



April 1, 2014

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.

**Mount Holyoke College;** On Monday March 31<sup>st</sup> I met with students, faculty and members of MPIC to discuss some of the various projects students were looking at in respect to South Hadley. Among the subject under review are transportation, historical preservation, open space, "Falls versus the Village", defining neighborhoods, schools and the library system.

The student studies will continue and there will be an end of semester presentation which I indicated I would make myself available for, as best as possible. The faculty in attendance had full understanding and a high level of engagement in respect to the student research. It is likely there will be quite valuable information revealed in the final product.

**Fibermark:** This project has gone sideways several times and recent events are no exception. Recently there was two discoveries, first by JayMor that some of the light bulbs and were not removed by SMI and that JayMor could not proceed until that was addressed. I got in contact with SMI and they returned to the site to address the situation, they discovered some additional contamination in the form of Transite Pipe (asbestos, additional asbestos) hidden behind some HVAC equipment (visible in left picture on left side of equipment above). This required we get a waiver permit from DEP, which we received within 24 hours thanks to the cooperation from Bob Schultz and Mike Gorski. The removal of all known material was removed by Friday.



Picture #2 I could not figure out what was up or down when it was being placed, but then I realized in really did not much matter, the interior is a mess and last week was a frozen waste land (see read barrel of ice). I am not sure how the workers were even able to complete the task, but they did.

**Time and Attendance:** ATA Wolowicz, IT Coordinator Doolittle, Payroll and Benefits Specialist Gentile and I met to discuss the July 1<sup>st</sup> roll out of our new “Time and Attendance” system. I was disheartened to hear through the grapevine that some employees feel it is a “big brother’ move, I can tell you it is intended to protect the worker, workplace and the Town of South Hadley. In our litigious world it is becoming more important from disaster situations to everyday conduct of employees to have true accounting of attendance.

Beyond the safety and security issues, the taxpayer is entitled to know that they are getting what their money’s worth. The sick time, vacation, personal time that public employees are entitled to is undeniably generous and there must be an accurate accounting.

**Rental Property Forum:** A core group of town department managers met this past week and will meet again to plan for a symposium on rental property ownership. The code, the challenges and best practice for those that would like to invest or have invested in rental property in South Hadley. The fire districts have been invited, as well as state and county agencies (i.e State Health, Building Inspectors, DA’s Office, and Housing Court). The symposium is slated for May 17 from 9:30 to 11 AM (Saturday after the ATM).

We are hoping to encourage new investors as well as helping present owners what protections and opportunities are available. This is an important segment of the value equation for SoHa especially in the Falls.

**SEC Chairman Whitford:** I recently met with the Chairman of SEC to discuss the ongoing discussion about how best develop a comprehensive plan and ultimately design of a pedestrian/bike system for South Hadley. With as the Master Plan suggests a concentration on the connecting the Village and the Falls, the Ferry Street to Fairview concept so to speak.

I am supportive of having PVPC develop a RFP in regards to a design/study for the Town of South Hadley to create a blueprint going forward for this worthwhile idea. I believe this step to be crucial prior to accepting property or making commitments which we may be ultimately unable to fulfill. All of the hard work of this advisory group is greatly appreciated, but must be organized for success, I feel Chairman Whitford and I are in accordance on that point.

**Labor Counsel:** ATA Wolowicz and I have decided in consultation with Town Counsel to begin moving some of our labor workload from Collins and Peloquin to Sullivan and Hayes. It should be noted that I am not related to Sullivan of Sullivan Hayes, but have worked with them before and hold them in high regard. This change will hopefully save us money and provide accessible local counsel.

Sullivan, Hayes offers several management tutorials that we are very much interested in which will be of great benefit to the town. It should be noted that Atty. Tim Norris severed South Hadley well and this should not be seen as a criticism. Atty. Norris will still be considered counsel on open cases he is already involved with and used where his firm offers a better fit. I am hopeful that the SB is supportive of this needed change. I intend to send a letter early next week to Collin and Peloquin to their Boston address in regards to the change

**Bartholomew & Company:** Treasurer Baldini, Asst. Treasurer Fitzsimmons and I met with Dory Huard from Bartholomew to discuss investment strategies for trusts and balance funds. We also reviewed some best practices in investment policies and the importance of having a slightly different strategy for an OPED Trust.

While all communities are facing some anemic earnings, this group has successfully helped over 170 municipalities to maximize their earnings. Ms. Huard a former Treasurer/Collector herself knows firsthand the difficulties we face in reporting and reconciling fifty plus bank accounts.

As the client list would reveal cities and towns across the Commonwealth have recognized how having a specialist perform this ever complicated task makes money safer and auditors happier. The cost is nominal and is tied to how much money you place under their control and is deducted from the earnings. This is a specialized municipal field and this Worcester group is seen as the high watermark.

The real strength of the group is their monitoring and reporting. The segregation and accounting for these accounts continues to be a monumental task, moving towards this service will improve investments, improve accounting, improve reporting and introduce expert advice to a complex field.

I would like to thank you for all your support over my first year as Town Administrator. It is a pleasure to work with you and for the Town of South Hadley. Thank you for the opportunity! Today is my one year anniversary.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Sullivan

Town Administrator, South Hadley