



November 27, 2013

Honorable Selectboard;

Please accept this as an abridged version of the work being performed in South Hadley Town Hall by myself and more often by other dedicated employees.

School Collective Bargaining Negotiations; As your representative to the school negotiations. I wanted to inform you that the process has begun and for reasons you are familiar with I cannot say much more. The Superintendent and I have had conversation and he has reviewed the process with me and supplied me with the proposals (which are also confidential).

I am hopeful that the process moves swiftly and without issue. As long as all parties are well aware of the limitation related to municipal revenue resources, I believe there is some solid ground in the muddy waters.

Municipal Broadband Institute (MBI); Donna Baron from MBI and Bill Stathis from Axia (a contractor hired by the Commonwealth) asked to have me assemble anyone who could benefit from this statewide initiative funded by the state to increase or improve connectivity and hopefully lower costs.

This presentation was well attended Bill Collins (Schools), Joe Rodio (library), James Doolittle (TH IT), Lt. Parentella, Chief Labrie (SHPD), Wayne Doerpholtz (SHELD), Bill Selkirk (District2) Bob Smith (Cable Access) and I were all on hand to discuss the ways we connect, have connected or more importantly should connect. There were a number of encouraging strategies suggested, such as more voice over IP phone technology, expanded wifi hot spots (...I know I get the humor as well) and shared costs.

There was unfortunately no representative able to make it from District 1, but Bill Selkirk offered to fill them in on the discussion. Hopefully there will be a re-energized discussion on ways to increase our ability to have one foundation for media and business communications.

Forty Force; It was truly remarkable to see the response in such a short period on time. The class of South Hadley really was on display. The topics and interviews that WGGB chose for this showcase was a good representation of the much longer list I provided. Bob Hastings promised to do some ramp ups for the FallsFest and to not be a stranger on news events in the community.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors received provisions, recognition and monetary donations, not bad for a freezing cold day in December. The library project exemplified the investment that the town is making in itself, as does the Plains School Project. The importance of Mount Holyoke to South Hadley and vice versa was sounded by President Pasquerella's statements in her interview. South Hadley has much more to be proud of than what can be captured in an evening news show, so we have given WGGB our thanks and an open invitation to return.

Bonding; Unlike so many communities we were very fortunate to retain a very favorable bond rating from Moody's Investors. David Eisenthal from UniBank Financial Advisors was wonderful to work with as we prepared the prospectus for the market sale of our bonds and assisted in hosting a visit from Moody's Investors.

In respect to the visit from Moody's Investors they spent a full day with us in South Hadley and were very impressed with some the continued adherence to solid municipal finance principles by community leaders. They understood and were extremely supportive of the recent changes to the Treasurer-Clerk-Collector function and applauded the efforts to make that happen sooner than later.

Treasurer/Collector Debbie Baldini stepped right up to the plate and was outstanding in guiding the process and collecting the necessary mountain of data and information required by all the parties. I also would like to thank the Clerk for her service and ability to add historical perspective.

As you may be aware the bonding strategy has increased the length of the primary bonds to twenty five years, to utilize bank qualified notes which will lower the coupon rate and to take advantage of the QECB granted to us by DOER. All of these will translate to less cost per year for borrowing and less impact on the taxpayers.

Granby's Temporary use of the South Hadley Transfer Station; Superintendent Reidy has informed the Town of Granby that we are willing to help out as best we can in respect to their landfill dilemma. We have made it clear that if we were able to help Granby out for the nine weeks following January 1, 2014 that we will be able to load trash into the landfill all cost related to such a plan must be borne by the Town of Granby. They seem to understand that fully and if that can be agreed to we will assist our neighbor. We would hope they provide the same sense of fairness in all issues related to District 2 and we will encourage them to do so.

I hope you have a great Thanksgiving Holiday, as we look forward there are a lot of moving parts, so I hope that you will give me guidance where you see it needed. Stay well!!

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J Sullivan South Hadley Administrator