



June 30, 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.

**Columns;** I wanted to let you all know there will be two columns I have penned in the last week. One will be in the Town Reminder about the South Hadley Fireworks, thanking sponsors and participants and reminding people to be respectful and keep it safe for the celebration. I have received calls from Stanton Street residence to ask that we be prepared to remove debris from their yards caused by the fireworks and some other surrounding areas who asked we be vigilant in enforcing parking laws. I assure all parties we would do our best and if there was problem to please call me.

The second column will appear in the South Hadley Falls Neighborhood Association about the naming of the Ted Belsky Overlook. As we get closer to the Texon Building disappearing from the landscape and the Canal Park being a reality, we should probably start to set a strategy for the dedication of the overlook or some other appropriate setting to honor the Belsky legacy.

**RFPs:** There has been substantial work involved with the RFPs we are attempting to get out. The Golf Maintenance "draft" was sent to the SB for review and consideration. I believe we can get this out by mid-July and have replies back for mid to end of August for review. I suggest that one member of the Selectboard be appointed, one member of the Golf Advisory Board be invited (of their choosing) and myself be charged with reviewing the submittals and making a recommendation to the full board by the first meeting in September.

The Bardwell Street Library is out ...again. We will be sending it to developers and any potential investor we can reasonably think of, if you have suggestions, please send me names and addresses and we will make sure they receive the document. I believe what is important with this is not so much the highest price, but the highest value to South Hadley. The ideal developer will have the means to help save the historical nature of the property, find a viable adaptive reuse and put forth a proposal to have such a use blend in to the neighborhood. If you know that kind of thinker with some money to invest ...have we got a library for them! The Assistant Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz will be coordinating this RFP.

We also will have the voting tabulator RFP and the 1 Canal Street land out in the next few weeks. The tabulator proposals will be reviewed and qualified on by the Town Clerk Carlene Hamlin and the ATA. The 1 Canal I recommend be vetted by a committee comprised of a member of the Selectboard, a

member of the Redevelopment Authority, the Planning Director, the Library Director and the Assistant Town Administrator with a recommendation to the Selectboard as a whole.

**D&M Towing;** On Thursday June 26, Chief LaBrie, William Forget (D&M Towing), his attorney and I met to discuss a request from Mr. Forget to be added to the rotation for South Hadley Towing. Mr. Forget's business is in South Hadley, as well as his residence. He has the necessary equipment to meet the demands of the local volume and demonstrated access to additional equipment if necessary. Under the authority granted to the Police Chief and the Town Administrator we saw no reason to deny D&M Towing be part of the rotation.

Every third week he will be on call for towing. He has met the specifications for his storage yard at a location other than his garage. The impact will be minimal as South Hadley averages five tows a week, including the peak winter season. D7M will meet all the requirements set for the other tow agents. The other two companies, Hampshire (operates out of South Hadley) and Interstate (operates out of Chicopee) both have performed well and this is not in any way a comment on their service, it is just an objective and fair approach to keep a competitive marketplace.

The rotation change will begin in August.

**Everbridge;** As we hurriedly transfer our Reverse 911 over to the Everbridge platform, we received our first tutorial from Greg Cannon our implementation specialist assigned from Everbridge. The attendees to the web based tutorial were Chief LaBrie, Health Director Hart, IT Coordinator Doolittle, ATA Wolowicz and myself. It was a very informative first session, we will be inviting other partners into the July 14 meeting including DPW and both Districts (Water and Fire have been invited).

We will be strongly encouraging the public to go into Everbridge beginning on July 10 to designate their contact preferences and update their contact info. As failsafe for the first nine days we will be relying on publicly available (White/Yellow Pages) landline information, we hope to upload other available CVS files, but we do not want to input any files until we are reasonably sure they are reasonably accurate.

Admittedly if we were released from our former provider earlier we could have had a more robust approach, but we will do the best we can under these circumstances. In the end this will be an upgrade, allow us to scrub the data and reduce the cost ...well at least for the Districts, all in the name of cooperation and service to the public.

**Website Re-build;** IT Director James Doolittle coordinated another meeting this week, as we look for the right partner going forward to bring the SoHa site up to date. I am learning more and more about what is the most utilized features of websites and ideas which have been successful in other communities.

This opportunity allowed me to be guided through another dozen community websites. Communities of all sizes. It seems the most popular new feature for any of these design companies has been the "How Do I?" button. Having "google" like search feature imbedded and specifically tailored for a municipal website is also very progressive. There has been a reoccurring suggestion to have a local webmaster or some "smart" kids design the site. The biggest reason is support, I get the idea anyone can design a website, the reality is we need to have support to sustain features and make upgrades so we never become static again. I do have to admit there are some "smart" kids around this place.

**Codification; As** an ancillary enhancement to the website process we will be engaging a service to first “scrub” all of our by-law, zoning and enabling legislation. When I refer to “scrub” I mean research all town meeting votes related to by-laws or other such changes, place them in a live document with the proper annotations and generally tidy up the document.

Making sure this happens before we go live with a new website is either sensible or crucial and may be both. Once it is “scrubbed” a service will oversee any and all site updates after any town meeting vote or other legislative change.

Town Clerk Carlene Hamlin will be central to this upgrade and will involve the Town Planner, Health Director, Assistant Assessor, Police Chief and all other effected departments will be working together to make this work.

The service will review all by-laws, offer templates from other communities, locate conflicts within the existing South Hadley by-laws and reasonably ensure a law is consistent with the state. These companies have direct-line relationship with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office. The cost will be part of the website warrant appropriation and be less than \$10,000 with an annual service fee going forward of about \$1,500.

**Route 47 Scenic By-way Meeting;** Wednesday June 18<sup>th</sup> I attended the FRCOG/PVPC Joint Meeting on the Route 47 Scenic By-way Bike Initiative. South Hadley resident Wayne Buckout was in attendance as was his mother. Participants from Erving, Hatfield, Greenfield, Hadley, Montague, Northfield and the host community Sunderland were in attendance.

There was much enthusiasm about the progress of this project and all it moving parts. The attendees spoke glowingly about how they hope this initiative would transform their communities ...but not too much, so the flavor of the towns will not be destroyed. Mr. Buckout made a great suggestion to the planners to locate a kiosk of some sort at an appropriate location in South Hadley to herald the start of the Route 47 journey. The pizza was gluten free.

**Time and attendance;** The Payroll and Benefits Coordinator Julie Gentile is working feverously to have our new tracking equipment in Town Hall. While we are hopeful this will replace a “paper” system of time in attendance and bring a greater level of accuracy to this function, it will also provide us with an important safety feature for our employees, presently there is little way for us to know who is in the building. Hopefully there will never be a need, but in the case of an emergency this information is critical.

I confident this change will draw some fire, but it is well within our rights to know when people are at work. We will remain flexible to accommodate employee’s schedules when interrupted, but knowing when they are in the building is not only a personnel issue, but a personal safety issue.

**Building Department;** The new Building Commissioner Charlene Baiardi seems to be settling in and working very hard to provide great service and consistent enforcement. She has been casting a critical eye on both the early stages of the Plains School and the late stages of Library. Some of the requests seem to be viewed by some as unnecessary. I have encouraged her to press our OPM’s to gather the information she needs to make the necessary determinations. After all they are the owner’s project managers, they have been responding professionally and complying.

These are very expensive investments by the Town of South Hadley and having someone who is going the extra mile to make sure they are done right is not only necessary, but uplifting. I know you all support getting what we paid for in regards to these projects.

**Patriot Care;** DPH's Medical Marijuana division has announced Patriot Care has successfully completed the final review and will be allowed to move forward on the South Hadley Cultivation Center as a full licensed facility. To be clear there will be no dispensing of product at the site and will only supply the dispensaries in Lowell and other communities as they are assigned. This will trigger the first payment to the Town of South Hadley of \$10,000 and more importantly start a beneficial relationship between the town and Patriot.

The jobs, the investment and the research which will part of their project will have a profound effect on the region, the state and the Town of South Hadley. More information to follow.

Thank you for all your support, I hope you enjoy the Fourth. We will be closing Town Hall to the public at 3 PM on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, but I should be here later if you need something.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Sullivan

Town Administrator, South Hadley