

# THE BEDFORD CITIZEN

## 2019 Annual Report

### President's Message

Dear Reader—

I am delighted to report that The Bedford Citizen had a record year—from news coverage, to social media, to fundraising, we are proud of all we achieved.

Among our many accomplishments this year, The Citizen:

- Hosted a community conversation about the First Amendment and the Free Press with NEFAC, the New England First Amendment Coalition;
- Became a member of the Institute for Nonprofit News and qualified for News-Match, the matching gift program that runs from November 1 to December 31;
- Launched the first update to our website since our launch in 2012;
- Produced our first ever Bedford Guide 2020: It's Better in Bedford. The guide orients residents and business owners to life in Bedford.

I am most proud of our news coverage in 2019. We ran over 1,200 stories, covering everything from the sale of the Navy hangar at Hanscom Field, the Town Election and both Annual and Special Town Meetings, EEE and its impact on life in Bedford, and among our list of most popular stories, Recycling Know-No's.

All of this was made possible by the dedicated donors, sponsors and Bedford Guide advertisers.

As we mature and grow as an organization, becoming Bedford's go-to news source, we are building the infrastructure needed for the long-term. What started out as an effort to keep Bedford informed about local government has grown into a full-fledged news organization. See Looking Forward, on page 3 for how we are moving ahead.

And that brings me to 2020. Thanks to the outpouring of support last year, we feel confident enough in our funding sources (donations, sponsors, Bedford Guide advertisers) to announce that we are planning to hire a part-time community reporter this spring.

With gratitude,

*Teri Morrow*

Teri Morrow  
President and Publisher

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# Coverage Highlights

It has been our honor to serve as your source for local, community-supported, independent news since 2012. Thank you for making our work possible! Here's a sampling of what you read about in *The Citizen* in 2019.

The *Citizen* covered the sale of the **Navy Hangar at Hanscom Field** by the GSA (Government Services Administration). Julie Turner, Managing Editor, followed the story from the launch of the auction in late 2018 through the Federal Government shut down, to the frenzied bidding action right before the close of the auction in February 2019. The *Citizen* continues to keep its eye on the property and will report plans for it as they become public.

**The 2019 Town Election** was one of the most interesting stories we reported on in 2019. From the Caucus to election results, *The Citizen* was in the thick of campaign coverage. With candidate forum, the League of Women Voters' election guide, extensive Letters to the Editor, and election day results, Julie Turner and others were on the ground bringing you the latest news and information.

The *Citizen* produced over 30 stories about **Annual and Special Town Meetings** in 2019. These included Town Warrant preparation and votes, explanations about specific articles, and vote-by-vote reporting on each night's meeting outcomes.

In **Student Voices at The Bedford Citizen**, local high school students explored a range of topics in 2019, with nearly 20 stories. Ryan Doucette wrote about the impact of the Federal Government shutdown on families, the suicide of a fellow student, and reflected on his summer job, among others. Brooke Shamon wrote about the process of growing up and heading off to college. And Lily Nemirovsky wrote about an exchange student in Bedford joining the class of 2020, and with Hannah O'Connor, the impact of listening to a speaker on the impact of gun violence.

# Readership At A Glance

Stories Posted	1,205
Email Subscribers	1,690
Facebook Followers	2,260
Twitter Followers	1,370
Story Views	541,000



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## Our Mission:

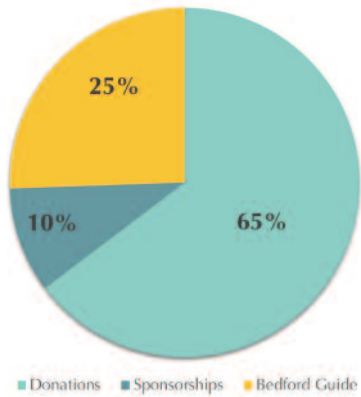
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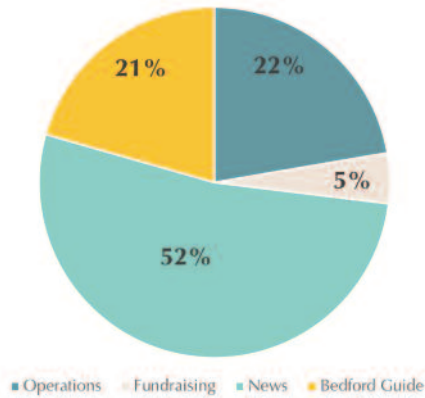
# Financial Highlights

# Looking Ahead

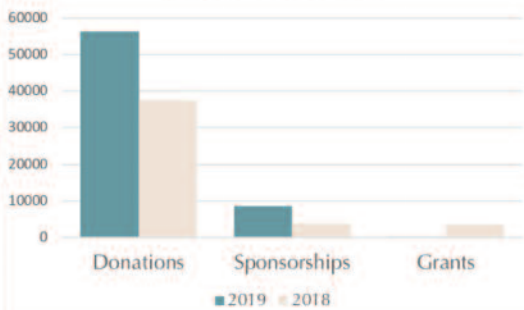
2019 Income



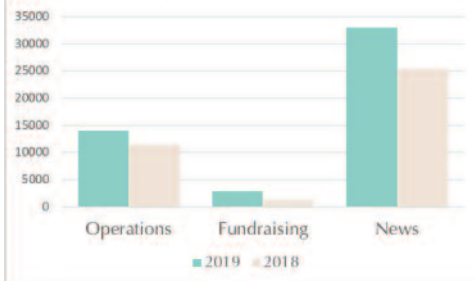
2019 Expenses



Income vs Prior Year



Expenses vs Prior Year



Comparisons to prior years excludes the Bedford Guide project.

Thanks to supporters, sponsors and advertisers, The Citizen was able to set aside surplus revenue to invest in our future and in keeping the Bedford community informed.

We are grateful for donations to all our fundraising appeals and remain humbled by the outpouring of support during both our Spring match and fall NewsMatch Challenge. A full list of 2019 donors can be found on page 4. You really like us!

Our sponsors stuck with us through the launch of our updated website and remain a loyal corps of support. You'll find our 2019 sponsors listed on page 6. The Bedford Guide provided Bedford businesses with a new way to reach Bedford through a printed version highlighting life here in Bedford. We hadn't anticipated how well the Guide would be received and how many Bedford businesses would advertise. You can find an on-line version of the Bedford Guide at [www.thebedfordcitizen/2020guide](http://www.thebedfordcitizen/2020guide).

As a relatively young organization (founded in 2012), developing a sustainable income means we can put more muscle behind our reporting. Every week, we hear news that we believe you deserve to know about. But with only one full-time staff member dedicated to the news and a stringer or two, we haven't had the bandwidth to pursue those stories. We are excited to post a position for a Community Reporter, starting in the first half of 2020. Funded in part by the NewsMatch matching gift grant, and with the knowledge that we can count on our community, we are confident that we can hire and pay a reporter to cover these kinds of stories, and more.

We are operating without media insurance to cover us should a lawsuit be filed. Even the most responsible news organizations can be subject to lawsuits, whether frivolous or not. For an operation as small as The Bedford Citizen, responding to a lawsuit could wipe out our limited reserves within a couple of months. Our INN (Institute for Nonprofit News) membership includes support for research of coverage options and costs for this kind of insurance. We hope to be able to purchase media insurance in 2020 with their assistance.

We are expanding our 2020 Town Election and Annual Town Meeting coverage with a print version of the LWV's Voters Guide along with advance coverage of Town Meeting with Warrant highlights. While this is funded with help from the Bedford Cultural Council and the Bedford League of Women Voters, the majority of the funding for this project comes from the generous support of our donors.

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