

JENNIFER L. WOLOWICZ, Deputy Town Administrator

Deputy Town Administrator Report

October 30, 2020

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

The MMMA Bootcamp was hosted virtually this year and although it wasn't the same as in person the discussions and shared stories with peers was so important. We are all experiencing this pandemic through the municipal administration eyes and it is always good to have the support of your peers. We discussed financial management & budgeting during a pandemic as well as the basics of being a municipal manager.

I was on the planning committee for the annual fall conference for MMHR so we of course moved to a virtual platform and spread the 2 day conference across 3 partial days in October. We learned about pay equity, FMLA & ADA intersection as well as cultural humility including diversity, equity & inclusion.

We are still receiving fraudulent unemployment claims for current and former employees. This is not unique to us as many municipalities and private sector employees are dealing with this as well.

October was cybersecurity awareness month so we took this opportunity to inform employees of the ways they can protect their identities and personal information that is floating around the WWW.

I have completed the MCPPO recertification class & passed the exam that is now required to apply for recertification status as a public purchasing official. I believe this is my 4th time being recertified for this designation over the years. The designation is required of a municipal official in the community in order to receive reimbursement for school building projects.

We have recirculated the out of state travel policy to staff to remind them of their responsibilities as an employee if they choose to travel to a "hot" state or community.

Administration has moved forward with a partnership with Dr. Lauren Appio to help us learn more about the important topics of diversity, equity & inclusion program. Dr. Appio has introduced herself to our staff virtually and has provided an anonymous survey where employees were asked to share some feedback about past diversity, equity, & inclusion training experiences, as well as questions, concerns, and goals for this work. We are very excited to embark on this next step in our journey to expand our minds about diversity, equity, & inclusion. We have created a tag line for this project....

There is a seat for everybody at our table....we need you there!

We have begun a collaboration with the City of Easthampton to assist their HR department and staff. I will be spending time in Easthampton as well as virtually over the next few months. Some of the areas we have assisted with this month are CORI check requirements, DOT drug testing clearinghouse regulations, employee performance, unpaid LOA's, employee engagement/culture, 3rd party benefit vendors as well as contracting with NFP for benefits administration as we do as well for all current & retired employees.

This month I celebrated 15 years with the Town of South Hadley and am happy to say that I continue to find my work challenging as something new comes up quite often (ever hear of a pandemic) and the nature of the work is forever changing. I am thankful for the many people I have met through my work both as coworkers and residents.

Stay healthy!

Respectfully,

Jennifer L. Wolowicz
Deputy Town Administrator, South Hadley