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Town Administrator

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

Administration, Finance and Operations

● **Administration:**

- **Budget/Town Meeting:** The Town has a mid-year budget gap due to the additional rise in health insurance costs by 20% starting on October 1. This will create another 1.2m annual gap and about \$900k for the remainder of the year.
- **State/Federal Funding:** The State budget process was completed with the result of a net reduction of less than \$20 to the town compared to FY25 and about \$50k less than the Governor's budget, which was used in the estimates. This gap will likely be resolved by the excess in insurance as the cost came in about \$40k less than budgeted.
- **Elementary School Building Project:** The town is hoping to have an architect on board later this month after a robust process.
- **Budget Task Force:** The group held their first meeting in July and their next meeting is on August 25.

● **Accounting:**

- The department has finalized the end of year invoices and is currently working with departments on encumbering funds for invoices that are still outstanding.
- The annual process of reviewing accounts at year end is in progress.
- The department is working on the required end of year vendor report.

● **Assessor:**

- Staff attended the annual Assessor's annual Summer Conference.
- Continued data entry of Fiscal 2026 property data changes including permits, sales and inspection related data. Personal property has been completed.
- Calculating new growth for FY2026.
- Working with vendor regarding data collection and review of all vacant land parcels.
- Edited the presentation regarding assessing that is taught at the Massachusetts Collector/Treasurer's Association (MCTA) annual school in August.
- Process owner update to allow Collector to update ownership for trash billing.

- Preparing to teach at Assessor's annual school in August.
- Attended and participated in meetings and trainings such as Enhancing your Appraisal Intelligence with Artificial Intelligence.
- **Cable:**
 - Cable staff have 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.
- **IT:**
 - Supporting town departments to restore, update and streamline digital files.
 - Supporting new permitting processes.

Building and Zoning

- **Certificates on Inspection (3 families and above):** Notices are going out to non-responders (more than 90 days with no response) from the initial notice (about 25 out of 117 delivered). We are over 60% of buildings in town now compliant (from just over 10% when we started) with numerous more close to compliance.
- **10th Edition:** Updated code edition now in full effect. A short fact sheet indicating the major changes was developed to present to contractors and homeowners. All expired permits that wish to be reissued will need to comply with the updated code.
- **Mount Holyoke College Inspections:** Continuing work with college officials and fire department to conduct inspections of all classroom and assembly buildings on a weekly basis with the goal of all certificates issued prior to the start of the fall semester.
- **Short Term Rental Guidance:** State has delivered long-awaited guidance on short-term rentals confirming the sprinkler requirement as expected. Any previously registered property was granted a 1-year grace period to comply. Any newly registered property will need to comply immediately. We expect there are dozens of properties throughout the town operating as a short-term rental 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.
- **Burial Permits:** The office is now issuing e-permits for burial permits to funeral homes, enhancing work-flows and customer convenience.

- **Voter Registration:** The office is 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 will work to establish a value for 27 Fulton St prior to marketing to sell the property. Also working on 35 Carew Street as that has now been taken for back taxes.
- **Q1:** Real estate was due on August 1.

Department of Public Works

- **Center/Warner/Grave:** Project currently under bid review status.
- **Joffre/Viviani drainage outfall for Queensville Dam/Mountain Ave. Conservation project:** Tighe and Bond dam inspection in progress. Work that could be done in -house completed.
- **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, under review.
- **Trash/Recycling Carts:** Automated collection program in progress; carts delivered.
- **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. Scheduling for construction summer 2025.
- **Fall road paving:** Fall road paving list being finalized, contractors have been notified: September 2025 work scheduled.
- **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.
- **WWTP:** Security gate, mechanical improvements in progress. CWMP in progress.
- **Main Street pump station permanent by-pass project:** Project awarded to JMC Construction. Pre-construction meeting in August.

- **Tree Work:** Trimming/removals scheduled for August, school playground trimming/removals before school opens.
- **Capital:** New Vac Truck in service; new WWTP pick-up/plow received; new Parks pick-up/plow received; 6 wheel dump truck in design/build phase: November 2026 delivery expected.
- **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.
- **SIGNS: 25 MPH Townwide sign:** All signage is installed; message boards deployed for notification of new speeds. School Zone signage installed on Lincoln Avenue. Speed control islands/stop signs installed on Michael/Paul/Laurie roadways.
- **DPW Highway Division:** Highway Division crews line striping of school lots/x walks completed; Town-wide stop lines/x walks/ handicap spots/directional markings: in progress. Roadside brush mowing in progress.
- **Rt. 116 culvert out fall/New Ludlow Road culvert outfall:** All infrastructure improvements are completed.
- **DPW Parks Division:** BATTERY BROOK PARK park enhancements including disc golf area, band shell, playground drainage, pickleball sidewalks in progress. Fall sports field/park improvements in progress.
- **Schools: Transportation Department:** Parking area and office upgrades at location for School Van Transportation Division completed.

Emergency Management

- **Active Shooter Event: Participation in** the Interagency Response to an Active Threat at MESMS on July 30, 2025. **After Action talks have identified additional resources that may be needed for Police and Fire departments to respond to an active shooter threat (e.g. Abdominal Aortic and Junctional Tourniquets).**
- **Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA):** Met with MEMA Regional Coordinator to discuss South Hadley's participation in a State Exercise in September. One community from each county was asked to participate. South Hadley's Emergency Management Team will be the participant from Hampshire County.
- **Drone:** A new drone for interior usage has been purchased and training will take place by **UAS Supervisor, Sgt. Raymond Hebert.** The initial drone is dedicated to outside operations and now, the addition of an "interior" drone dramatically adds to the overall effectiveness of operations.
- **FEMA:** Class on Preliminary Damage Assessment completed.
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_rd_pda-guide_07012025.pdf

- **Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant:** Received review from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that the South Hadley Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant has been completed, signed by Selectboard and uploaded to the Mass Emergency Mgmt Agency website (WEBEOC).
- **HURREVAC Training:** Completed four (4) day training. **HURREVAC** is a web-based decision support tool used by emergency managers for hurricane evacuation planning and response. It integrates real-time hurricane forecast information, storm surge modeling, and evacuation clearance times to help Emergency Management Directors assess threats and make informed decisions about evacuations.

Facilities

- **High School:** The accessible pathway project is mostly complete. Only the guardrails are left to install. The gym bleachers have been repaired. Painting of the gym ceiling and refinishing of the floor is in progress.
- **DPW-New security and fire alarm** has been installed. The office trailer is currently under repair and is to be used by the school transportation department.
- **Library:** Duct cleaning and security camera installation is complete.
- **COA:** Hand dryers have been installed in all of the bathrooms. A new storage shed has been ordered to alleviate the lack of storage space in the building.
- **Ledges:** The river pump has been replaced and the old pump is being rebuilt so we have a spare for quick replacement if needed. Heat pumps will be installed to replace the
- **MS:** The elevator modernization project has been awarded and materials are on order. The building automation system replacement has been contracted and will start soon.
- **Skala Elementary:** BDA replacement is complete.

Human Services

- **Recreation:**
 - Construction at BATTERY BROOK PARK is almost done with the exception of the pickleball issue. There will be a growing season for all of the new grassy areas.
 - Fall sports have started for certain sports and divisions.
- **Veterans:**
 - Veteran Coffee Hour: Held monthly at the Senior Center with coffee and pastries, generously provided by VFW Post 3104 and American Legion Post 260. The next one is Aug 13 at 9am.
 - Veterans Evening Social Hour will be starting back up in the fall third Thursday of the month starting Sep 18th from 430 to 530..
 - VA Accreditation complete and have been assisting with various types of VA claims.

- 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. There are various locations in different parts of MA, NH & VT we are the newest location. This was setup up by Dave Mendoza and Steve Connor from Central Hampshire Veteran Services. Next one is Sep 2.
- **Council on Aging:**
 - The COA is going through a large transition after a shift in staffing. Our Programs Coordinator, Kathy Florence, will leave the COA as of August 7. During this time, please send program questions to Julie Pearce for follow up.
 - Delaney's Market, provider of the congregate meal at the COA, hosted a BBQ at the Center for meal participants. At the event the staff from Delaney's sought insights, feedback and suggestions from participants in the hopes of improving the service they provide. Delaney's Market plans to make this an annual event to always be aware of the feedback from consumers.
 - The next event in our Summer Concert Series will be our Polka Party, August 27. This event will feature music from the Eddie Forman Orchestra and a special meal.
 - Don't miss out on a sweet treat from the Batch truck, serving ice creams at the COA for the monthly birthday and anniversary party on August 22. This event is open to all ages while supplies last.
 - With summer upon us, farmers markets and farm stands have opened for the season. Through the Health Incentives Program (HIP) individuals who receive SNAP benefits receive up to \$20 in extra SNAP funds each month when shopping for fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets and farm stands. The COA has a list of local list of local HIP-approved farm locations.

Human Resources

- **Hiring/Staffing:**
 - Please welcome the following new hires to the Town!
 - May 26, 2025: Rebecca Whitten, Substitute Receptionist, Council on Aging
 - June 9, 2025: Colin Zraunig, Temporary Cable Studio Assistant
 - June 9, 2025: Teddy Trybus, Heavy Motor Equipment Operator, DPW Highway Division
 - July 28, 2025: Kathryn Elias, Human Services Coordinator, Council on Aging
 - August 4, 2025: Deborah Bergeron, On-Call Companion Driver, Council on Aging
 - August 11, 2025: Molly Farber, Police Officer, SHPD

- September 4, 2025: Danielle Rossoni, Volunteer & Front Desk Coordinator, Council on Aging
- The Senior Tax Credit Worker application period closed May 15th, and the HR Department has begun notifying applicants of placements to assignments throughout departments for the work period July through October 2025.
- For a list of open positions and how to apply, visit <https://southhadley.org/jobs>

Library

- **Mini-Golf at SHPL:** To celebrate the end of our summer reading program we're setting up a mini-golf course *INSIDE* the library on Friday, August 15! **All ages and families are welcome.** [Sign up](#) and attend at 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, or 3:30 to play the course!
- **Library Conference:** Library Director Joe Rodio recently attended the American Library Association's Annual Conference in Philadelphia on a scholarship from the MA Library System. He attended programs focused on intellectual freedom, community outreach, and practical applications for AI use in libraries.
- **Postcard Campaign:** The library has begun mailing postcards to new residents encouraging them to visit their friendly local library. Over 100 postcards have been mailed in the first two months of this pilot program. Postage is being paid by the Friends of the Library.
- **Check Us Out:** Circulation of library materials increased 9% last fiscal year, with 200,189 items checked out of the South Hadley Public and Gaylord Memorial libraries.

Planning and Conservation

- **Routes 202/33 Corridor:** The Planning Board held a public listening session on 7/28 and will continue to refine the proposed zoning amendments ahead of a Public Hearing to be held on 9/8/25, 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, Public Hearing planned for 9/22/25, and intent to send amendments to November Town Meeting for adoption. <https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13675/Agricultural-Uses-Review-and-Recommended-Amendments>

- **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>
- **Land Management.** Conservation land management is ongoing through the summer. This includes monthly mowing of Leaping Well Nature Trail through contracted services, responding to maintenance concerns and completing repairs as they arise, and continued vegetation management to keep trails open for residents and visitors. Planning has begun with an Eagle Scout to install new kiosks at several trailheads across town.

Public Health

- **July/August is Tick & Mosquito Safety month:** Recommendations for staying tick and mosquito safe Information is being posted at Town Hall, Council on Aging and the South Hadley Library - in English and Spanish. The information is also available on the Town website.
- **Behavioral Health 360:** South Hadley Health Department has invested in this software in order to provide additional resources to South Hadley residents. Regional grant funding was secured for South Hadley and additional funding was secured also for Holyoke and Chicopee Health Departments. **Website has been launched!** <https://413health.crediblemind.com/>
- **Narcan Public Service Announcement (PSA):** with Public Health Director and Regional Public Health Nurse <https://vimeo.com/1099411395>
- **Tick and Mosquito Announcement (PSA)** Public Health Director and Regional Public Health Nurse are currently working on this topic as a new PSA.
- **Mosquito - Catch Basin Treatments:** Five hundred (500) catch basin treatments were completed. Another 250 are scheduled. Map of treatment areas:
<https://www.southhadley.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1276>
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program>
SNAP provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budget so they can afford the nutritious food essential to health and well-being. The Health Department was asked to assist the SNAP program in locating a site for them to set up and outreach to community members. Worked with the library for date/times in July, sign ups took place..
- **Impaired Driving & Impact of Medication Management:** Health Department created powerpoint and will be creating PSA.
- **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.

- **SEMINAR:** The Health Department will be presenting a State Sanitary Code (housing) Seminar for Landlords on Saturday, September 6, 2025 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm at the South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal Street, South Hadley.
- **Nicotine Free Generation Regulation:** A Health Department Regulation was just written for [Nicotine-Free Generation](#) (NFG). This regulation will gradually phase out tobacco sales to people born after a specific date. This approach aims to create a generational firebreak, preventing new generations from starting tobacco use and potentially reducing the long-term health impacts of tobacco use. The Town Counsel has reviewed and approved.
- **Non-Emergency Communication Plan:** The Health Director created a non-emergency communication plan to be used by the Health Department's Regional Grant participants (Holyoke, Chicopee and Granby) and local Public Health Staff. This Plan will be made available to other communities across the state.
- **Big Rig Day:** The Health Department and Regional Health Grant Staff participated in the event: Supplying members of the public with health information.
- **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.
- **Viral respiratory illness (COVID, RSV, Influenza)**
https://www.mass.gov/info-details/viral-respiratory-illness-reporting?_gl=1*8r8lr2*_ga*NTIxNzA0MTQ2LjE2OTUwNDc3MTM.*_ga_MCLPEGW7WM*MTczNjk3NDE2OS4xMi4xLjE3MzY5NzQxODg0MC4wLjA

Opioid Abatement:

- **Overdose Awareness Memorial Event:** Tuesday, August 26, 5:30-7:00pm in Beachgrounds Park. Coordinated in partnership with the South Hadley Tree Committee, Hampshire HOPE, Tapestry Health, and Northampton DHHS Drug Addiction Recovery Team (DART). The event will include the dedication of a new memorial tree to remember and honor the lives of community members lost to overdose. Grief support and overdose prevention resources will be available. All are welcome to attend.
- **Tapestry Mobile Health Clinic:** Working with Tapestry Health to confirm dates and location for mobile health van to provide a range of health services including STI, Hepatitis, and HIV testing, STI and Hepatitis C treatment, reproductive health counseling and prescriptions, blood pressure & blood sugar checks, and referrals to specialists.
- **Tapestry Harm Reduction - Syringe Service Program:** Strengthening partnership with Tapestry to increase community awareness of and access to mobile harm reduction services.
- **Substance Use & Opioid Webpage:** Finalizing updated substance and opioid use webpage with resources and information on town website.
- **National Recovery Month:** Preparing communications and identifying opportunities to uplift local substance use recovery resources and services during National Recovery Month in September.

Public Safety

- **Accreditation:** In June, 2025 the Police Department was awarded re-accreditation. The three (3) year long, self-initiated process involves a rigorous independent review and evaluation by MPAC of the Department's compliance with 253 mandatory standards and 80 optional standards. This award recognizes the department's continual efforts to provide the highest level of professional service to the community as well as a commitment to the best overall policing practices and ensures the South Hadley Police Department is prepared to meet the demands of the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) legislation created under the Commonwealth's police reform law. The South Hadley Police is one of seven municipal police agencies in western Massachusetts to achieve this prestigious status. Appreciation is extended to the members of the South Hadley Police Department for their dedication in this effort, and the Town Administration and the Selectboard for providing the Department the tools, training, equipment and funding necessary to accomplish this great task.
- **Internship:** The Police Department had the assistance of a student intern from Salem State University for June and July. The internship program is supervised by Lt. Mark Baran. The intern was a great help to various data collection projects and updated the presentations of the FY2024 [Police Annual Report](#). The FY25 will be released by September 1, 2025
- **Recognition:** Officers Corey Whelihan and Karl Kapinos presented the Exceptional Service Award on July 1, 2025 for their response a male party who was emotionally disturbed, threatened self-harm and had armed himself with a large hunting knife and taser device. Officers de-escalated this violent incident without harm to the offender or bystanders. Ofc. Kapinos did suffer an injury, and we wish him a speedy recovery.
- **Active Threat Training:** On Wednesday July 30, 2025, Officers from SHPD joined multiple other agencies in an active threat/shooter drill at Michael E Smith Middle School. The training emphasizes coordination among first responders to improve readiness for an active threat or shooter incident. Through scenario-based drills, officers strengthened their communication, response tactics, and teamwork to better protect our schools, churches, workplaces, and public spaces in the event of a critical threat.
- **Activity:** May, June and July, 152 incidents required investigations by personnel. 78 individuals were criminally charged. Summary of the criminal offenses charged include Abuse Protection Order Violation/5; Domestic A&B/6; Larceny or Burglary/12; Motor Vehicle Offenses/24; Narcotic Offense/2; Warrant Arrest/8; Operating Under the Influence/4; A&B/8; Restraining Order Violation/6.

- **New Employee:** Officer Christian Santiago, hired March 17, 2025, completed his field training program and has been assigned to the evening and dayshift

Selectboard

- **Town Meeting:** The Selectboard will begin reviewing proposed articles for the November 2025 town meeting during their September and October meetings.
- **Strategic Plan:** The Selectboard held their second retreat to develop the upcoming year's action plan on July 26.
- **Vacancies:** There is a school committee vacancy. Applications are due by August 25th for appointment by a joint meeting with the school committee at the Sept 2 meeting.