

Jeff Cyr, Chair
Nicole Casolari, Vice Chair
Carol Constant, Clerk
Andrea Miles
Renee Sweeney

Lisa Wong
Town Administrator

HYBRID SELECTBOARD MEETING AGENDA

TUESDAY, JAN. 6, 2026 - 7 P.M.

SOUTH HADLEY SENIOR CENTER MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

Join Zoom Webinar from your computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81169576156?pwd=2gA.JvXErijygb3lqTb54FFrhQtP67Q.1>

By phone: +1 646 558 8656 | Webinar ID: 811 6957 6156 | Passcode: 059386

Watch live on SHCTV Channel 15 or <https://shctv15.com/watch-live/>

Note: Not all topics listed here may be reached for discussion. In addition, the topics listed are those which the chair reasonably expects will be discussed as of the date of this notice. This meeting may be audio and/or visually recorded.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS / PUBLIC COMMENT

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft Minutes of Dec. 16, 2025

Documents:

[DRAFT DEC 16, 2025 SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES.PDF](#)

4. NEW BUSINESS

- A. FY27 Budget Notice and Contract Signatory Authorization Highway Bids
- B. Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan presentation
- C. Ledges Rates
- D. Agricultural Bylaws Advisory Committee
- E. Citizen Petition – SHELD facility
- F. 27 Fulton Street Sale

Documents:

[A. FY27 BUDGET NOTICE AND CONTRACT SIGNATORY AUTHORIZATION HIGHWAY.PDF](#)
[A. HIGHWAY-BIDS-PROCESS-GRAPHIC-FY27.PDF](#)
[C. THE LEDGES OPERATIONS REPORT 2025_12.PDF](#)
[D. MEMO AG BYLAW.PDF](#)
[E. MEMO.BALLOTQUESTION PETITION 12 23 25.PDF](#)

5. BUDGET TASK FORCE – PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

6. RESIGNATIONS

A. Alexander W Hunter – Historical Commission

7. ADJOURN

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
DEC. 16, 2025 – 7 P.M.
HYRBID ON ZOOM AND SOUTH HADLEY SENIOR CENTER

Present in person were Chair Jeff Cyr, Clerk Carol Constant, member Renee Sweeney and Assistant Town Administrator Chuck Romboletti. Member Andrea Miles was present virtually. Vice Chair Nicole Casolari and Town Administrator Lisa Wong were absent.

CALL TO ORDER

Cyr called to meeting to order at 7 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / PUBLIC COMMENT

Sweeney encouraged folks to take the Budget Task Force Survey on the town website. Constant let residents know they could take out nomination papers to run for office. Miles announced she will not seek re-election and encouraged residents to take out nomination papers for her seat and others.

BUDGET TASK FORCE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Members discussed the Dec. 8 public listening session and said excellent feedback was received. The next listening session is Jan. 15 at the Senior Center at 1 p.m. and again on Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. Residents are encouraged to take the Budget Task Force survey online on the town website. Hard copies are also available at the senior center, library and town clerk's office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Constant motioned to approve the draft minutes of Dec. 2, 2025. Sweeney seconded.

Roll Call Vote

- Miles – Aye
- Sweeney – Aye
- Constant – Aye
- Cyr – Aye

All in favor. Unanimous.

180 WILLIMANSETT CLASS 2 USED CAR LICENSE

Sweeney motioned to approve a Class 2 Used Car License for Diamond Tools & Equipment Inc dba Diamond Automotive displaying up to 12 secondhand vehicles, at 180 Willimansett Street. Constant seconded.

Roll Call Vote

- Miles – Aye
- Sweeney – Aye
- Constant – Aye
- Cyr – Aye

All in favor. Unanimous.

ANNUAL LICENSE RENEWALS

Miles motioned to approve the 2026 license renewals as publicly presented in the Dec. 16, 2025 Selectboard packet and allow renewal upon completion of all applications, submittal of all fees, completing all required inspections, and any other laws, bylaws or regulations required for issuance. Constant seconded.

Roll Call Vote

- Miles – Aye
- Sweeney – Aye
- Constant – Aye
- Cyr – Aye

All in favor. Unanimous.

TIGHE & BOND POST CLOSURE CONTRACT

Constant motioned to approve the contract with Tighe & Bond for landfill post closure services as presented and allow the Town Administrator to sign on the Selectboard's behalf. Sweeney seconded.

Roll Call Vote

- Miles – Aye
- Sweeney – Aye
- Constant – Aye
- Cyr – Aye

All in favor. Unanimous.

MUNICIPAL HEALTH INSURANCE

The main issue is unsustainable increases in insurance premiums charged to member units and their employees, due to increased claims costs driven by higher-than-average utilization and increased expenses on both medical and pharmaceutical. Romboletti said the next Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust meeting will be held on Dec. 17. A third-party look at the trust will include assessing claims data, reviewing contracts and identifying spending trends. This helps municipalities optimize health plan performance and allocate funds more efficiently. Trust members are hopeful for enhanced communication and transparency.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATES

Clover Apartments has approximately 20 percent of the project constructed. Substantial completion is slated for Dec. 11, 2026 with an estimated certificate of occupancy on Dec. 28, 2026.

Romboletti provided a clarification about the project's valuation that was brought up at the Nov. 18, 2025 Selectboard meeting. He said Assistant Assessor Melissa Couture Rimbold requested information from Wayfinders and their attorneys will not provide it until at least the spring. Based on these items, the town cannot project an estimate. He thanked Rimbold for her work.

Cyr said he is hoping fees for sewer tie-ins are being paid and asked for an update on that.

REPORTS

Cyr said the Mosier Elementary School Building Committee is meeting tomorrow to further discuss the seven options presented to the committee and public. Cyr will provide another update to the Selectboard at its next meeting. Visit the building committee's website (<https://www.southhadleyschools.org/our-schools/south-hadley-elementary-building-project/home>) or the South Hadley Cable Studio website (<https://shctv15.com/>) for more information.

Constant said the Affordable Housing Trust had its first meeting last week. The trust will apply for a grant to receive assistance in planning for how to use funding.

For the full Town Administrator's Report, see the Dec. 16, 2025 Selectboard packet on the town website.

ADJOURN

Sweeney motioned to adjourn. Miles seconded.

Roll Call Vote

- Miles – Aye
- Sweeney – Aye
- Constant – Aye
- Cyr – Aye

All in favor. Unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Maher
Executive Assistant to Administration**



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

TO: Collective Highway Bid Participants

FROM: Laura Phelps, Chief Procurement Officer
(ph 413-774-3167 x104)
Email lphelps@frcog.org

RE: FY27 Budget Notice and Signatory Authorization Form

DATE: December 15, 2025

In order to consolidate the collection of information requiring Select Board / Awarding Authority review and approval, we are providing the following details for the upcoming round of Collective Highway bids.

FY 2027 Fee Structure

To assist with each municipalities' budget planning, please use the following figure for the structure of fees that will apply to the Collective Highway Bid program for FY27. (This is the projected fee schedule for FY27, which represents an approximate 5% increase).

Town Population	Fee for FRCOG Member	Fee for Non-FRCOG Member
<500	\$1,212	\$1,433
>500 but < 1,000	\$1,984	\$2,178
>1,000 but < 5,000	\$3,144	\$3,585
>5,000 but < 20,000	\$3,417	\$3,858

(FRCOG member means municipalities in Franklin County who are all members of FRCOG and already pay assessments for FRCOG's other services.)

FY 2027 Contract Signatory

As we begin the FY27 FRCOG Collective Highway Bid process, requesting approvals and identifying key signatures is an important first step. As a reminder, we use the **DocuSign** process for contract execution.

To identify the Authorized Contract Signatory for FY27 Construction Services bids, and Permission to Contract on each Participant's behalf, please carefully review the information on page 2, then complete and return scan **pages 3 & 4** to Laura Phelps at lphelp@frcog.org no later than **January 9, 2026**.

RE: (1) CONSTRUCTION SERVICES BIDS - CONTRACT SIGNATORY AUTHORIZATION

(2) MATERIALS BIDS - PERMISSION TO CONTRACT ON THE PARTICIPANT'S BEHALF

We are beginning the FY27 FRCOG Collective Highway Bid process. Thank you for your continued participation in this program.

Each Municipality must electronically co-sign the Highway contracts for Construction Services bids that they have chosen to participate in via **Docu-Sign**. Prior years' contracts and bid specifications are available to you for review before you sign on. They can be found at frcog.org/bids or by email request.

With your Permission, FRCOG will continue to execute the vendor contracts for Materials bids on your behalf. Reference the full list of Construction Services and Materials bids on page 5.

This process requires the following two steps:

- 1) Signed approval from your Awarding Authority (the Selectboard / Mayor's office), to name the **Authorized Contract Signatory** for the Construction Services bids for which you will be participating in and,
- 2) Acknowledgement that FRCOG may **Contract on Your Behalf** for the Materials bids.

This authorization will cover other bids you may choose to participate in during the next year including Winter Sand, Salt and Liquid, Water Treatment Chemicals, and Equipment Rental bids which will be issued throughout FY27. This does not commit you to participate in those bids or award any particular bid.

*****PLEASE DO NOT DISREGARD THIS REQUEST.***
YOU MUST PROVIDE THE CONTRACT SIGNATORY INFORMATION TO RECEIVE
A FY27 HIGHWAY ESTIMATE SURVEY.**

The signatory may be changed later if someone leaves a position or is not re-elected.

Please scan and return Pages 3 and 4 to lphelps@frcog.org by January 9, 2026.

TO: Laura Phelps, Chief Procurement Officer
FRCOG, 12 Olive Street, Suite 2, Greenfield, MA 01301

We understand that our municipality is participating in the **Franklin Regional Council of Governments Collective Highway Products and Services** Bids and Contracts for FY 2027.

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES BIDS: (please print clearly)

We authorize NAME: _____ whose title is _____ for the City/Town of _____ and whose direct email address* is _____ and telephone number is _____ as the official signatory for all highway construction services contracts in which we choose to participate. We understand that contract execution will be managed through **DOCU-SIGN** and that we will be responsible for electronically signing the contracts in a timely manner. Each participant/signatory must sign before the contract is considered Executed and no work can begin until all Participants have signed.

We understand that we will have the opportunity to preview the Contract Templates for Highway Construction for FY27, each Invitation for Bids with Specifications, and applicable Prevailing Wage Schedules at the FRCOG website at frcog.org/bids and any issues or questions about the form of contract were presented to FRCOG before the Bid Opening which is currently anticipated to be on Thursday, May 7, 2026.

***Note, Docu-Sign cannot accommodate a shared email address – it must be specific to the signatory.**

MATERIALS/GOODS BIDS:

We authorize the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to contract or renew contracts on our behalf and we have taken action to duly appoint the FRCOG as our agent for Materials bids which include Aggregates and Loam, Cold Patch, Geotextiles, Calcium Chloride Products, Culvert and Guardrail Products, and Hot Mix Asphalt Picked Up.

We acknowledge that FRCOG takes precautions to ensure that procured vendors or contractors have adequate insurance coverage as required by law. Nevertheless, in the event that any vendor or contractor is deemed to be an employee of our city/town for the purposes of Massachusetts Workers Compensation laws, as set forth in Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) c. 152, or lapses in their liability coverage, we agree to indemnify and hold harmless FRCOG from any and all claims, liabilities, assessments, costs (inclusive of attorneys' fees and costs of litigation), penalties, judgments, and awards which may be assessed against us.

We agree to abide by M.G.L. c. 30b and c. 30, §39M for the purposes of procuring additional highway products and services, and will not engage in any activity in violation of Massachusetts ethics laws.

Municipalities may not concurrently contract for the same service from multiple collectives (i.e. BRPC, state OSD contracts). A choice must be made before executing the contract.

All financial obligations to vendors and contractors as a result of these agreements are the full responsibility of our city/town and not the FRCOG.

SELECTBOARD / MAYOR OF THE TOWN / CITY OF: _____

Signature

Date

IF REQUIRED:

Signature

Signature

Signature

Signature

Please return pages 3 and 4 of this form by January 9, 2026

You may scan/email to lphehelps@frcog.org

THANK YOU!

A list of the Collective Highway Bids by number is attached. For reference, more information can be found on our website at frcog.org/bids

Type of Material or Service:

Materials

H1 Aggregates and Loam
H2 High Performance Cold Patch
H3 Geotextiles
H4 Calcium Chloride Product
H5 Culvert Products
H6 Guard Rail Products
H7 Hot Mix Asphalt (FOB) Picked Up

W-1 Winter Sand
W-2 Winter Salt and Treated Winter Salt
W-3 Winter Liquid Pretreatment

Services

H9A Highway Line Painting-Ch 90
H9B Highway Line Painting –Rubber - Maintenance / Not Ch 90
H10 Guard Rail Installed
H11A Road Crack Sealing
H11B Microsurface, Fog Seal & Cape Seal Applied
H11C Hot Poured Mastic and Cold Crack Fill
H12 Calcium Chloride Applied
H13 Stone Seal Applied
H14 Rubberized Chip Seal Applied
H15A Hot Mix Asphalt Applied – Roadways
H15B Hot Mix Asphalt Applied – Parking Lots, Driveways, Playgrounds
H15C Leveling and Shim Course *NEW*
H16 Liquid Asphalt Applied
H17 Asphalt Reclamation
H18 Bonded Wearing Course Applied
H19 Hot in Place Recycling
H20 Cold Planing and Milling
H21 Cold In Place Recycling
H22 Tree Work
H23 Catch Basin Cleaning

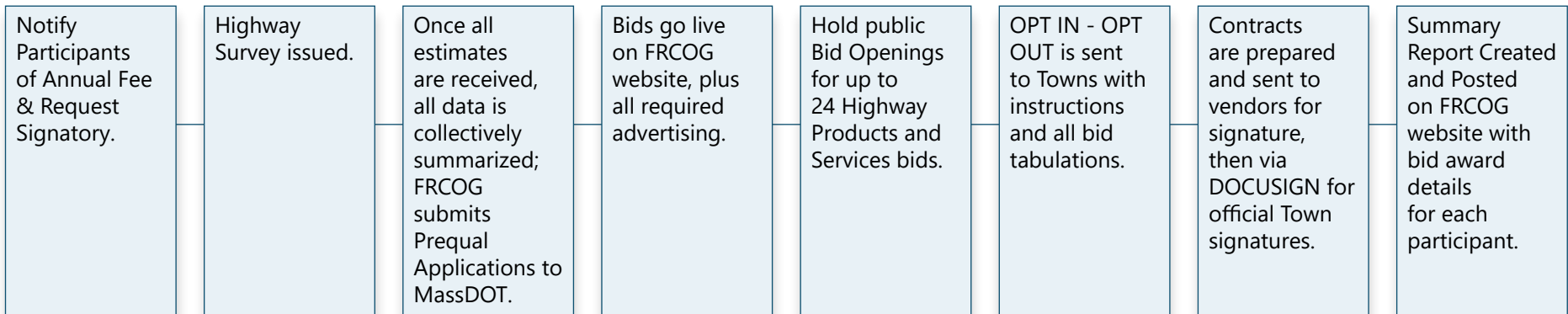
Participation Fee and Contract Signing Authority given include:

- Highway Equipment and Operator Rental Contract
- Water Treatment Chemicals

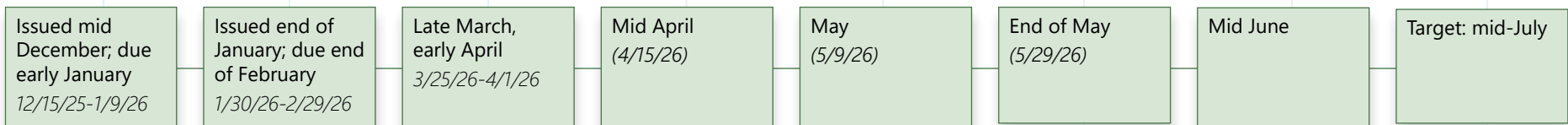
Highway Bid Procurement Process Timeline for FY27

This graphic highlights some important tasks and timing for the Collective Summer Highway Products and Services Annual Bid Program. The timeline is tight, and we hope seeing the bigger picture helps you understand the constraints under which the highway bids procurement process occurs. This is a snapshot; our full list comprises close to 80 individual steps and tasks. Your Town's timely responses are VITAL! Any one Town that is late holds up the process for all!

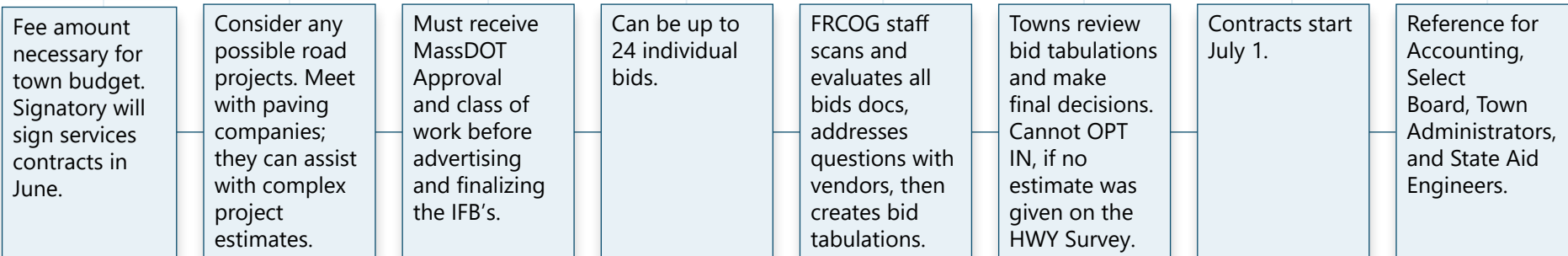
Task:



Timing:



Notes:



GOLF OPERATIONS REPORT

Fall 2025



International Golf Maintenance
5385 Gateway Blvd. Suite 12
Lakeland, FL 33811
P: 800-413-5500
golfmaintenance.com



General Comments

The 2025 golf season began with untimely rainfall in the spring and ended with below average temperatures in November. Inclement weather can negatively impact usage and revenue greatly. Regardless of the weather challenges at the beginning and end of the season, revenue for the 2025 golf season (Jan – Dec 12th \$1.728M) was very similar to the 2024 totals (\$1.729M) when we had better than average weather. Considering the challenges, the season was a success.

The season began with losing twelve weekend days due to precipitation. These days are the most profitable for most golf operations. Weather impacted November's results significantly due to a lower average daytime high temperature of 49 degrees versus 56 degrees in 2024. In addition, frost delays were more frequent in November of 2025 impacting nearly 55% of morning tee times offered during the month. Had the weather cooperated in November alone and matched the month of November of 2024, revenue would have surpassed \$1.75M.

Customer service continued to be offered at a high-level with a significant number of rave reviews being reported about our new Golf Professional, Ed Lockard. Ed made an enormous impact on the operation!

In addition to a spectacular first season with our new Golf Professional, our Superintendent, Amanda Fontaine continued to impact the golf industry bringing notoriety and acclaim to The Ledges' operation. Amanda presented Turf Winter Kill study findings at the New England Turf Conference and contributed to the "Wonderful Women of Golf" campaign in their industry podcast, ABC 5 Chronicle article, Golf Course Industry Magazine and in Golf Digest features.

The Course won the Gazette Reader's Choice Awards for Best Local's Golf Course and Best Driving Range, the course was rated #6 in Massachusetts by Golf Pass, and player ratings on Golf Pass are holding steady at 4.6 stars. Feedback indicated that the course "value" is still Excellent, but our "pace of play" continues to be an area where we could improve. Much of the discussion from the recent operational review revolved around increasing rounds. However, we must be mindful that if we increase rounds, it could have a negative impact on pace of play and subsequently player satisfaction. Since "value" is still rated as Excellent, we see opportunity in increasing rates during certain times and certain days to drive further revenue growth, i.e. Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings during season. This will protect course conditions and player satisfaction.

FY26 was trending better than Jul – Oct in FY25, but the relatively slow November caused a slight dip in the numbers. A strong membership drive has allowed us to recapture some of the lost revenue from a poor weather November. Overall, FY26 has started identical to FY25 with total sales of \$1.045M (Jul – Dec).

2026 marks the 25th anniversary of Ledges Golf Club celebrating a quarter century of unforgettable rounds, lasting friendships, and a shared love of the game. Since opening its fairways 25 years ago, the course has become known as one of the area's finest tests of golf while maintaining extraordinary playing conditions. Exciting club events will take shape as we honor this remarkable milestone that will be celebrated by our members, golfing patrons and the South Hadley community.



2025 Events and Charities Benefited

- USGA Junior Amateur Qualifier
- South Hadley High School Golf Team*
- UMASS Police
- Holyoke Regional YMCA
- South Hadley / Granby Chamber
- East of the River Five
- Human to Human
- Luke Stronger
- UMASS Football
- South Hadley Food Pantry
- Galaxy Community Council
- Worcester County Seniors
- Glow Ball
- Numerous leagues and smaller events

*228 rounds and 55 bags of range balls were donated to South Hadley High School

2025 Operational and Course Accomplishments

- New golf carts
- New range mats
- Took delivery of two new rough mowers and a large fairway and rough blower
- Paved cart paths on holes 2, 4, 9 and leading to the bridge
- Replaced tee sprinklers on 1-9, 10, 11, 17 and 18
- Repaired numerous irrigation control wires
- Removed rock shelf in 18 fairway
- Resodded 3 green's collar
- Installed new drainage on hole 2

2026 Goals

- Install automated range ball dispenser
- Host week long Junior's Camp in cooperation with the South Hadley Recreation Department
- Host Member-Member and Member-Guest event
- Hold a season opener member's only event
- Enhance service with a dedicated Greeter in front of the Clubhouse on Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings
- Host USGA / UMASS / First Green event for industry education and community outreach

2026 Proposed Rate Structure

Daily Fees

Weekday (Mon - Thu) - 18 holes	2025		2026	
	Walking	Riding	Walking	Riding
Resident	\$ 38	\$ 58	\$ 38	\$ 58
Senior Resident (62+)	\$ 32	\$ 52	\$ 32	\$ 52
Non-Resident	\$ 40	\$ 60	\$ 42	\$ 64
Non-Resident (62+)	\$ 33	\$ 53	\$ 35	\$ 55
Military & Student (With ID)	\$ 30	\$ 50	\$ 35	\$ 55
Junior (13-17)	\$ 15	\$ 25	\$ 15	\$ 25
Junior (12 and under)	\$ 10	\$ 25	\$ 10	\$ 25

Weekend (Fri - Sun) - 18 holes	2025		2026	
	Walking	Riding	Walking	Riding
Non-Resident	\$ 50	\$ 70	\$ 55	\$ 75
Non-Resident (1pm-4pm)	\$ 44	\$ 64	\$ 46	\$ 66
Resident			\$ 50	\$ 70
Resident (1pm-4pm)	\$ 44	\$ 64	\$ 44	\$ 64
Twilight (4pm-5:30pm)	\$ 38	\$ 50	\$ 40	\$ 52
Military, Senior & Student (After 1pm with ID)	\$ 35	\$ 56	\$ 37	\$ 58
Junior (After 1pm, 13-17)	\$ 15	\$ 25	\$ 15	\$ 25
Junior (12 and under with paying adult, after 3pm)	\$ 10	\$ 30	\$ 10	\$ 30

Weekday (Mon - Thu) - 9 holes	2025		2026	
	Walking	Riding	Walking	Riding
Resident	\$ 30	\$ 42	\$ 32	\$ 42
Non-Resident	\$ 32	\$ 43	\$ 34	\$ 45
Junior (13-17)	\$ 15	\$ 26	\$ 17	\$ 28
Junior (12 and under with paying adult)	\$ 10	\$ 22	\$ 10	\$ 22

Weekend (Fri - Sun) - 9 holes after 1pm	2025		2026	
	Walking	Riding	Walking	Riding
Resident	\$ 33	\$ 45	\$ 33	\$ 45
Non-Resident	\$ 35	\$ 46	\$ 37	\$ 48
Junior (13-17)	\$ 15	\$ 27	\$ 15	\$ 27
Junior (12 and under with paying adult)	\$ 10	\$ 25	\$ 10	\$ 25

Season Passes

7 Day	2025	2026
Family	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,800
Single	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,100
Senior Single (62+)	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,900
Senior Family (62+ both members)	\$ 2,475	\$ 2,550
Twilight (after 1pm)	\$ 1,550	\$ 1,625
Young Professional (23 - 29)	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,700
Student (18 - 22, Weekends/Holidays after 1pm)	\$ 900	\$ 900
Junior (17 and under)	\$ 450	\$ 450

Weekday (Mon - Fri)	2025	2026
Single	\$ 1,700	\$ 1,800
Single Senior (62+)	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,750
Senior, Family (62+ both members)	\$ 2,050	\$ 2,100
Twilight (after 1pm)	\$ 1,275	\$ 1,350

Cart Plans (Includes Tax)	2025	2026
Single	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,300
Single, Weekday or Twilight	\$ 950	\$ 1,000
Additional Family Plan	\$ 400	\$ 400

Driving Range (NEW)	2025	2026
Single		\$ 600

The Ledges Golf Club

Projections

	<u>FY 2022</u> Actual Revenue	<u>FY 2023</u> Actual Revenue	<u>FY 2024</u> Actual Revenue	<u>FY 2025</u> Actual Revenue	<u>FY 2026</u> Projection	<u>FY 2027</u> Projection	<u>FY 2028</u> Projection	<u>FY 2029</u> Projection
Revenues:								
Greens Fee's / Cart Rentals	\$ 1,033,519	\$ 1,152,015	\$ 1,196,427	\$ 1,338,261	\$ 1,378,408	\$ 1,419,761	\$ 1,462,353	\$ 1,506,224
Pro Shop	\$ 49,825	\$ 67,005	\$ 59,218	\$ 57,526	\$ 59,252	\$ 61,029	\$ 62,860	\$ 64,746
Misc./ Lessons	\$ 47,232	\$ 6,603	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Food & Beverage	\$ 292,960	\$ 369,657	\$ 346,989	\$ 333,526	\$ 343,532	\$ 353,838	\$ 364,453	\$ 375,387
Total Revenues	\$ 1,423,536	\$ 1,595,280	\$ 1,602,634	\$ 1,729,313	\$ 1,781,192	\$ 1,834,628	\$ 1,889,667	\$ 1,946,357
Operating Expenses:								
Management Fee	\$ 36,000	\$ 36,000	\$ 39,900	\$ 39,900	\$ 39,900	\$ 39,900	\$ 39,900	\$ 39,900
Operations Expense	\$ 671,129	\$ 711,129	\$ 764,464	\$ 830,600	\$ 847,212	\$ 868,392	\$ 890,102	\$ 912,355
Maintenance Contract	\$ 571,932	\$ 612,229	\$ 625,239	\$ 701,762	\$ 715,797	\$ 733,692	\$ 752,034	\$ 770,835
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,279,061	\$ 1,359,358	\$ 1,429,603	\$ 1,572,262	\$ 1,602,909	\$ 1,641,984	\$ 1,682,037	\$ 1,723,090
Net Operating	\$ 144,475	\$ 235,922	\$ 173,031	\$ 157,051	\$ 178,283	\$ 192,643	\$ 207,630	\$ 223,267

MEMO

To: Selectboard
From: TA Lisa Wong
Re: Agriculture Bylaw
Date: 12/26/25

Background: Agricultural Uses Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Assessment report and draft bylaws online (posted January 2025):

www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws

An advisory committee has been formed by the Director of Planning and Conservation, and appointed by the Town Administrator, to review the draft zoning bylaw amendments. As discussed in late winter/early spring 2025, an advisory committee would be formed to explore the bylaw recommendations more in depth, and make any additional recommendations prior to the Planning Board taking this back up for discussion. The committee held their first meeting on 12/18/25, and anticipates meeting several more times before sending final bylaw recommendations to the Planning Board. Ideally, we would like to send this to Town Meeting for May 2025 which would require the Planning Board to begin public discussion and hearings in March.

Agricultural Uses Bylaw Amendments Advisory Committee

Name	Affiliation
Tina Smith	MDAR APR Stewardship Southern Berkshire & Hampshire County Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance
Steve McCray	Farm Business Owner
Rebekah Cornell	Conservation Administrator/Tree Warden

Anne Capra

Director Planning & Conservation

Rob Watchilla

Planning Board Member

Sharon Hart

Director of Public Health

Chuck Scott

Board of Health Member

Tom Reidy

Resident

Mark Cavanaugh

Resident



Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC
Attorneys at Law

227 Union Street
Suite 606
New Bedford, MA 02740
www.mtclawyers.com

To: Sarah Gmeiner, Town Clerk
From: Lisa L. Mead, Esq.
Elizabeth Lydon, Esq.
Cc: Lisa Wong, Town Administrator
Date: December 23, 2025
Re: Citizens Petition – Municipal Light Board

Reference is made to the above captioned matter. In that connection you have requested our opinion relative to the validity of the petition you received to place a question on the ballot for the upcoming election, and the process under the statute.

The question contained in the petition reads as follows:

“SHALL THE VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY VOTE TO PETITION THE South Hadley Electric Municipal Light Board to proceed with the construction of a new electric headquarters facility, which would replace the current, nearly 100-year-old building that is in need of major updates and is currently situated in a 100-year flood zone, thereby creating a long-term reliability issue?

This new building project is estimated to cost over \$35 million and is projected to result in a monthly increase in electric bills of approximately 10% for ratepayers over the next 30 years.

Do you support the proposed construction of the new South Hadley Electric Department facility?”

As an initial matter, in speaking with the Director of the Elections Division in the Secretary of State’s Office, as the petition contains multiple questions, it is not valid and should be returned to the petitioner by the Town Clerk. There can only be one question per petition.

Upon acceptance of a valid petition, under M.G.L. c. 53 Section 18A:

“A nonbinding public opinion advisory question may be placed on the ballot for a regular municipal election in any city or town no later than the thirty-fifth day preceding such election... by vote of the board of selectmen of a town or by vote of the annual town meeting; or in conformity with the following provision of this section:

A proposal to place a nonbinding public opinion advisory question on the ballot for a regular municipal election in any city or town may be presented to the governing body thereof on a petition signed by at least ten registered voters of the city or town. If such governing body shall not approve said petition at least ninety days before said election, then the question may be so placed on said ballot when a petition signed by at least ten per cent of the registered voters of the city or town, but in no case less than twenty such voters, requesting such action is filed with the registrars, who shall have seven days after receipt of such a petition to certify the signatures. Upon certification of the signatures, the city or town clerk shall cause the question to be placed on the ballot at the next regular municipal election held more than thirty-five days after such certification... if an

Newburyport Office
30 Green Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Millis Office
730 Main Street, Suite 1F
Millis, MA 02054
Phone/Fax 508.376.8400

alternative procedure is prescribed by a home rule charter, optional plan of government, or special act applying to such city or town, relative to the placing of public opinion questions upon the local ballot, then such alternative procedure shall apply.”

The Town does not appear to have any alternative procedures in place relative to this process. Therefore, once presented with a valid petition, if the Select Board votes not to place the question on the ballot, the Petitioner may gather additional signatures (at least 10% of the registered voters) and resubmit the question so long as it is resubmitted more than ninety days prior to the election. Upon certification of the signatures, the question must be placed on the ballot.

Please let us know if you have any additional questions related to this matter.