

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

Lisa Wong
Town Administrator

Town Administrator's Monthly Report
May 2025

Administration, Finance and Operations

- **Administration:**
 - **Budget/Town Meeting:** The Town will follow-up on the votes, including implementing capital projects that have funding available now, and working with the AGs office to approve bylaw changes.
 - **State/Federal Funding:** The Senate Budget was recently released, with aid numbers similar to the Governor's budget numbers used in the town budget.
 - **Procurement:** The TA was awarded recertification as a Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official by completing the required coursework and passing all the tests.
 - **Transportation:** The town hosted a secretary of transportation and various division representatives recently. The TA will post her remarks on the website.
 - **Elementary School Building Project:** The committee is waiting for approval from MSBA to advertise for the Designer to conduct the feasibility study.
- **Accounting:**
 - The accounting department completed the FY26 Budget Book.
 - Assisted with the compilation and verification of the Appropriations Committee report.
 - Completed the March 2025 Quarterly Report highlighting the various revenue and expense budgets for the general fund and enterprise funds.
- **Assessor:**
 - Received approval of the fiscal 2025 motor vehicle reimbursements to the Department of Revenue.
 - Received approval of the fiscal 2025 personal exemption (for property tax) reimbursements to the Department of Revenue.
 - Continued work on updating Personal Property accounts for businesses for Fiscal 2026. There are approximately hundred eighty-three (483) accounts currently.
 - Continue review of Fiscal 2026 property data changes including permits, sales and inspection related data.

- Continued regressivity analysis through the Lincoln Land Institute's Vertical Equity application. This will be monitored twice per year; once prior to value updates and once after to see if we are providing equity through our valuation regulations, standards and processes.
- Suggested release of overlay surplus; board will take vote.
- Reviewing Fire District Appropriation reports from their annual meetings.
- Have been working with multiple state agencies surrounding incorrect legal reference on a reimbursement form.
- Partnering with DOR - Bureau of Local Assessment and Attorney Matthew Thomas to prepare a webinar on local property tax exemptions for MAAO.
- Engaging counsel on ownership and paper street determinations.
- Collaborating on property related inquiries with other departments as requested/needed.
- **Cable:**
 - Cable staff have been instrumental in supporting many community meetings. Catch a recap to the Special and Annual Town Meetings from May 14th, and tune into Good News by BHMA online at: <https://shctv15.com/>
 - Cable Studio Director coordinated a collaboration with MHC Film Dept to showcase a Short Film Screening. Lookout for some excellent content from MHC students including a short documentary about Jorge the Goose
 - Numbers for South Hadley Comcast Subscribers came in for 2024 from the Dept of Telecommunications and Cable. We continue to see a gradual drop and have hit a new low of 2,694. This is especially alarming as we have lost half of our subscribers compared to the 6,000 average we sustained from 2003-2016
 - Thanks to the Commission on Disabilities we have become aware of a grant opportunity for Municipal ADA Improvement and will begin work on writing a grant for Closed Captioning
- **IT:**
 - Prepare Meridia software for Town Meeting
 - Work with Building on Short Term Rental Renewals
 - Work with Vision to resolve space issues on Vision server
 - Begin working on Large Event license online applicaiton

Building and Zoning

- **Certificates on Inspection (3 families and above):** Inspections are ongoing throughout town. We are nearly at 40% of buildings in town now compliant (from just over 10% when we started) with numerous more close to compliance. Goal of over 50% compliance by the end of May. Any

non-responders (more than 90 days with no response) from our mailing list will be sent a follow-up notice and have accrued fines added to tax bills similar to zoning violators below.

- **Short Term Rental Violations:** Will be working with the planning department to ensure registration of all short-term rentals in town as required in bylaws. New code to officially take effect on July 1st will require sprinklers in all short-term rental units which will have a huge impact on those property owners.
- **Problem Properties/Zoning Violations:** Accrued fines for violators that refuse to comply (6 months or longer with no response/action) will be added to upcoming tax bills. This list includes 6 properties currently with violations dating back to as early as September 2023 with no response or action. There are more than 30 on the current list of zoning complaints being investigated and followed up upon.

Clerk

- **Town Meeting:** A Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting were held on Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at the South Hadley High School:
 - A total of 93 attendees were present out of 117 current Town Meeting Members
 - Voting results can be viewed at: https://www.southhadley.org/1480/_2025
 - The Town Clerk's Office will be submitting to the Attorney General's Municipal Law Review Unit, the 6 By-Laws passed at Town Meeting, and submitting other documentation to appropriate offices.
- **Burial Permits:** The Town Clerk's Office will begin serving as the burial agent of the town effective June 2, 2025, shifting this role from the Board of Health.
- **Official Street Lists:** 2025 Street Lists will be available at the beginning of June. Printed copies are available for purchase for \$20 in the Town Clerk's Office and electronic (PDF) versions are free and available upon request.
- Confirmation postcards will be sent to residents who did not return their 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

- Real Estate and Personal Property 4th Quarter bills were mailed on April 1st and were due May 1st. Demands will be issued for any unpaid bills in the next 2 weeks, which will add the \$30 late fee.
- Sewer bills covering 1/1 - 6/30/25 were mailed April 1st and are due May 15th.
- The 2nd 2025 Motor Vehicle Excise commitment of 945 bills was issued May 5th.

Department of Public Works

- **Center/Warner/Grave:** Professional services agreement with BETA approved. RFQ for engineer services for construction services in progress.
- **Joffre/Viviani drainage outfall for Queensville Dam/Mountain Ave. Conservation project:** DPW in-house work on Queensville Pond outfall behind 7/11 building scheduled for May/June (weather related issues). Maintenance and Operation Plan (MO), Emergency Action Plan (EAP), and required May 2025 inspection in progress by Tighe and Bond.
- **Pearl Street:** Pearl Street closed to through traffic: May 6 until July 1 (or further notice), at Woodbridge and Pearl and Rt. 47 and Pearl. Existing culvert removal, bypass pumping and site preparation for new water main, culvert install and headwalls has begun.
- **Buttery Brook Park:** DPW/SHELD work for underground electrical/communications completed. Project excavation work and grading, walls, utilities in progress. Court paving scheduled mid-May.
- **Trash/Recycling Carts:** Resident informational packets for distribution with new trash/recycling carts in progress. Distribution plan completed, on-site assembly and distribution of carts by Rehrig begins June 16, 2025.
- **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 : late May-early June time frame expected.
- **DPW:** Stanton Avenue drainage install; easement approved with MHC. Scheduling for construction summer 2025.
- **Spring road paving and pavement preservation:** Spring 2025 Cracksealing project completed (17 streets), Spring 2025 Paving Project: road milling completed, structure adjusting in progress, paving of streets scheduled mid-May (12 streets).
- **WWTP:** Plant mechanical, security entry gate work in progress (electrical install and panel upgrade, excavation, concrete/paving); Thickener Room heating unit installation in progress; CWMP in progress.
- **Tree Work:** stump grinding of fall/winter removals: mid-May. Trimming/removals scheduled until June 30th as needed, and as funding allows. Spring planting program completed (R. Cornell) +/- 75 new trees planted!
- **Capital:** New Street Sweeper received and working daily! 2025 Sewer Vac/Flusher Truck completed: mid-May delivery; excavator Steel Wrist attachment in progress; 2 dumpsters for trash and recycling collection completed, and in service.
- **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.

- **DPW/Town Departments Fuel Bid: Gasoline and Diesel 2025-2028:** Advertising for qualified vendors now, bid opening June 2, 2025: 3:05pm. (Police Department is procuring separately)
- **DPW: Solid Waste Brush Grinding/Compost Screening Bid:** Advertising for qualified vendors now, bid opening June 2, 2025: 3:10pm.

Emergency Management

- **Emergency Management Requirements for a Large Scale Event Policy:** Met with Massachusetts Emergency Management Coordinator to help design a local policy that meets the standards of Emergency Management Policies across the state. Emergency Management Team (PD, FD#1, FD#2, Building Commissioner) met and worked on the policy. It was shared with the Town Administrator.
- **JULY Fireworks:** Participated in the July Fireworks Planning.
- **Multi-Agency Drone Incursion Exercise at Westover Air Force Base:** Schedule to attend on May 19, 2025.
- **Emergency Management Planning Grant:** Close out of the grant for the Lithium Battery response for FD#1.
- **Road Sign Message Boards Usage Request for:** University of Massachusetts, Voting, Shredding Day/Public Safety Fair, Drug Take Back.

Facilities

- **High School:** The accessible pathway project will begin the week of Memorial Day. Replacements of the failed hood vent fans for the cafeteria kitchen are complete. A new landscape contractor has been hired at a substantial cost savings from the previous contractor and thus far the work has been above satisfactory.
- **Library:** Vendors have been contracted for duct cleaning and for interior cameras. Failing lavatory faucets have been replaced.
- **COA:** We are seeking quotes for a new custodial vendor. Electrical repairs are complete.
- **Ledges:** The starter shed, pump house shed, and driving range shed have all been renovated. There is an issue with the river pump that supplies the irrigation pond and are in the process of working with vendors to identify and repair the issue.
- **MS:** Bids for the elevator replacement project are due May 15. If approved construction will take place over the summer break.
- **Plains Elementary:** We have received and are reviewing bids for the BDA system that has failed. A new landscape contractor has been hired at substantial savings from the previous contractor.

- **Capital Planning:** The Capital Planning Committee annual report and 5 year capital plan are complete.

Human Services

- **Recreation:**

- Construction at BATTERY Brook Park is coming along nicely! The playground/spray park should open on May 17 with other amenities in mid-June. Received a Mass Cultural Council Facilities grant for \$98,000.
- Ledges Open House will be Wednesday, May 28 from 5-7pm. We have been working with our two consultants for a finished product in June. The river pump has failed due to a silt buildup.
- It has been incredibly wet causing 100s of cancellations of youth sports practices and games.
- Fall and summer activity registrations are currently open and include spring sports, summer programs, James Taylor at Tanglewood on July 4, and log cabin and pavilion rentals at BATTERY Brook Park.

- **Veterans:**

- **May Events**

- “Flags In” Memorial Day Cemetery Flagging for the general public to occur Saturday May 17th at 0945 am. Location Notre Dame and Mater Dolorosa Cemeteries- rain or shine event. Ceremony and instructions at Notre Dame Cemetery Flag Pole. Anyone can attend this event approximately 2500 veterans graves to flag at these 2 cemeteries. Family friendly.
- “Flags In” for the other 4 cemeteries Monday thru Thursday will be flagged by various scouting organizations. This is a closed event.
- Memorial Day dinner scheduled for Thursday 22 May 2025 from 430 to 630. American Legion Post 260 Commander Brian Willette will be discussing the crewmembers of the B-24 crash memorial (Some family members in attendance). State Rep Homar Gomez to be in attendance. Senator Oliveria cannot make it due to schedule.
- 23 May Friday 6 pm - American Legion B24 crash memorial will be held at Skinner State Park.
- 26 May Monday Memorial Day - No events planned groups that normally support are either not in town or not enough member support to help
- Holyoke Rotary Club Flags for Heroes - Flags to go up in front of town hall with a small ceremony run by the Holyoke Rotary around 1130 or 12.

- **Council on Aging:**

- The application period for Fuel Assistance has ended. Due to Federal cuts and the dismantling of the LIHEAP department, some applicants are still waiting to have their application processed. Funds were to be spent by the end of April, so we are waiting to hear how these will be addressed for those who have not yet received a response to their application. Anyone with questions about the program can be referred to Community Action of Pioneer Valley or Valley Opportunity Council.
- The Senior Farm Share program will once again be taking place at the COA. This program provides fresh, local vegetables over a 10-week period for a one-time payment of \$10. Individuals must be over the age of 60 and meet income guidelines.
- The COA will be closing at 4 pm on Thursdays throughout the summer. This allows everyone to attend the wonderful concert series taking place throughout the summer. The last late night at the COA will take place on June 26. The COA will reopen for late nights on Thursday, September 4.
- The COA will be hosting a Pride celebration dinner on June 26. Jay Blotcher, board member of the Gilbert Baker Foundation and Co-author of Baker's 2019 memoir, *Rainbow Memoir: my life in color*, will share insights into Baker's life, activism and the flag's enduring legacy. This event is open to members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies of all ages.

Human Resources

- **Hiring/Staffing:**

- Please congratulate Al Tuergeon of the DPW on his recent promotion to Senior Heavy Motor Equipment Operator in the DPW Highway Division. Al has worked for the Town Highway Division since 2022 and was promoted to a position recently vacant in DPW.
- Please welcome Larry Cromack, who will start on May 27th as a new Heavy Motor Equipment Operator in the DPW Highway Division! Larry comes to the DPW from the Town of Palmer DPW, and previously worked for the City of Holyoke as well.
- The Senior Tax Credit Worker application period will close May 15th, and the HR Department will be working with supervisors to make placements for the work period July through October 2025. Individuals should be notified of assigned placements in June.
- For a list of open positions and how to apply, visit <https://southhadley.org/jobs>
- **Open Enrollment** closed on May 7th for employee insurance benefits. Health and other insurance deductions for coverage effective July 1st will begin being reflected in June's payroll.
- **HR Newsletter:** The spring edition of the [quarterly HR newsletter](#) was released featuring comprehensive open enrollment benefits information and other updates, tips and resources for employees.

Library

- **Birthright Citizenship and the 14th Amendment:** Professor Montana Martinez, Assistant Professor of Law at Western New England Law School, will give a talk on *Birthright Citizenship and the 14th Amendment* on Wednesday, May 21 at 6:00. Join us for this free and timely program.
- **Film Screening: [Matter of Mind: My Alzheimer's](#)** is an intimate portrayal of three families confronting the unique challenges of Alzheimer's and how this progressive neurodegenerative disease transforms roles and relationships. In collaboration with the Senior Center, we will screen this new documentary on Friday, May 30 at 4:00, followed by a group discussion.
- **The Crescent Dancers:** With colorful, dazzling costumes and a wealth of cultural and historical information the Crescent Dancers are inspired by the rich music and dance traditions of the Middle East. This all ages program promises to be educational, imaginative and get people dancing! Join us Saturday, June 7, at 11:00.
- **A Beautiful Future Music Program:** The Climate Healing Chorus blends music and activism to uplift spirits and inspire action on climate change. Their songs—many inspired by the book *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed To Reverse Global Warming*—share practical, hopeful solutions rooted in love, community, and sustainability. This all ages program, happening on Saturday, June 14, at 11:00, is supported by the South Hadley Cultural Council

Planning and Conservation

- **Routes 202/33 Corridor:** The Planning Board has begun discussion of the zoning recommendations; anticipate scheduling a public listening session in June, public hearing in September, and send draft zoning to Fall Town Meeting in November.
- **Business A-1 Design Guidelines:** Public Hearing scheduled for 5/19/25. The Business A-1 zoning district was amended at Town Meeting in May 2024. Per the amendment, there is a temporary moratorium on permitting new projects until June 1, 2025 for the adoption of design guidelines.
- **ADUs:** Chapter 255-50 amendments on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant (Article 19). The new ADU law (part of the Affordable Homes Act St. 2024, c. 150, § 8) went into effect on 2/2/25 and at this time, our local bylaw is not fully in compliance with the new Regulations as promulgated under 760 CMR 71.00.
- **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.
- **Sign Zoning Bylaw Amendment:** The Planning Board will begin discussion on amendments in June with the 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 will begin discussion in June with the intent to send amendments to November Town Meeting for adoption. <https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13675/Agricultural-Uses-Review-and-Recommended-Amendments>
- **Tree Planting Program:** Spring kicks off the Shade Tree Challenge - to plant 400 trees over the next two years. Applications for trees being accepted. This is possible by the funding from two grants: DCR's Environmental Justice Tree Planting Program is funding the first 100 trees. These will be planted in the town's two Environmental Justice Neighborhoods: in the Falls and near MHC. The remaining 300 trees are funded by EEA's Cool Corridors Grant and will be planted town-wide. Trees must be planted in the front or side yard of a property and the property owner must commit to watering the trees for the first two years. Residents can learn more and apply online. <https://www.southhadley.org/1063/Tree-Planting-Program>
- **MVP FY26:** has submitted an application for the FY26 MVP Action Grant. This project proposed to restore Titus Pond Conservation Area, create a viewing platform for recreational use, and complete downstream design work for future culvert replacement at Mountain Ave.

Public Health

- **May is Asthma awareness month:** Nearly 28 million people in the U.S. have asthma. It is a long-term disease that causes your airways to become swollen and inflamed, making it hard to breathe. 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. A contract was written for the three (3) communities. **Website design in progress. The grant also allows us to include a language. This software will be in English and Spanish.**
- **Hampshire HOPE (Heroin/Opioid Prevention & Education):** OPIOID PSA written for **MassDot Office Outdoor Advertising** grant. Request was submitted to run for two months (August & September) - **RECOVERY HAPPENS HERE IN MASSACHUSETTS. CALL 800-327-5050**
- **Blood Drive: Blood Drive** being provided by Baystate Medical Center and the South Hadley Health Department. This blood drive is now scheduled for May 27, 2025 from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm and will be held at the South Hadley Library.
- **Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network (MAVEN); an integrated web-based disease surveillance and case management system:** Attended the Mass Department of Public Health

monthly meeting and webinar. The webinar focused on New Disease Surveillance Tools available to Public Health Departments for Measle outbreak and follow-up.

- **Viral respiratory illness (COVID, RSV, Influenza)** is on the decline.
https://www.mass.gov/info-details/viral-respiratory-illness-reporting?_gl=1*8r8lr2*_ga*NTlxNzA0MTQ2LjE2OTUwNDc3MTM.*_ga_MCLPEGW7WM*MTczNjk3NDE2OS4xMi4xLjE3MzY5NzQxODguMC4wLjA
- **Water Equity Summit Steering Committee:** Request by Massachusetts Rivers Alliance to be on the Steering Committee. The first meeting was rescheduled and will be held in June.
- **ADU Department of Environmental Protection seminar:** Public Health review of ADU's with Septic Systems, will be considered "new" construction and ADU's as rental needs to meet the [Massachusetts State Sanitary Code](#), specifically [105 CMR 410.000](#), which sets the minimum standards for housing in Massachusetts.
- **Department of Mental Health Site Board meeting:** this meeting will be held June 10, 2025.
- **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. Town Counsel is currently reviewing.
- **Catch basin treatments:** are being contracted out again this year.
 The treatments in **June** include: Treatment of 500 catch basins around schools and areas where WNV had been previously detected.
 The treatments in **August** include: Second round of treatments to 250 catchbasins around schools and areas as needed.

Public Safety

- **Public Safety Day:** Save the DATE, Jun 1, 2025 at the Michael E. Smith Middle School. Several public safety partners will be in attendance. 10am.
- **Activity:** April-2025: 63 incident reports assigned, 40 arrest reports assigned. Of the 40 events that resulted in criminal charges, an overview include: ; Operating under influence/2; Abuse Protection Order Violation/4; Domestic A&B/4; Assault and Battery/3; Larceny 4; Motor Vehicle Offenses/15;Threats to Commit a crime/2. Incidents either open or closed with no criminal charges include: Missing Person/2; Unattended Death/2; Threats/1; Fraud with loss/6; Person at Risk/2; Larceny-Burglary/5; MV pursuit/Failure to stop/1; Vandalism. [Police Logs can be found here.](#)

- During the month of May, all officers had use of force training-firearms training at the Smith and Wesson-Springfield Police range. Per POST standards, officers must have 40 hours of inservice training each fiscal year, of which 8 hours must be use of force-Firearms. Instructors for this block were Ofc. Karl Kapinos and Lieutenant Mark Baran
- CT River Task Force Officers have begun their annual training and meetings with the Environmental Police and other partners. The CT River Task Force efforts are lead by Sgt. Jeff Goulet and include Ofc. David Pratt and Ofc. Chance Sliwa.
- Sgt. Ray Hebert, the SHPD drone operator, has been assisting the Recreation Department by logging his flight training hours by documenting the progress of the re-build of BATTERY Brook Park. This has been a great collaboration.
- Cumberland Farms Store Clerk Christopher Benoit was given the Citizen's Award of Appreciation on 04/22/25 for his actions assisting a elderly citizen who was being scammed at the bitcoin-crypto machine in the store. There are estimates that the VAST majority of the transactions at those ATM-Bitcoin machines are elderly persons being scammed. If you see a person at one of those machines, and talking into their cell phone, chances are THEY ARE BEING SCAMMED. Please, call the police or engage the person in respectful conversation, such as "Is a stranger on the phone telling you to put money into that machine? If so, you are being SCAMMED and will lose your money." Read this informative [Federal Consumer Trade Commission article!](#)

Selectboard

- **Budget Task Force:** The Selectboard will be interviewing applicants at their May and June meetings.
- **Reorganization:** The Selectboard has elected Jeff Cyr as Chair, Nicole Casolari as Vice Chair and Carol Constant as Clerk.
- **Strategic Plan:** The Selectboard will be organizing their second retreat to develop the upcoming year's action plan.