



July 11, 2013

Honorable Selectboard;

Please accept this as an abridged accounting of recent activities of the Town Administrator on your behalf and related to various projects and initiatives.

**Building Maintenance Updates;** I wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of some projects we have been engaged in primarily in Town Hall as necessary improvements to the building. First we have been meeting with vendors to understand the costs and best practices to make the building more secure. The Assistant Town Administrator and I have various groups to understand fire alarm, fire suppression, security camera, and entry systems.

It has been a blessing that this building has little in the way of theft or vandalism, but I believe we need to tighten up security and introduce some basic fire alarm products. The issue of the keyless entry and the controls for remotely locking the exterior doors is something we continue to learn more about.

ATA Wolowicz has been busy removing the drapes in the auditorium and getting everything in place for the renovation of the Selectboard Meeting Room. I would remind you that it will be unavailable for public use beginning on July 17 until August 6 (the next SB Meeting). These are relatively inexpensive improvements which will professionalize the appearance of the room. The work includes repairs to wall and ceiling surfaces, painting, carpeting and a thorough cleaning of the space.

We have also begun a conversations with property management groups to explore the possibility of an innovative model for us to receive necessary work without paying exorbitant prices for routine services. This would be a something substantially different than how municipalities get this work done, but we are committed to finding a way that is efficient and affordable.

This may be an opportunity to seek local visual artists to come in and display their work in the Selectboard Meeting Room on a six month rotation. Having the Selectboard feature the local artists would be a great way of encouraging more of the creative economy in South Hadley.

**Emergency Management Planning;** This week I had the opportunity to discuss some of the direction I would like to move emergency preparedness with Forrest Price who has served as the Emergency Management Director. I articulated some of the models I have favored over the years related to emergency management preparedness. I also explained that I have not re-appointed him as the EMD, but asked that he continue to serve until we have a more defined strategy. I believe strongly that the responsibilities need to be brought in-house and that we need to have more exercises and regularly scheduled meetings of stakeholders.

The next step will be to establish the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) which will act as a launching pad for new preparedness strategies. This is an area that over the next year we must increase our capacity and performance.

I have contacted our partners at MEMA and will be reaching out to our regional partners to strengthen our plan. It will be essential to also involve the private sector, especially heavy equipment owners for a complete plan.

**Sustainability and Energy Committee (SEC);** SEC Chair Whitford and I met this week to discuss progress being made and initiatives being taken to move towards the goals for a greener, more sustainable South Hadley. I cannot praise Dan's engagement on these matters enough and his breadth of knowledge is impressive to say the least.

Part of our discussion was about how we may tighten up the processing and requesting of information from SEC members to the chairman and back through me to the Selectboard. Dan and I agreed that we need to have a info path or we will have a lot of people out asking the same questions causing unnecessary information gathering.

The Chairman and I will meet on a monthly basis and communicate through telephonically and electronically in the interim. We will focus on some very specific tasks and goals to make this a sharpshooter project as opposed to a scattershot.

**Land and Property Disputes;** This was difficult week to get any core work done, as it seemed that no neighborhood was immune to disputes. There was a condemned house torn down that was demolished at 44 Berwyn Street, although the neighborhood appreciated the razing, at least one neighbor expressed concerns about harmful contaminants being released into the air.

To be sure we followed the necessary steps and that the contractor was complainant we had the Building Inspector, the Health Director and the Mass DEP come to the site. Each of the local and state regulators felt that everything was in compliance and there was no threat to public health.

We also sent out letters to residents on Tampa, Spring Gaylord, Carew Streets and few I may be forgetting for various health and code violations from dog feces to grass lengths. There were also several neighbors who found themselves in dispute over access or property rights from East School to Pearl Lane. In these case we were steadfast that these were Massachusetts Land Court issues which the Town of South Hadley would not and could not make a ruling or assess a judgment. Some people take it better than others.

I would just like to say I am very happy to be working in your community and am very much enjoying the extremely fast pace that summer has brought to Town Hall. I hope you and the citizens of South Hadley feel good about what we are trying to accomplish together.

Michael J. Sullivan

Town Administrator, South Hadley