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Town Administrator

***Town Administrator's Monthly Report  
September 2025***

***Administration, Finance and Operations***

- **Administration:**
  - **Budget/Town Meeting:** A Special Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5 at 6pm at the High School to review financial articles and bylaw changes. The Selectboard will vote on the warrant at their October 21 meeting.
  - **State/Federal Funding:** Information about federal cuts impacting the state are detailed on a website: [www.mass.gov/info-details/impact-of-federal-funding-cuts-on-massachusetts](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/impact-of-federal-funding-cuts-on-massachusetts). \$107million that had been frozen for education was recently released after the federal government was sued by a multi-state coalition of Attorney Generals including Mass.
  - **Elementary School Building Project:** The town has hired an architect and has formed the full project team per MSBA's Module 2 requirements. Module 3 will kick off this month - feasibility. Schematic designs, budgets and scopes will be formulated over the next year
  - **Budget Task Force:** The group is now meeting every other Monday until the end of 2025, and will be scheduling listening sessions soon. The group has a webpage and will be uploading information to <https://southhadley.org/1504/Budget-Task-Force>
  - **Health Insurance:** The Town is exploring options to see if plan design changes, self-funding or changing trusts/entities would be beneficial.
- **Accounting:**
  - The department is preparing the closing year journal entries and state reports and checklists to be submitted for Free Cash certification.
  - The annual process of reviewing accounts at year end is in progress.
  - The department continues to work on the required end of year vendor report.
- **Assessor:**
  - Continue to work to finalize data entry of Fiscal 2026 property data changes in preparation of valuation analysis work.
  - Reconciling and reviewing data collection of all vacant land parcels.
  - Staff working on finalizing Fiscal 2026 exemption applications received to date.

- Staff is currently processing the next commitment of motor vehicle excise as well as preparing data for boat excise billing.
- Associate Assessor successfully co-taught at the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO) Annual School in August. Twenty-six (26) out of twenty-six (26) students passed! This allows those folks to move forward in seeking a designation from the MAAO as there are seven (7) required courses.
- Staff has attended and participated in employee and committee meetings regarding the budget. Associate Assessor presented at the Budget Task Force and Planning Board meetings.
- Continue educating stakeholders on new growth, property taxes, property and personal exemptions, tax levies and property valuations.
- Working to restore, update and streamline digital data and processes.
- **Cable:**
  - Cable Director identified that Comcast should have increased their quarterly payments to the town from 2% to 2.5%. They worked with accounting to request over \$80k in payments that should have been made to the town. Comcast is reviewing this.
  - Cable staff successfully helped set up a screening and livestream a Documentary put together by SHHS Marching Band Alumni called “The Town with the Band”. The studio and equipment was used to help facilitate the recording of interviews and Marching Band Alumni edited the final product which can be viewed online or on SHCTV
  - Coordinated and facilitated two public hearings with Planning Board & SHELD
  - Worked with Sports Network students to use the studio for Media Day and took pictures of Fall athletes to be used in graphics for upcoming livestreams.
- **IT:**
  - Continued working on security updates
  - Continued file recovery.
  - Network configuration updates.

### ***Building and Zoning***

- **Mount Holyoke College Inspections:** All assembly/residential building inspections were completed in time prior to the start of the fall semester. There are minimal issues to be addressed beyond one building (Willits). Kendade construction is ongoing and along with facilities the contractor is working through the concerns building shares with FD2.
- **Certificates on Inspection (3 families and above):** Notices continue going out to non-responders (more than 90 days with no response) from the initial notice. We are approaching 70% of buildings in town now compliant (from just over 10% when we started) with numerous more close to compliance.

- **Short Term Rental:** Awaiting newly registered properties which will need to comply immediately. We are investigating dozens of properties throughout the town to have visual confirmation of these properties in operation that are not in compliance with the local or state regulations.

### *Clerk*

- **Social Media Archive:** The Town has over 15 social media accounts departments use to inform and interact with residents. We're starting implementation of CivicPlus Social Media Archiving to ensure all of the Town's social media accounts are archived automatically and remain fully compliant with public records retention laws.
- **Orange Postcards - Voter Registration:** It's not too late to send in the orange postcard you received a few months ago! The office has almost completed processing returned confirmation cards for voters who did not return the 2025 census/annual street list. These voters are now inactive voters. Click here for information on inactive voters:  
<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/voting-information/inactive-voters.htm>

### *Collector/Treasurer*

- **Tax Title:** the town is working with legal counsel to prepare an RFP for a realtor to list 27 Fulton St for sale. 35 Carew Street was taken for back taxes and is preparing for potential market listing and sale, as well as other options.
- Trash bills were mailed on August 15th and due October 1st.
- 2nd Qtr Real Estate, Personal Property and Sewer bills will be mailed on October 1st.
- Working on year-end state reporting to close out FY2025.

### *Department of Public Works*

- **Center/Warner/Grave:** Project currently under bid review status.
- **Pearl Street:** Pearl Street closed to through traffic: mid October road opening anticipated due to material delays.
- **Buttery Brook Park:** Project completed, except for pickleball court issue: engineering quotes in progress for new design. Spring 2026 construction.
- **Main Street TIP Project:** 2025 TEC updated and submitted; 75% submittal due from Tighe and Bond to MassDOT; Easement review in progress by MassDOT; public hearing date TBA. February 2027 advertising date. Currently awaiting DOT review and comments : update: 6/18/25: Tighe and Bond and MassDOT finalizing easements/encroachment issues, discrepancies for review consideration for 75% design approval. Letter from Redevelopment Authority sent to state representatives to help move this project along.
- **DPW:** Stanton Avenue drainage install; easement approved with MHC. Construction fall 2025.

- **Fall road paving:** Fall road paving list being finalized, contractors have been notified: September 15, 2025 work starts.
- **RT 33 paving:** MassDOT will mill, adjust all structures, upgrade ADA transitions, repave, and install new recessed traffic markings, as well as install 2 solar X-walk crossing points as part of their Municipal Pavement Program, this fall. This project will be fully funded by MassDOT, and no Town money will be needed: Old Lyman Road to state easement line near Hollywood Street. September 2025 start.
- **WWTP:** Security gate, mechanical improvements in progress. CWMP in progress.
- **Main Street pump station permanent by-pass project:** mobilization and start September 2025..
- **2025/26 Sidewalk Program:** new sidewalk installations: plans in progress for new installations on : Park Street, Brainerd Street, Lincoln Street, Hartford Street, Lathrop Street, bidding/oversight/construction as funding allows. DPW removal of existing sidewalks: Upper Prospect Street, Bombardier Street, Douglas Street, Berwyn Street, Camden Street.
- Fall yard waste curbside collection: November 3-29, on your collection day.
- Rt. 116 brick sidewalk lighting upgrades: in review with lighting consultant/engineers. Will provide a safer lighting environment.

### ***Emergency Management***

- ***To be updated***

### ***Facilities***

- **High School:** The accessible pathway project is complete. Painting of the gym ceiling and refinishing of the floor is complete. Audio upgrades for the gym and auditorium are in progress. Multiple HVAC repairs were completed over the summer.
- **DPW-**The plumbing and HVAC repairs are complete for the office trailer used by the school transportation department.
- **COA:** A minisplit installation for the kitchen is scheduled for Sept. 19th
- **Ledges:** The roof for the driving range shed has been replaced. HVAC replacement and building envelope sealing will be done in the coming months.
- **MS:** The elevator modernization project will be done over the Christmas break. The building automation system replacement has been contracted and will start soon.

### ***Human Services***

- **Recreation:**
  - Fall activities are all up and running.
  - Planning for winter programs and registrations will open for basketball and wrestling shortly.

- NYC Bus Trip on December 13.
- Working with Laudable Productions for sound, power and lighting for the new band shell.
- **Veterans:**
  - Veteran Coffee Hour: Held monthly at the Senior Center with the next one is Oct 8th at 9am.
  - Veterans Evening Social Hour will be starting back up in the fall third Thursday 18 September at 430 pm to 530 pm.
  - Building Bridges Veterans lunch is being held in South Hadley on the 1st Tuesday of the Month from 1145 to 1 pm at All Saints Episcopal Church 7 Woodbridge St. This is a free lunch for veterans and a guest. Next one is October 7.
  - Initial planning stages for Veterans Day breakfast to be held on Friday November 7th at COA.
- **Council on Aging:**
  - The COA continues to seek a qualified Programs Coordinator to fill the open position.
  - Open Enrollment will be running October 15 - December 7. The COA has a brand new volunteer SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) counselor who will hold appointments throughout the Open Enrollment period. Appointments are in limited supply, so if you know someone who needs to make changes to their Medicare plan, now is the time to sign up!
  - The final event in our Summer Concert Series will be the Happy Five Oompah Band on September 25 from 4:30 - 6:30. This event will feature great music and a delicious dinner.
  - The COA had two new staff members start recently. Kathryn Elias is our Human Services Coordinator, and Danielle Rossoni just started as our Morning Receptionist and Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Human Resources**

- **Hiring/Staffing:**
  - Please welcome the following new hire to the Town!
    - September 4, 2025: Danielle Rossoni, Volunteer & Front Desk Coordinator, COA
  - For a list of open positions and how to apply, visit <https://southhadley.org/jobs>
- **Insurance/Benefits:** The Special Open Enrollment period closed on 9/5/25 allowing employees and retirees to switch from PPO plans to HMO plans effective 10/1/25. This period was held due to an mid-year increase of 20% in Hampshire County Group Trust health insurance, providing opportunities for those on the high cost PPO plan to switch to an HMO plan. Subscribers of town health insurance should note that voluntary terminations are permitted at any time throughout the year, and to do so please contact [GCongram@SouthHadleyMA.gov](mailto:GCongram@SouthHadleyMA.gov) or [HR@SouthHadleyMA.gov](mailto:HR@SouthHadleyMA.gov). The October 1st increases to health insurance will begin being reflected in payroll issued to employees in September.

**Library**

- **Access to Health Resources:** The Library and Public Health Department are teaming up to increase public access to information and services. This includes regular monthly Public Health drop-in hours (third Monday each month), a visit by the Tapestry Health Mobile Harm Reduction Van (Wednesday 10/1), and a Baystate Health Blood Drive (Monday, 10/20).
- **Online Author Programs:** Some amazing online events are happening in October including [Nuestra América: Stories of 30 Inspiring Latinas/Latinos Who Have Shaped the United States](#) with Smithsonian Educators; [10 Years of Daring Heists and Lovable Outcasts in YA Fantasy](#) with Leigh Bardugo; and [Finding My Way](#) with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai.
- **Chess Club:** Meeting on the first Saturday afternoon each month, the South Hadley Chess Club is a place for beginners and experienced players alike to learn, play, or compete. It is open to those who have never played before and supports skill development for those wanting to improve their game. The Chess Club is a casual place for anyone to enjoy the game of kings!
- **Children's Programs at SHPL:** *Rhyme Time* happens every Tuesday at 10:30, *Story Time* every Wednesday at 10:30, and *Baby Lapsit* every Friday at 10:00. The *CFCE Playgroup* will meet on Thursday, September 18 at 10:00 and Friday, September 26 at 3:00. For bigger kids, *Lego & Games* are out every Monday and Wednesday from 3:00-5:00, *STEAM* is Thursday, September 16 at 3:45, and kids can *Read to A Dog* on September 24 (call the library to register for the dog program).

**Planning and Conservation**

- **Town Meeting:** The Planning and Conservation director will update the Selectboard at their 9/16 meeting.
- **Routes 202/33 Corridor:** The Planning Board held a public hearing on 9/8 and will continue to 9/15/25, and send draft zoning to Fall Town Meeting in November. [Route 202 & 33 Corridor Re-Zoning | South Hadley, MA - Official Website](#).
- **Sign Zoning Bylaw Amendment:** The Planning Board has begun discussion on amendments, Public Hearing planned for 9/22/25, intent to send an amended bylaw to November Town Meeting for adoption. [Sign-Bylaw-Review-and-Recommended-Amendments](#)
- **Agricultural Uses in Zoning Bylaw Amendments:** Agricultural uses within the zoning and general bylaws, as well as Board of Health regulations, are in conflict. The Planning Board has begun discussion on amendments but will aim for the May 2026 town meeting instead of the November 2025 meeting for adoption.
- **Affordable Housing Trust:** The Committee has finalized a 5-year strategic plan and proposed budget. A bylaw to create the Trust will be sent to Town Meeting in May. One seat on the Trust Board is still open for a person currently or formerly living in Affordable Housing.

- **Tree Planting Program:** The Shade Tree Challenge is accepting applications on a rolling basis from now until June 2026. <https://www.southhadley.org/1063/Tree-Planting-Program>
- The Conservation Commission has received a Notice of Intent filing for 14 proposed condominiums at 506 Granby Rd. The public hearing will open on 9/17, be presented to the Commission, take public comment, and then will be sent out for a peer review.

### **Public Health**

- **Blood Drive:** **Blood Drive** was provided by Baystate Medical Center and the South Hadley Health Department in the spring, which was held at the South Hadley Library and is now being set up for Fall.

## **GIVE BLOOD, SAVE A LIFE**

**BLOOD DRIVE HOSTED BY South Hadley Health  
Department**

**Date October 20th, 2025**

**10 AM – 2 PM**

**LOCATION: South Hadley Public Library  
Community Meeting Room**

**SIGN-UPS Contact: Fiona Cioch**

**Email: [fcioch@southhadley ma.gov](mailto:fcioch@southhadley.ma.gov)**

**Phone: 413 887-8008**

- **Vaccine Clinic:** The Health Department's **Drive-thru vaccine clinic** will be held on **October 15, 2025 from 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm at Beers & Story, 646 Newton Street, South Hadley.**  
**Vaccines available:** Influenza-High Dose (65+), Influenza- Trivalent, Covid-19(12+), Prevnar 20, TDAP, Shingrix, RSV, Hep-B, and Pneumovax 23.

### **Public Safety**

- **School Safety:** On August 21<sup>st</sup>, Ofc. Josh Helems and Ofc. Ray Faginski led the annual 360 Safety Meeting with the public safety and South Hadley School District Partners. SHPD is grateful for the support of SHPS and Town Administration in prioritizing school safety.
- **New Employee:** On August 11<sup>th</sup>, town resident Molly Farber joined the South Hadley Police Department. Ofc. Farber has 8 years of experience working in policing for the town of Amherst. SHPD and the Town welcome her to the team.
- **False Alarm Bylaw:** The community is reminded that the Town of South Hadley has a [False Alarm Bylaw](#) (burglar alarms). Since the start of 2025 SHPD has responded to 338 false alarms, each one diverting officers from real emergencies. Three separate false alarms within a calendar year, the alarm user shall be assessed \$25 for the 4<sup>th</sup> offense and \$50 for the 5<sup>th</sup> and subsequent offense. Weather related-False Alarms will not be counted as a “false alarm.” The goal is to have less alarm calls, and not to have to issue fines. SHPD appreciates cooperation in this matter. Let’s work together to reduce false alarms and keep our community safer for everyone. The Police Department sent notices to 21 businesses and 5 residential properties about excessive false burglar alarms, and that the next violation will result in a bylaw fine.
- **Annual Report:** The [FY2025 Police Department Town Report](#) is completed. Please visit the PD website for the stats from FY2025
- **Activity:** In August, 46 incident reports required investigations by Police personnel and 1,819 calls for service were generated by Dispatch personnel. A summary of incidents reported include Sex Offense/2; Larceny or Fraud/7, Robbery/1; A&B/3; Family Abduction/1; Possession of Child Sexual Abuse Material/1. 25 individuals were criminally charged in August. Summary of the criminal offenses charged include: Abuse Protection Order Violation/1; Domestic A&B/1; Larceny or Burglary/2; Motor Vehicle Offenses/15; Narcotic Offense/1; Warrant Arrest/2; Operating Under the Influence/1; A&B/1; Restraining Order Violation/1.
- Chief of Police Office Hours include Sept 24th 8:00am to 10:00am at Tailgate Picnic and Sept 30th 10:00am to 12:00pm at the COA. Chief Gundersen will also be at the SHPS Open House Events at the High School, Mosier, Skala and MESMS to meet with parents and caregivers.

### **Selectboard**

- **Town Meeting:** The Selectboard will begin reviewing proposed articles for the November 2025 town meeting during their September and October meetings.
- **Vacancies:** Tri-Annual interviews happening now for open positions on boards and committees.
- **One South Hadley:** The board is working with other town governmental entities to form a new partnership with the Districts and SHELD to share information.
- **Liquor Licenses:** The board will be initiating a home rule process to obtain more licenses for the town.