

THE WEEKLY WRAP UP

A report from Town Administrator Lisa Wong

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SELECTBOARD, 7 p.m.
Hybrid at Senior Center

Tuesday, March 18
Budget vote

Tuesday, April 1

Tuesday, April 15
Town Meeting warrant

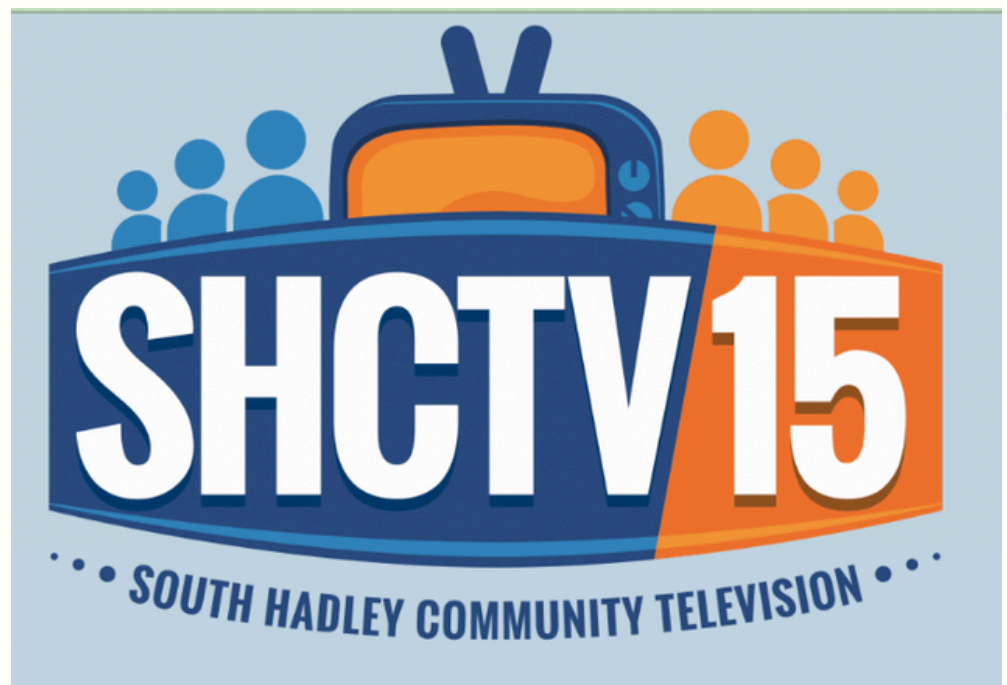
[www.southhadley.org/
agendacenter](http://www.southhadley.org/agendacenter)

SCHOOLS

The School Committee will hold a Budget Hearing on Tuesday, March 11 at 6pm hybrid at the Senior Center.

Their budget vote will be March 20.

REMOTE MEETINGS?



As of the publication of this newsletter, no action has been taken by the State on the Open Meeting Law provisions that allow for remote meetings that expires on March 31, 2025. Boards are advised to schedule IN PERSON meetings until further notice. Town policy does allow for remote participation but the chair must be in person.

Budget Materials: <https://southhadley.org/679/Budget-Town-Meeting-Documents>

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Local Aid

FY25: \$15,532,392

Proposed FY26 (Governor budget): \$15,714,994

www.mass.gov/cherry-sheet-estimates

www.mass.gov/info-details/background-fulfilling-the-promise-of-local-aid

Local Aid Each year, the Commonwealth provides financial resources, often referred to as local aid, to municipalities and regional school districts (RSDs) through a series of formulae. While some types of aid are explicitly discretionary or subject to appropriation, others are required by state law to be provided.

Communities can view their allocation of local aid through the state's "Cherry Sheet," an official notification by the Department of Revenue that breaks down estimated allocations for large programs such as Chapter 70 education aid and Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA) as well as smaller programs such as municipal reimbursements for veterans' benefits.¹ Other local aid categories appear as legislative appropriations in line items in the state budget.

However, full funding of the state's commitments to municipalities has been a historical exception to the rule, since the Legislature annually determines how much will be allocated to specific programs, if anything at all. Insufficient allocations of local aid have resulted in shortfalls, which need to be supplemented by municipal revenues, thus increasing upward pressure on the local tax levy.

State Hearing and Mass Municipal Association priorities:

www.mma.org/advocacy/mma-legislative-package

The Joint Committee on Ways and Means will begin holding public hearings on the fiscal 2026 state budget on March 6, and is scheduled to hold a hearing focused on municipal and school aid on March 24 at 11am. at UMass Amherst Campus Center.