

JENNIFER L. WOLOWICZ, Deputy Town Administrator

Deputy Town Administrator Report

August 31, 2020

To: Selectboard
From: Jennifer L. Wolowicz, Deputy Town Administrator

The need to provide support to our employees has been magnified during this pandemic. The HR department has made it our priority to be available to employees either in person, if social distancing is possible, but preferably by phone & utilizing the video conference feature of google meets. We all are experiencing different emotions & reactions to the pandemic and with that comes the need for all types of support. I am pleased to say we have received many positive comments from employees about the role of both HR & administration.

For several years we have talked about the need to be clear to staff on what the core department responsibilities are for the community. This topic has come up countless times over the years when a certain function is highlighted needing more staff, money or resources. Many times we realize through the discussion that the “service” is not a true core responsibility. When the pandemic hit we started to have this conversation as a whole with all departments and asked that a core services list be created so we could use this as a guide when determining the needs of the community. This exercise has helped staff recognize that just because we have done it for years does not necessarily translate into a core municipal service.

In an effort to continue to share the message of the importance of wearing a mask to help to stop the spread of Covid-19 we have recruited the wellness committee to work with the cable studio to create a ‘Mask Up Campaign’ for the community.

Our town hall staff was recruited to assist the Clerk’s office in the prep work for the upcoming election. Staff stuffed ballots to mail out to residents who requested to vote by mail and also performed an audit process.

The wellness committee received a grant from our group insurance trust in the amount of \$1,000. These funds will be used to encourage employees to improve their mental & physical health through nutrition & exercise programs and offerings.

The Director of Public Works and I have been working on procurements to find a contractor for line painting and one to perform tree work in town. We hope to have these contracts awarded over the next few months.

Due to the pandemic and the need to social distance from each other we will be unable to host our fall professional development program for our staff in person. We like so many others have pivoted and are developing a multi-week video training program focusing on diversity, equity & inclusion. Our goal for this program will be to distribute a variety of training videos every few weeks with the hope that these trainings will promote conversations with each other on these very important topics.

Stay healthy!

Respectfully,

Jennifer L. Wolowicz
Deputy Town Administrator, South Hadley