



June 14, 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.

**Town Hall Roof;** You may have heard that during a recent Know Your Town gathering there was a leak in the Town Hall auditorium. The damage should not be regarded as major, but there is damage to interior plaster and ornamental columns on the north side of the room approximately midway. This does not pose any structural threat to the integrity of the room or the building. It will however have to be addressed to secure the loosened plaster and ceiling material so that it does not fall and hurt any citizens, especially the Zumba crowd when they get the place rocking. I have asked the Rec Director to notify the Zumba-ists to avoid the affected area until it is repaired.

The cause of the seepage was one the incredible rains, but more acutely the lack of a "roof drain" maintenance plan. As you can see from the photos below which I took when I went up top with the roofer, there is pitch to the roofs which collect around a drains. When those outlets are covered with the leaves, paper and other debris the water backs up under the soffit and finds a path of least resistance and creates indoor puddles as it did in this case.

R&H Roofing who installed the roof over two years ago and installed the membrane came over and helped clear the drain (see the drain cover on left). The tech rolled up his pants, took off his shoes and socks and waded in to the water to remove the drain caps and applied some sealant to the soffit to create a more water tight seal.



There was no charge, even though we are beyond our warranty. The technician did point out that the white portion of the roof is over twenty years old and is susceptible to failure. I committed to having

them come to clean the drains properly and assess the “white” roof including an estimate. The proper maintenance will be five to six hundred dollars, I feel strongly that is a wise investment. I did free up one of the caps myself so I could learn how to do it, but only in one of the small lakes and left my shoes and socks on. It was like being with Tom Sawyer on a roof.

**Mosier Street Sewer Back Up;** The Department of Public Works Superintendent James Riedy has been dealing with a some line blockages in an area near Mosier School, although the school has not been affected by the blockage has caused two homes to have untreated sanitary sewer to be back flowed on to and into the properties. This is a direct result of the extreme water table due to the nearly constant rains.

I have been in contact with one of the residents to explain what our immediate responsibilities are and what our will be process determinations through other parties (i.e. courts, counsel, insurance) in the future. As part of that explanation I nor anyone else have or should, the authority to commit public funds to private property or an individual without due process. I explained that there is claim process and I would be derelict in my duty to suggest that the Town is accept full or partial responsibility for the costs. There are circumstances and situations which must be reviewed in making a fair assessment of culpability.

The DPW has taken swift and immediate action they have sent rotary cutters through the line, a jetta vac process has also been applied and will have a firm do a camera inspection of the sewer line this Saturday. The employees have been advised in the most uncertain terms that the law prohibits us in doing any work on private property that must be our policy and standard. The only situation that can be disregarded is in a ‘State of Emergency’. This has been painful for all of us , in respect to full disclosure one of the property owners is a longtime friend of mine and my families, that has not clouded my judgment or treatment.

**Library Construction Process;** The construction meetings have been revamped to include the Building Commissioner and it has been explained to all parties the legal responsibilities of the Building Department and the oversight responsibilities of the owners project manager. It is critical to the success of this project to understand the roles and cooperate where appropriate.

The foundation work is completed and the process will quickly move to other major components, like steel work, speaking of steel work the large old iron transmission towers at (see left photo)



the site are gone. The HG&E had a contractor in and coordinated the removal with the Fontaine Brothers to remove the structures.

**Lunch with The President;** It was pleasure recently to be invited by President Pasquelli at her home on the campus of Mount Holyoke College, Kevin McCafferty was in attendance as well. It gave us an opportunity to get to know each other and to discuss our common commitment to help South Hadley grow in a dynamic way.

Madame President was rightfully proud of the initiatives and ways Mount Holyoke has helped the host community and made it clear that they looked forward to more of that approach. She was particularly in tune to how we could work together to help the Falls discover the creative economy. It was a great lunch, I was just unsure which spoon to use, so I used them all.

**DOR Symposium on Finance;** On Thursday last I had the pleasure to attend a symposium hosted by the DOR about the basics of municipal finance. I was well played and I was interested to hear some of the challenges others face and how some of the solutions may be applied in South Hadley.

Selectboard member Etelman and Collector Baldini were in attendance as well, and were politely bored to tears by my near constant chatter all the way down and all the way back ...even I was wondering ...does he ever stop talking.

**D'Ambrosio and Brown;** Collector Baldini and I met with Attorney Peter Brown to discuss next steps to lighten our portfolio of properties of low value, assembled parcels and tax titled properties that have languished. I cannot thank the Collector enough for her professionalism and cooperative attitude. I believe we will be able to organize some productive measures to turn some properties into cash for the Town of South Hadley in the next fiscal year.

**Olde Fire House Museum;** Recently I was invited to tour the museum with Dianne Laroche and Desiree Smelcer. It is really nice place that has some ardent advocates. I explained that the Selectboard and I were taking a pragmatic approach to the present and future needs of the building. In our discussion I intimated that I thought the Selectboard would commit to putting a heating system in that would meet the needs of the Fire House and would discuss any additional needs after a full structural audit of the building was completed.

We also discussed the adjacent park and the closing of the church across the street. They would like to see the benches in the park returned or replaced as soon as possible. It was my belief that they appreciated the frankness and the pragmatic approach to the demands of this old, but important building.

There was also progress on the concept of a Redevelopment Plan/Authority, the Texon Building and personnel policies. The ATA will be attending a future meeting to present the changes in the policies. Thank you for your support,

Michael J. Sullivan

Town Administrator, South Hadley

