been 375,455 total positive cases with 4,358 new cases yesterday alone. In addition, there are 17,133 total probable cases in the State. 81,449 cases are currently active in the State. Of these, 2,339 are hospitalized today. Massachusetts has had 12,401 confirmed Covid-19 deaths. Sadly, these numbers will be higher by the end of the day today. To put this in perspective, 1,331 Massachusetts residents of a total 58,220 U.S. military died in the Vietnam War, paying the ultimate sacrifice for serving their country. There were 291,557 American soldiers killed in battle during World War II, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The number of deaths from Covid-19 in the United States are projected to surpass the total number of U.S. military personnel killed in World War II. These statistics are sobering.

In Auburn, our Covid-19 numbers continue to increase weekly. The Town has been designated by the State as a high risk “red” community for the past 4 consecutive weeks. Our total case count as of last week, December 29<sup>th</sup> was 893. Auburn’s positivity rate is 10.3%, outpacing the State’s rate of 8.5%. Auburn has had 210 new cases in the last 14-day reporting period and the second highest daily incident rate (91 per 100,000), second only to Webster at 96.5 out of 25 municipalities in Fire District 7. To put this in perspective, the week before Thanksgiving, Auburn had 390 total cases, we were designated yellow and had a 3.4% positivity rate. Since mid-November, Auburn has had over 500 cases

Everyone has a responsibility to take measures to protect themselves and their families and to prevent the potential spread of Covid-19 to family, friends, customers and patrons. Unfortunately, once again we need to remind the public to be respectful of each other. We implore those who post on the Town’s official Facebook page to be respectful and engage in civil discourse. Town Administration has an obligation to educate and provide outreach to the community about public health issue, and Covid-19 is a significant public health issue. As a high risk community, the State has made educational resources available to the Town of Auburn to aid in our efforts to curb the spread of Covid-19. We will continue to post these educational materials and flyers on our official website and on our official social media pages as we must do everything we can to curb the spread of this virus. While some may tire of hearing the message, we cannot and will not stop trying to educate the citizenry. For those who do not

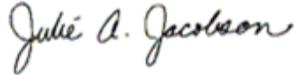
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want to read these posts, we kindly and strongly urge you to respect those who do. We will not tolerate those who post damaging, disrespectful or inaccurate remarks that undermine the Town's efforts to keep our community healthy and safe.

The Town of Auburn thanks our residents and businesses for their continued diligence and adherence to the public health regulations and measures. Together, we have to strive to combat Covid-19 in 2021 which will enable us to reopen our local, state and national economies and return to a "new" normal.

Thank you.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julie A. Jacobson".

Julie A. Jacobson  
Town Manager