

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, NOV. 27, 2018
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM – 7:00 P.M.
AGENDA**

<p>Note: Not all the topics listed in this notice may actually be reached for discussion. In addition, the topics listed are those which the chair reasonably expects will be discussed as of the date of this notice. These meetings may be audio and/or visually recorded</p>
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1. CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *Draft minutes of the Oct. 16 and Nov. 13 Selectboard meetings*
3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/OPEN FORUM
4. State Senator-Elect Jo Comerford introduction and discussion
5. CONSENT AGENDA
 - A. Request for a One-Day Beer & Wine License from Rachel Osborn for Willits-Hallowell on Friday, Nov. 30 at 3 p.m.
6. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Change of Manager at Sok's from Nicholas Vautrin to Sokharun Yim
 - B. Temporary closure of College Street and College Street Bypass for Holiday Stroll
 - C. Smart Growth Fund approval for Complete Street engineering
7. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS
8. OTHER BUSINESS
9. TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT
10. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
11. ADJOURN

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
OCT. 16, 2018
MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM – 7 P.M.**

Present were Chair Ira Brezinsky, Vice Chair Andrea Miles, Clerk Jeff Cyr, member Sarah Etelman, member Bruce C. Forcier, and Town Administrator Michael J. Sullivan.

CALL TO ORDER

Brezinsky called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Forcier encouraged the public to get their flu shot for the year; announced the Friends of South Hadley Elderly have a 2019 tiger calendar on sale to benefit the new senior center; let the public know about an Oct. 21 trek at Black Stevens with the Bike Walk Committee; announced early voting hours and the last day for residents to register to vote in the November election.

Etelman announced a Symposium of Understanding on Oct. 18 for the public to offer input to the incoming police chief.

OPEN FORUM

Resident Peter McAvoy of 20 Jewett Lane, South Hadley, said he runs a business in which he collects used cooking oil from restaurants and resells it to larger businesses to convert into diesel fuel and heating oil. He said he has no place to legally operate his business in South Hadley, and at times has had to wash and repair his trucks at his residence. Neighbors are tired, he said, of him operating his business in the neighborhood, and he agrees. He needs to find a place to invest and grow his business, and he alleges South Hadley and Southampton are making efforts to keep him from operating in those towns.

VFW Post 3014 Commander Brian Willette invited the public to a Veterans' Day ceremony set for Nov. 11 at the Michael E. Smith Middle School. He said the ceremony, which included a Bells of Peace segment, is an intergenerational activity between youth and veterans

CONSENT AGENDA

Miles asked to pull item D, a change of manager at Cozy Oaks, out of the consent agenda. Forcier motioned to approve items A, B and C: a request for a one-day beer and wine license from Jen Marion of the Trustees of Mount Holyoke College for Oct. 18 from 6-7; a request for a one-day beer and wine license from Rachel Osborn of Willits-Hallowell for Oct. 25 from 7-9:30 p.m.; and a request for a one-day beer and wine license from the St. Patrick's Parade Committee for Nov. 17, 5-11:30 p.m. at St. Patrick's Social Center. Miles seconded. All in favor.

Of the change in manager, Sullivan said it's straightforward. The Cozy Oaks manager goes away in the winter and in the past has changed managers during that time.

Forcier motioned to approve the request for a change of manager at Cozy Oaks. Cyr seconded. All in favor.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Sullivan said there are some changes to the draft warrant but none are major. For the dog park article, Cyr said he would like to see some kind of surety or bond so the town is not on the hook for restoring the property in the future. Sullivan said the Friends of South Hadley Dog Park really have to make the argument they're going to be engaged and a strong group going forward. They have to convince Town Meeting and Selectboard members they're in this for the long run.

Selectboard members divvied up on which town meeting warrant articles members will make motions. Forcier will present on articles 4 and 5. Cyr will take articles 3, 6, 7 and 8. Miles will take 1 and 2. Etelman will take 9, 11 and 12. Brezinsky will take article 10.

A joint Appropriations Committee meeting and Sullivan's town administrator's review of the warrant will take place on Oct. 30 at 5:30 p.m. in the Selectboard meeting room in town hall.

Forcier motioned to approve the special town meeting warrant. Miles seconded. All in favor.

FY 2020 BUDGET

Sullivan said unreserved free cash is healthy. He is concerned about inflation. He has asked town departments to review the fees they are charging for permits and licenses to see if the fees are in line with other communities, and later make any recommended adjustments to the Selectboard. The town hasn't reviewed its permit and license fees in years, he said.

Cyr asked Sullivan about health insurance. Sullivan said Medex rose 2.7 percent. Last year it rose 1.4 percent. He thinks without any changes to the design plan, TOSH will wind up close to a 10 percent increase as a result of prescription drugs. With some design plan changes and luck, he hopes that figure drops to around 5.4, 5.3 percent. The trust is very healthy, he said.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S CONTRACT

Brezinsky said Sullivan's contract with the town expires on June 30, 2019. The board agreed to host an executive session this evening to consider Sullivan's contract.

ACTS OF 2018

Sullivan said this was brought to the board's attention at the request of Mike Wozniak. Among the items of discussion is the idea of veteran parking spaces and abatements for veterans. A portion of the abatements would be refunded by the state. He suggested the Selectboard send a letter to the Board of Assessors asking for their opinion on the language related to the abatements. The Selectboard formally acknowledged that they received the information.

VOTERS ONLY PARKING

Forcier motioned to approve "Voters Only Parking" on Pleasant Street from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Oct. 22 to Nov. 2. Miles seconded. All in favor.

ZONE CHANGE

Miles Motion to refer a request for a zone change at 629 Granby Road to the Planning Board for a public hearing. Cyr seconded. All in favor.

POLISH AMERICAN CLUB AMENDMENT

The ABCC came across an issue where a proper vote has not been taken for many years to allow a change of stock holders. Sullivan said it's a basic vote and doesn't affect what the Selectboard voted on last week relating to the transfer of the Polish American Club license. However, the ABCC can't move forward with the transfer until this issue is cleared. Miles motioned to accept the license amendment for the Polish American Club. Cyr seconded. Four voted in favor. Forcier abstained.

RESIGNATION

Etelman made a motion to accept a resignation of Kyle Steinbock from the Golf Commission. Miles seconded. All in favor.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR PBE / POLICIES

Sullivan said this sub-committee will meet in the next few weeks and will discuss their updates at the Nov. 13 meeting.

TA REPORT

Sullivan said the ValleyBikes are fun to ride and he would like to see South Hadley ridership increase. The bikes will be winterized at the end of November.

Sullivan said the town was awarded a grant to tailor ViewPemit applications and platform to better suit South Hadley. The goal is to increase its usability internally and externally.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

While still in open session, Forcier moved to enter into Executive Session under MGL 39 Section 23B for the purpose of negotiations with non-union personnel (Town Administrator). Cyr seconded. Members voted affirmatively by roll call vote as follows:

Member Forcier Aye
Member Etelman Aye
Member Miles Aye
Member Cyr Aye
Chair Brezinsky Aye

Brezinsky said the board will not return to open session. The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
Kristin Maher
Executive Assistant to Administration

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, NOV. 13, 2018
MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM – 7 P.M.**

Present were Chair Ira Brezinsky, Vice Chair Andrea Miles, Clerk Jeff Cyr, member Sarah Etelman, member Bruce Forcier, and Town Administrator Michael J. Sullivan.

CALL TO ORDER

Brezinsky called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Forcier motioned to approve the draft minutes of the Oct. 2 and 30 Selectboard meetings. Cyr seconded. All in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

Forcier motioned to approve the consent agenda which consisted one of item – a request for a One-Day Beer and Wine license for Willits Hallowell on Nov. 15 from 6:30-10 p.m. Cyr seconded. All in favor.

INTRODUCTION AND APPOINTMENT OF NEW POLICE CHIEF

Sullivan said the town is very excited about its most recent hire – Jennifer Gundersen – who will become the new chief of police when Chief Steven Parentela retires on Jan. 3. Gundersen introduced herself to the Selectboard, and said she feels confident she would fit well within the department. She has 24 years of policing experience. She feels outreach is the cornerstone of policing, and any opportunity to have officers out of their cars improves the safety of the community. She said she promotes problem-oriented policing and feels officers should be trained in and tasked with solutions to problems the community faces. Etelman motioned to accept the appointment of Jennifer Gundersen as the next South Hadley police chief. Forcier seconded. All in favor.

STORMWATER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Sullivan began a discussion of 2019-2025 stormwater compliance requirements as an introduction to an issue that will occupy a lot of the town's time throughout the next three years. He noted a grant the town has received to improve its nitrogen system. A slight increase in sewer fees for 2020 will be a future discussion with the Selectboard.

SENIOR CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE OPM RECOMENDATION

A subcommittee of the Senior Center Building Committee has recommended to the Senior Center Building Committee to hire Colliers International as the owner's project manager for the new senior center building project. Their fee is still to be negotiated, but Sullivan said it's usually a percentage of the overall project cost. The industry standard is 12-16 percent. Miles moved to authorize the town administrator to move forward with negotiations with Colliers. Cyr seconded. All in favor.

SELECTBOARD POLICIES

Etelman expressed that the current way in which the Selectboard is appointing candidates to committees is not the way it should be making those appointments. The intent, she said, was to recruit for committees according to the process that had been previously laid out – announce open positions in April and May and appoint in June/July. Currently, the Selectboard is immediately appointing people to vacancies. She recommended the Selectboard appoint twice a year instead of just once. There are very few boards that cannot operate without a full complement of members, she said.

Cyr said he is comfortable with twice a year. Miles suggested January and July. Brezinsky said he would like to see three dates – July, October and February.

Forcier motioned to have appointments three times a year. Cyr seconded. Four were in favor. Etelman was against.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING REVIEW

Sullivan said he felt the meeting went very well. He said town meeting members came well prepared and are reading the material sent out in advance. There was fruitful discussion. He said Jodi Miller did an excellent job as moderator.

INVITATION TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO ATTEND SELECTBOARD MEETING

Brezinsky said this would be to bring each board up to speed and identify opportunities to collaborate or share services. Some topics the Selectboard will consider discussing include Mosier School information, a symposium with the school committee and students, facility maintenance, finance, health services, and upcoming OSHA regulations at the schools. The Selectboard decided to have Sullivan pen a letter to School Superintendent Nicholas Young asking him to ask the School Committee to think about a date they would be available to meet.

JANUARY SCHEDULE

Etelman moved to schedule January Selectboard meetings on Jan. 8 and 22. Miles seconded. All in favor.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Etelman thanked those who attended the Symposium of Understanding for input for the new police chief. She said residents are looking forward to continuing that dialogue and keeping that conversation going.

Sullivan noted the driver of the recent College Street accident has been charged with vehicular manslaughter and the state police have attributed the accident to distracted driving (looking at GPS on a phone). He said changes recommended by the safety group that has formed as a response to this accident would ultimately be something affordable and something that makes sense for the town and residents of South Hadley.

For the full report, see the Nov. 13 Selectboard meeting packet.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Senator-Elect Jo Comerford and Representative-Elect Dan Carey have accepted invitations to attend future Selectboard meetings for a meet-and-greet. Comerford will attend the Nov. 27 meeting and Carey will attend the Dec. 18 meeting. Brezinsky said discussions will take place in those meetings about issues important to South Hadley and the surrounding communities. Discussion topics can be submitted to the Selectboard via Selectboard@southhadley.ma.gov or MSullivan@southhadley.ma.gov in preparation for the Nov. 27 and Dec. 18 meetings.

ADJOURN

Forcier motioned to adjourn the meeting. Miles seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
Kristin Maher
Executive Assistant to Administration

DRAFT



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Town of South Hadley



Selectboard
116 Main Street, Room 109

APPLICATION FOR 1 DAY BEER AND WINE LICENSE

Application #

TGL-18-338

Date Submitted

11/16/2018

Applicant Name: **Willits-Hallowell Center**

Company:

Applicant Address: **50 College Street South Hadley MA 01075**

Applicant Phone: **4135382220**

Applicant Email:

rosborn@mtholyoke.edu

Date Applied For: **Friday, November 30, 2018**

Hours of Operation:

3:00-6:00pm

Address of Location: **50 COLLEGE ST, Souh Hadley, MA 01075**

Description of Location: **Warbeke Room, Pratt Hall**

Type of Event: **Reception**

RESTRICTIONS:

- If the event is to be held indoors in a building or structure that is not annually certified as a place of assembly, an inspection may be required by the Town Building Inspector and appropriate District Fire Inspector. The applicant is responsible to schedule the inspections, if necessary.
- Per MGL Chapter 138, Section 12 and 13, alcohol cannot be sold between the hours of 2 a.m. and 8 a.m. Monday-Saturday or between the hours of 1 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS:

LIABILITY DISCLAIMER:

By exercising the privileges of this license in serving persons with alcoholic beverages, the licensee is potentially exposed to significant liability for injuries and damages to persons served or to others who are injured or damaged by the persons served. Your acceptance and exercise of this license will be deemed to be acknowledgement that you are aware of this potential liability. You are encouraged to discuss the risks associated with exercising your privileges of the license and the precautions appropriate to avoid injuries, damage and liability to others with your legal advisor. The Town of South Hadley, and the Selectboard, as Local Licensing Authority, shall not be liable to the licensee or others if injury or damage should result from the exercise of the license.

LIQUOR LIABILITY INSURANCE REQUIREMENT

For any event held on town-owned property, liquor liability insurance naming the Town of South Hadley as an additional insured must be obtained prior to the event with a minimum per occurrence amount of \$250,000. A certificate of insurance showing liquor liability insurance coverage must be submitted with this application.

Payment Date	Amount Paid	Payment Type	Payment Number
11/16/2018	\$30.00	Credit Card	



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission
239 Causeway Street Boston, MA 02114
www.mass.gov/abcc*

**RETAIL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES LICENSE APPLICATION
MONETARY TRANSMITTAL FORM**

AMENDMENT-Change of Manager

APPLICATION SHOULD BE COMPLETED ON-LINE, PRINTED, SIGNED, AND SUBMITTED TO THE LOCAL LICENSING AUTHORITY.

ECRT CODE: RETA

Please make \$200.00 payment here: <https://www.mass.gov/epay-for-online-payments-abcc>

PAYMENT MUST DENOTE THE NAME OF THE LICENSEE CORPORATION, LLC, PARTNERSHIP, OR INDIVIDUAL

EPAY CONFIRMATION NUMBER

A.B.C.C. LICENSE NUMBER (IF AN EXISTING LICENSEE, CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE CITY)

ENTITY/ LICENSEE NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/TOWN

STATE

ZIP CODE

For the following transactions (Check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New License | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Class (i.e. Annual / Seasonal) | <input type="checkbox"/> Change Corporate Structure (i.e. Corp / LLC) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of License | <input type="checkbox"/> Alteration of Licensed Premises | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of License Type (i.e. club / restaurant) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pledge of Collateral (i.e. License/Stock) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change of Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Change Corporate Name | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Category (i.e. All Alcohol/Wine, Malt) | <input type="checkbox"/> Management/Operating Agreement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Officers/
Directors/LLC Managers | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Ownership Interest
(LLC Members/ LLP Partners,
Trustees) | <input type="checkbox"/> Issuance/Transfer of Stock/New Stockholder | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of Hours |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of DBA |

THE LOCAL LICENSING AUTHORITY MUST MAIL THIS TRANSMITTAL FORM ALONG WITH COMPLETED APPLICATION, AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS TO:

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION
239 CAUSEWAY STREET
BOSTON, MA 02241-3396**



November 6, 2018

Selectboard
Town of South Hadley
116 Main Street
South Hadley, MA 01075

Ladies / Gentlemen,

The South Hadley & Granby Chamber of Commerce will again be sponsoring the Holiday Stroll on the first Friday in December, this year December 1^{7th}. We are requesting that the College Street Bypass be closed off on that day from 4 PM until 9 PM for the safety of those crossing to and from the Village Commons. We also ask that the portion of College Street from the District 2 Fire Station to the Commons be closed at 6 PM in both directions to allow for Santa's arrival parade. The Parade will occur from 6:00 – 6:10PM, and will go from District 2 Fire Station to the College Street Bypass.

We will need 3 police officers to manage traffic and help pedestrians from 5:30pm until 8:00pm, and the help of the DPW in closing off the Bypass. We appreciate the help that the Town of South Hadley and the Selectboard have given us in past years, and hope you can do so again.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Sara Lawrence'.

Sara Lawrence
Executive Director
South Hadley & Granby Chamber of Commerce

Ira Brezinsky, Chair
Andrea Miles, Vice-Chair
Jeff Cyr, Clerk
Sarah Etelman
Bruce Forcier

Michael J. Sullivan
Town Administrator

November 21, 2018

Honorable Selectboard,

This report will briefly capture some of the issues and projects which have been occupying my time, as well as others in town hall, over the last two weeks.

It is always a very busy time and often affected by inclement weather. The approach will be similar to last year when I decide to close town hall out of public safety concerns. The conventional wisdom is when the weather is extreme it is unwise to act as a draw for residents to come to town hall unnecessarily. I can assure you and the citizens of South Hadley emergency services continue to operate during these periods.

“Equity in the Workplace:” Assistant Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz and I recently attended a MIIA training in Chelmsford. The subject matter as focused on laws related to “equity” in the workplace. This change became law on July 1, 2018 and states;

“No employer shall discriminate in any way on the basis of gender in the payment of wages, or pay any person in its employ a salary or wage rate less than the rates paid to its employees of a different gender for comparable work.”....among other things.

It goes without saying this law is still being interpreted, but there is sufficient case law and rulings to start in on guidelines and protections. The challenges are many, but I am confident the HR Department will take important steps to ensure the Town of South Hadley is compliant.

The first step will be to do a self-evaluation of job descriptions, titles and compensation. Make internal and external comparisons. To identify areas where there are “dissimilarities” in the requirements or conditions related to the job, such as what are the certifications or degree requirements, is there variation in working conditions, does someone work inside and someone else with a seemingly similar position works outside in the weather. It is worth noting that if a discrepancy exists based on performance based evaluation(s), it can be allowed as a reasonable variance for compensation.

The training also spoke to how the law changed in respect to making “accommodations” for employees who have injuries, disabilities or employees who are

pregnant or nursing. While “pregnancy” is not an area which is presently center stage on our workplace radar, it is helpful to be aware of the requirements.

It continues to be any accommodation must be reasonable and does not necessarily affect the general requirement of an employee having to be able to perform the core duties of their position. As with all changes, as I said previously, it is an evolutionary process, change a law, digest the ramification, sprinkle in some law suits and wait patiently for the work place culture to catch up with the intent. We do our best to keep up with the changes and work to protect the town and its employees at all times.

Board of Assessors Meeting: On Nov. 19 I had the pleasure of attending the Board of Assessor’s (BOA) meeting. The meeting was both informative and incredibly well organized and well run.

The reason I asked to attend was in order to discuss the changes related to the Acts of 2018 Chapter 218 - in particular the portion changing the veteran abatement calculation requesting to tie it to the Consumer Price Index. The BOA authorized the Assistant Assessor Melissa Rimbold (nee Couture and great employee) to examine the Town of South Hadley presently-allowed abatements and to consider what the changes in the act, if accepted, would mean to South Hadley.

As part of the discussion it was pointed out that 65% of all abatements presently go to veterans and that there were other programs funded by the town to assist veterans in paying other housing bills. The BOA, while not objecting to discussing the idea, did want to take a longer look.

Chair Kevin Taugher suggested Missy Rimbold and I work to create a presentation which would help taxpayers understand how abatements affect the total equalized value of the municipality. Basically, while an abatement lowers an individual tax bill, it shifts that cost to all other tax payers. I am sure there is more to come on this issue. The BOA chair suggested a meeting or presentation with the SB in late January or early February to discuss the ramifications of any changes. I believe that is something the SB would support.

Some of the good news in regard to the discussion was that values are up 3.3% in town. While the real estate market has cooled slightly in the last month due to rising interest rates, it is a positive sign. Hopefully there will be some “new growth” in the second half of FY 2019, as some of the Gaylord Street industrial properties come out of the cloud of bankruptcy and the Woodlawn Plaza is closer to final plans.

SHELD/MHC Cord Ribbon

Cutting: On an overcast wintery day, MHC invited town officials to a cord - or ribbon cutting depending on your perspective - on the half meg installation at Kendal Hall on the MHC campus.

MHC President Sonya Stephens, State Representative-elect Dan Carey, SB Chair Ira Brezinsky, and SHELD Manager Sean Fitzgerald, all heaped praise



on the collaborative effort which resulted in bring this project to completion.

MHC has set aggressive goals to become 100 % "green" over the next two decades and to continue to work with SHELD and the Town of South Hadley in reducing our carbon footprint. Congratulations MHC!

PVPC Eric Weiss: I had the opportunity to meet with the new Municipal Service Coordinator for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. The focus of the conversation was mainly on how we could create more regional opportunities.

In my opinion it is simple: make it easier and seize on opportunities. You make it easier similar to what we have done with providing building commissioner services to Granby. You do not try and hit it out of the park - just get a single.

Taking over the entire responsibilities of a building commissioner for Granby would have tipped the boat in South Hadley and put a river of doubt between all parties. Instead we clearly assessed how much capacity was within the South Hadley Inspectional Services Department (Building Department), how much we could afford to redeploy in Granby, decide whether that was enough to cover their needs, and lastly make the agreement easy to get into and easy to get out of for both parties.

It is now in the second year. Everyone seems happy. It gives Granby what it is required to have and it allows South Hadley to be economically competitive for a well-trained building commissioner and hopefully adds to our retention effort for qualified staff.

Selling some capacity to other communities for qualified staff is a different way to look at "regionalization." When well planned, it can expedite the process and assist

communities on both sides of the changing world of municipal services. I believe in the future, South Hadley can become a leader in selling services to other communities based on capacity and competency. I am not sure where Eric will go, but I would be interested in bring other opportunities to the SB for the benefit of South Hadley.

PVTA Meeting: At the most recent PVTA Board Meeting they fished Mike Sullivan's name card of a box of long-forgotten board members. South Hadley's representative Marilyn Ishler was not able to attend, so I did my best to stand in.

One of the agenda items which caught my eye was a program East Longmeadow, Northampton and Agawam have adopted. It is an initially-grant-funded program to increase access to seniors and persons of different abilities to transportation.

The basics as I understand them is each community has agreed to hire part-time or full time drivers to operate smaller (non-CDL) buses in each community (similar to our COA van). The municipality would be taking responsibility for drivers, insurance and gas costs and the PVTA would take care of providing the vehicle and repairs. It is a program in the early stages, but I have it on my list of things to learn more about and see if it would be a viable way to increase transit access in South Hadley.

HCHIT: I attended the Nov. 20 meeting of the Executive Committee. The issue of design plan change was part of the subject matter. As more communities have revisited the issue 32B section 21-22 to ensure it is accepted properly, there has been more comments from unions - some of those comments very uninformed from my perspective.

It is a fact the HCHIT reserve fund has trended better in the last year of claims. It would be irresponsible not to look at the financials from the previous three years or longer. It also would suggest blind disregard for the conversation going on nationally.

It is important to consider some of these analytics: in-patient admission is up 7.8% from the previous year, but more alarming in costs for such patients has increased by 14.8% on average. The most costly medical care, Emergency Department use, is up 12.2% or 1,697 more than in FY 17. 1.8% of those covered account for \$18.5 million or 35.5% of everything paid to providers. There was \$52.1 million paid in claims by HCHIT in FY 18.

The story remains the same. The growth in costs is unsustainable for HCHIT without incredibly high premiums or reasonable design plan changes or a balance of both. I will do my best to continue to make decision which are fair to the taxpayer and the employees to preserve this important benefit.

Holiday Schedule: I have made an administrative decision to close town hall on Dec. 24 and 31, as many employees will be otherwise unavailable. I hope to avoid both having

citizens come to town hall only to find it closed and avoid the cost of bringing the building up to 69 degrees for eight hours.

I am aware that some object to these closings, but considering how the dates fall and after long consideration, I believe it is the right thing to do. Essential personnel are not affected and I leave the decision to close the senior center and the library to Leslie and Joe respectfully. I have confidence they will make a wise decision on their customer needs.

We will get the message out starting Dec. 17 on FaceBook, the website and through email blasts. If there is inclement weather, we will still be ready to message remotely for parking bans or other notifications.

Website Update: There has been much progress made by IT Coordinator James Doolittle, Executive Assistant to Administration Kristin Maher and the CivicPlus design team. Unfortunately, it is largely behind the scenes so the progress is sometimes unnoticed. The color palettes have been updated and improvements are being constructed. Work continues on pages in various ways. We hope there will be something to look at for review in by February of March, with the final product live by May 1. Thank you for your patience on this project.



"We can't say 'new and improved' until we come up with a product." 

Please enjoy your Thanksgiving Holiday. I will be return to work on Tuesday, Nov. 27 and see you at the SB meeting that evening. While that evening's meeting will be relatively light lifting, the meetings to follow throughout the next month-and-a-half will be heavy (i.e. budget, license renewals, Town Counsel) duty. Let me know if there are questions or information leading into those meetings on the items I mentioned or others.

Respectfully submitted

Michael J. Sullivan
Town Administrator, South Hadley