

Andrea Miles, Chair
Jeff Cyr, Vice-Chair
Christopher Geraghty, Clerk
Sarah Etelman
Bruce Forcier

Michael J. Sullivan
Town Administrator

December 12, 2019

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 throughout the Town of South Hadley.

Winter has arrived. Thank you to the South Hadley Department of Public Works for the work they performed on the season opener! I would also wish everyone a healthy holiday season no matter what your tradition or beliefs guide you toward. Of course, I join you all in looking toward a wonderful 2020.

Winter Parking Regulations: The Chief of Police, Acting DPW Director and I recently got together to review the issues related to winter parking regulations and how we may improve. This included message delivery, timing and possible expansion of streets designated as no parking during weather emergencies. Adding streets to the “no parking” list would not be recommended until March or April to the Selectboard as it would be confusing to the public.

However, we are re-doubling our messaging to make people aware that we will be stepping up enforcement of winter parking regulations, including ticketing and, if needed, towing. This last storm was an oddly shaped storm from a duration and amount vantage point. Plus it was earlier in the season, I guess. Given these and other factors, while the DPW performed well, there was seemingly a lax response from the citizenry for this storm. Their assistance and cooperation I am confident will increase as we improve our messaging which we have already set out to accomplish.

It is our hope we will not have any more storms this winter but given the unlikelihood of that happening we need to step up our efforts to increase cooperation. Residents who park off street (legally), clear around hydrants, unburden storm drains and/or help their neighbors are really making a difference in their community in a tangible way.

The Town of South Hadley has already spent nearly \$45K between the “plowing” (est. \$23K) and salt and sand stockpiles of the \$100K budgeted for FY20. We will likely have to overspend (only account allowed by law) as we have in years past. Any effort, no matter seemingly small, performed by citizens in helping battle these storms is of great value in countless ways. Thank you!

South Hadley School Department: As you are aware, the South Hadley School Department is going through some significant changes. With the departure of Superintendent Nick Young and other key positions in flux, it is a very interesting period for the district.

The challenges are certainly significantly lessened by the talent level of the remaining personnel. With Dr. Diane Bonneville shifting her role from South Hadley High School Principal to Interim Superintendent it brings a level of trust, consistency and experience to the district as a whole. With Dr. Bonneville’s

leadership and the dedication of the South Hadley School Committee there is no doubt the South Hadley Public Schools will emerge from this period as strong as ever!

On the “town” side, we will meet with the Interim Superintendent early next week to discuss how we may assist the schools in any way with their mission. We will focus our discussion on the most immediate needs of the Superintendent and how we can lower the burden, even if the measures are temporary.

We all look forward to a continued working relationship which will benefit the community as whole. If needed I certainly will be happy to avail myself to the School Committee or the Interim Superintendent to offer advice or counsel in regard to the budget process.

PVPC Dual Stream Roundtable (NoHo): Selectboard Member Bruce Forcier, Solid Waste Coordinator Kevin Quesnel and I were all in attendance at this meeting. The forum was presented by the chosen operators of the “MRF” Northeast Recycling Council and focused primarily on the issue of glass in the waste stream and how adding additional separation may also impact the cost to a community.

Certain state regulations as to consistent size of crushed glass (3/8th inch) in Massachusetts create a processing challenge for some of the aftermarket glass but is consistent with the residual being used for road sub surfacing. There also was an interesting tutorial on the different rates on specific materials. While the information was certainly captivating, the message remains the same: the better the separation, the less we have to separate (and do) dispose of, the lower the cost of trash.

As you are aware, there is a lot ahead of us in terms of the issue of solid waste in South Hadley. It is becoming more and more apparent that one of the things we must do is increase education. This will help the public be our partner in reducing costs and have the public understand more of what is driving our cost. I will be honest with you - hearing where tipping fees are headed, the future costs of disposal will be incredible, even if we significantly reduce our waste stream.



The “Trash Sub-Committee” has a number of discussions scheduled with the area’s leading haulers to discuss how they may offer innovative ways to cut costs and become a partner in our drive to reduce, recycle, reuse..... and lower our bill.

Recent absence: While I technically was absent for only three-and-a-half days of work, it did seem much longer. The abbreviated time off was thanks in part to a day-and-a-half of closure due to the snowstorm. I did get to spend my Thanksgiving break in Baystate Medical Center, mostly in the ICU. I went into the hospital on Thanksgiving just as the turkey came out of the oven. While my condition sounds kind of scary - Abdominal Aortic Aneurism Type B - or Triple A (now I have two Triple A cards in my wallet), I am doing fine and happy to be back fully engaged in my work.

The progress and prognosis continue to improve, and I have been fully cleared to return to work. While I may have to take some time for doctors’ visits, I fully expect to be able to perform the duties required of me as South Hadley Town Administrator. I want to thank the Selectboard and my co-workers, especially Kristin Maher and Jennifer Wolowicz, for allowing me to rest easy for a few days knowing things in South Hadley are in good hands.

Happy holidays to all!

Respectfully submitted,
Michael J. Sullivan
Town Administrator, South Hadley