



April 28, 2017

Honorable Selectboard,

Please accept this abridged accounting of activities and initiatives which have been occupying my time and the time of other public employees during the past weeks. Thank you in advance for your attention and interest.

**Fire District 2 Message:** I apologize for the message which was sent on Thursday evening to alert people about the Monday District 2 Annual Meeting. It was totally my fault, there is a new system for Civic Ready and I was not as familiar and had not gotten the necessary training to accommodate the request from District 2. I have apologized to District 2 T/C Barbara Miller, as well.

The call went out to District 2 three times, oh and to District 1. It also went out to Grand Prairie, TX, West Chester PA, Fort Myers, FL., Springfield MA and Springfield Illinois to let everyone know about the meeting. How do I know this? Well, because citizens from each of those communities took the time to call me on my personal cell phone and leave a message. The range of return calls was from an elderly woman in Texas who wanted to let me know she would not be coming to the meeting to a angry man in Atlanta who suggested he may come just to find me so he could explain in person how annoyed he was with the call. It also went to every phone at the Robert Wood Johnson Charitable Trust Foundations in Princeton, New Jersey. I suspect I may have even caused some bridge closures in New Jersey.

The system was recently upgraded and I hope to gain some level of mastery before I attempt another message. I will assure you we will not be sending out any additional messages until such time as the errors have been identified and I get a new cell phone number. I never knew there was a Dallas, Oregon until this message went out. It cannot be said that we are not trying to broaden our message in South Hadley.

**PVTA Meeting,** I attended the PVTA meeting in Springfield as our regular representative continues to heal. You may have seen in the local press this is a critical time for the organization as its Executive Director retires (at 5 PM today) and PVTA looks for new leadership at a time in western Massachusetts transportation history the service is rapidly evolving.

There has been a reduction in ridership over the last quarter, federal funding is murky at best, the needs in the eastern part of the state for transportation funding is causing a total eclipse for the three western RTAs (BTA, FRTA, PVTA). It is critical we hire someone who can continue the good work which has been started.

The good news is Mary McInnes is leaving the operations in good stead. She has well trained competent staff which will serve the next PVTA Director well. Carolyn Hart was appointed interim, she is presently the IT director.

**SHELD Manager Luncheon,** On April 20<sup>th</sup> I hosted a meeting with the new SHELD Manager Sean Fitzgerald in Room 1. The attendees were a group of department heads and the meeting was intended to have more people understand the challenges SHELD is facing, as well as, how we can strengthen that town asset.

We discussed the upcoming phone project and other ideas how we may partner to bolster our Intelligence/Communication Technologies. The Superintendent of Schools mentioned how the schools were trying to strengthen their STEM curriculum and if there was any synergy to be had with the MLD. The Manager assured us all there was many partnerships to be developed.

Mr. Fitzgerald was affable in his approach and honest about what he can or cannot do to forge partnerships. Everyone in attendance was impressed, we look forward to having additional meetings with other managers and Sean. We all wish him well in his new job and he certainly seems up to it!

**Woodlawn Plaza Developers;** It should be no secret by now that the former Food Mart is about to be torn down. The permit was issued on Wednesday and the expectation is it will be completely razed in the next four weeks or sooner.

The developers are considering retail, housing, general merchandise and service industry space, but they are far from any final detail. It became apparent through their research that the existing building just was not going to make it as a grocery store, I can state emphatically they gave it their best try. Any dynamic or significant changes would likely need to have Planning Board review.

**Professional Development Day,** Thank to the Selectboard Members who were able to attend and we were happy to see our colleague Kim Mendoza from SHELD and Angela Wang from the schools in attendance. Thank you to Jennifer Wolowicz and Jackie Iskander for coordinating the presentations and the event.

The focus this day was on "Team Building" and "Recognizing the Signs of Stroke", there was interesting tips from Angela Smith and Helen Arnold both from HMC about the topics. It also has become a key opportunity for everyone to catch up on what others are doing or what projects are coming down the pike throughout South Hadley.

One of my take-aways from the "team building" presentation was never think you are above doing any job or you are too far down in the ranks to have a good idea. I thank the Selectboard for your continued support of these trainings, I do feel they make a difference.

**Conservation Coordinator and Commission Chair;** On April 21<sup>st</sup> I met with Jack Fleming and Janice Stone to discuss an issue we are dealing with on ConsCom property in regards to unleashed dogs. It has been made clear upon review that the "leash law" applies to all public properties at all times.

We ask all dog owners to be considerate and aware of the leash laws, we would much prefer cooperation over enforcement, but will use the laws available as needed. As a "dog lover" I get it, but telling someone who is fearful of dogs that your 200 pound Mastif is a "sweetheart" and would not hurt a flea, is not always that convincing.

We will be installing signs to warn dog owners and trying to get the word out as we step up enforcement. However that does not mollify or negate the owner's responsibility to keep their dog on a leash on any public property.

**McCray's Farm;** Recently I met with Steve McCray about some activities he is considering for this summer, including continuation of his summer market and other events. He is committed to attracting people to South Hadley and providing activities for SoHa citizens, as well.

The "Slow Duck" signs which we have gotten a couple of complaints about were also part of the conversation, he explained the signs were not placed there by anyone associated with McCray's. He understood that we were notified and because they violated the sign by-law they would have to be removed.

**ATM/STM;** I would like to thank everyone who played a part in getting the Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting warrant articles prepared. They have been electronically delivered (and in a few cases physically delivered, as requested) to all the Town Meeting Members. We continue to try to disseminate as much up to date information as possible.

This ATM/STM will continue to sap a great deal of my time and energy right up until May 10 and maybe a couple of days beyond. There are a number of projects I hope to get back to soon thereafter, many which the SB members and public have been very patiently waiting to see them move forward. Thank you for the patience.

The TA Review will be held Wednesday May 3 in the Town Hall Auditorium beginning at 6 PM. An invitation has been sent to all Town Meeting Members to attend, there will be an introductory meeting hosted by the Town Moderator prior (@5PM) for all members, but particularly new members. The PowerPoint I will use will be up on the Town Meeting page by Thursday next week.

If any person, Town Meeting Member or otherwise has a question about an article or would like a printed copy of the warrant, please contact me at (413) 538 5017 ext 136 or email me at [msullivan@southhadleyma.gov](mailto:msullivan@southhadleyma.gov) and I will do my best to comply.

Thank you for your input and support, please call me if you need anything ...just not on my cell. I will get you the new number as soon as I can get it.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Sullivan

South Hadley, Town Administrator