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Lisa Wong
Town Administrator

Town Administrator's Report to Selectboard November 16, 2021

I am pleased to submit the first of many Town Administrator Reports to come. In my first two weeks on the job, I was able to tour many of our public facilities, meet with local and state officials, hold my first department head meeting, and make my first new hire to fill a vacancy at the Senior Center.

Administration, Finance and Operations

- An offer was made to fill the part-time Senior Center Technology Instructor position. After an extended search, a qualified candidate was identified to teach two classes per week to assist our older adults with technology needs. The position is a grant funded 5-hour per week position.
- The Board of Assessors tested the hybrid meeting function at the Senior Center using the conference room and the Owl camera. It worked well and all members were heard, even with masks on, by our virtual test audience. They will have another test meeting on Nov 15 using the multi-purpose room recommended for larger boards that will have a larger public attendance. Valley Communications came out in early November to ensure that each side of this larger space worked well together. Dan Pease met again with equipment providers for the "Zoom Room." There is now one more option to consider if we move forward with using the "Zoom Room" equipment instead of the Owl. The Selectboard room at Town Hall needs additional audio support as the echo makes it harder to hear remotely.

Community Highlights

- I conducted an Interview with Carolyn Noel of The Reminder Newspaper to discuss my new role. I will share the article when it comes out.
- Fundraising efforts continue for a pickleball court in town. The cost is estimated to be between \$70-100,000.
- The Town continues to work with the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) on the closeout of the Senior Center building project. Final landscaping won't happen until next Spring, so the OPM will be on board until then. The Senior Center Director Leslie Hennessey is also checking on what items still need to be delivered.

Planning and Economic Development

- Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Keneally and Undersecretary of Community Development Ashley Stolba visited South Hadley on November 10 to discuss the town's Local Rapid Recovery Plan (LRRP) focused on the Village Commons. The roundtable was organized by Director of Planning and Conservation Anne Capra and a tour given by DPW Director Chris Bouchard of the nearby MassWorks project. The LRRP plan was developed with input from a local focus group and business survey and has recommendations that can be

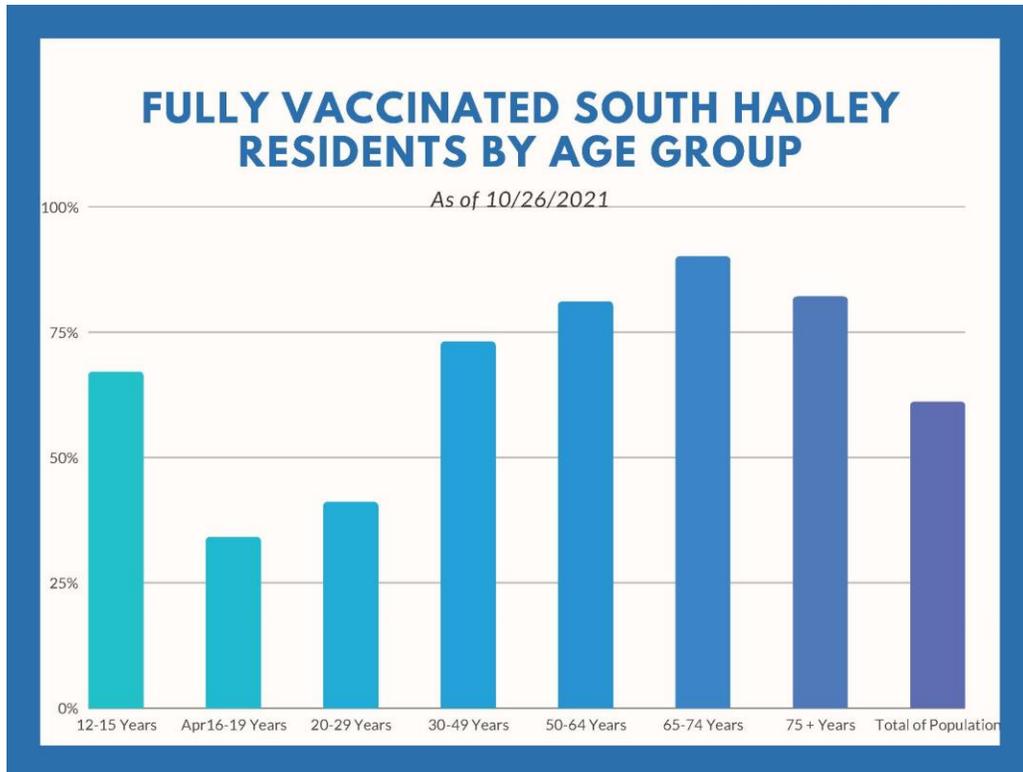
applied across the town. Recommendations include institutionalizing small business support such as holding regular office hours. This is similar to a regular weekly meeting that I implemented in Winchester with businesses each Friday morning in early 2020 that included town staff and the state delegation to provide timely information and resource support during the pandemic. In 2021, those meetings became monthly as relationships were developed and businesses knew more about how to access services and assistance. There are several other recommendations in the plan that I will work with Anne on how to prioritize and implement.

- Route 202 – On November 10, Emily Innes gave a high-level overview of the plan to about 40 participants about the Route 202/Route 33 Corridor Study. The Action Plan consists of public realm improvements such as consistency in signage, landscaping, lights, street furniture, bike lanes, crosswalks and sidewalks, and establishing better connections with surrounding streets and cul-de-sacs. Policies – workshops for small business and housing; closer working relationships with Granby and Chicopee, add the corridor to the bus network, expanding Valley BikeShare, and explore the relocation of the MassDOT highway maintenance center to allow for more development.

Public Health

- Public Health Director Sharon Hart helped to organize a state mobile vaccination unit to come to the Michael E. Smith Middle School on November 18th from 1-5pm. The unit will serve all elementary school students (ages 5 – 11) in this district, in addition to families and school staff. Information on registration will be sent to the school community and posted online.
- The COVID information on the town webpage has changed slightly. The Total Active Confirmed Case number is now included, as well as the vaccination rates by age group. The Active Confirmed Cases are 26 as of November 9th and updated every Tuesday. Kristin Maher put together this information and bar chart based on the latest data as of October 26, 2021.

Age Group	Population	Proportion of population	Individuals with at least one dose	Individuals with at least one dose per capita	Fully vaccinated individuals	Fully vaccinated individuals per capita
12-15 Years	659	4%	490	74%	440	67%
16-19 Years	1,702	9%	686	40%	575	34%
20-29 Years	3,221	18%	1,560	48%	1,329	41%
30-49 Years	3,793	21%	3,017	80%	2,756	73%
50-64 Years	3,451	19%	3,046	88%	2,786	81%
65-74 Years	1,927	11%	1,951	>95%	1,736	90%
75+ Years	1,686	9%	1,597	95%	1,381	82%
Total	18,076	100%	12,347	68%	11,003	61%



Public Safety

- South Hadley and Granby have applied for a \$60k grant from the state Department of Mental Health for a shared behavior health professional. The grant would cover three 8-hour shifts, where a mental health clinician would be available to respond to both communities, with their respective police officers, to assist persons in crisis.
- The Town signed a contract with SHELDT to provide the South Hadley Police Department with a dedicated fiber radio network to be constructed and maintained by SHELDT 24/7. The contract is a three year contract for \$1200 per month. This SHELDT-Fiber project is part of the upgrade to the police communication system that was approved by Town Meeting this past June.

Public Works & Facilities

- MassDEP issued it’s 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan in October 2021. The plan establishes goals to reduce disposal statewide by 30% by 2030 and 90% by 2050. I am talking with the DPW on what the implications are locally and what strategies we need to put in place sooner than later.
- About \$2.74 million in sewer system upgrades have been identified as projects to be prioritized for ARPA funding. I am still working on identifying other proposals but believe infrastructure should be prioritized.
 - \$2.3m for the Judd Brook Interceptor Lining Project. There have been several studies and the Town stated to the DEP that it would pursue funding to complete this project.
 - \$350k for the Morgan St. Pump Station Upgrades, converting to submersible pumps, upgrading controls and investigating possible inflow and infiltration
 - \$85k for a Comprehensive Study of the Sewer Plant, pump stations and collection system