

Jeff Cyr, Chair
Sarah Etelman, Vice-Chair
Carol Constant, Clerk
Chris Geraghty
Andrea Miles

Lisa Wong
Town Administrator

Town Administrator's Report to Selectboard December 21, 2021

Administration, Finance and Operations

- Department budget meetings between Department Heads and the Town Administrator are ongoing. The State will hold a consensus revenue hearing on December 21 that will help determine the direction of the state budget, including local aid and Chapter 70 school funding.
- State law mandates yearly ethics training for all public employees, members of a public body or elected/appointed officials. Deadline is April 1, 2022. <http://www.muniprogram.eth.state.ma.us/>
- New Employee: Sandra Farnsworth accepted the position of Council on Aging Program Coordinator. The position will work with the director on planning, organizing and implementing a variety of educational and social programs which include wellness activities and special events. Sandra has great experience as an Activity Director at organizations focused on seniors.
- Census is going out the first week of January. That will include a reminder for dog license renewals, which can be done online. Absentee ballot requests forms will also be available on the website. We don't know yet whether the legislature will allow Vote by Mail.

Community Highlights

- SHTV studio improvements to upgrade the playback server and approved by Town Meeting and Capital Planning are moving forward. A contract was signed with Integrated Solutions Group (Ockers Company).
- I will be the guest speaker at the next Fireside Chats at the Senior Center (formerly Coffee and Conversation) on January 7th.

Planning and Economic Development

- The Planning Board voted to endorse updating the town's Housing Production Plan, which expires in June 2022.
- The 12-unit multifamily condo development on Canal Street has not been issued Certificates of Occupancy for 75% of the dwellings and 100% of the building foundations. The roadway has been installed, and the developer completed the sidewalk on High Street, including ADA compliant curb cuts/ramps.
- The state Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development has opened their "Expression of Interest" period through March 18 with the Full Applications period between January and June 2022. The Town can submit 2 proposals, or up to five projects if submitted by February 4. www.mass.gov/guides/community-one-stop-for-growth#-about-the-one-stop-

Public Health

- South Hadley, has been allocated 2,880 iHealth Labs OTC rapid antigen kits. Each test kit has two tests, for a total 5,760 tests. They are being provided free of charge for distribution to the public, with an emphasis on increasing access for individuals and families who are facing financial hardship. It is the state's expectation that they be allocated equitably and at locations accessible to individuals and families who are determined to be in high need and as quickly as possible during the holiday season. The Health Department has reached out to community groups such as the Senior Center, Housing Authority, church groups, Riverboat Village, the Recreation Department and others. The tests can be completed by residents at home. Test results are available in 15 minutes and samples do not need to go to a laboratory. The tests are for any individuals 2 years of age and up, regardless of vaccination status or whether they have symptoms. People who test positive should isolate for 10 days and notify their close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. If someone needs help with support resources to be able to safely isolate or quarantine, they should contact their health care provider or the local board of health.

Public Safety

- South Hadley Police is hiring! The SHPD is part of the Massachusetts Civil Service program and Potential employees must take the Massachusetts Civil Service examination. This exam for Police Officers is only offered every 12 months, and the next exam is March 16, 2022 with an Application Deadline of January 18, 2022. (late fee registration is February 1, 2022). To register for the Civil Service Police Officer Exam, visit www.mass.gov/orgs/civil-service.
- SHPD recently received a \$16,200 grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety, as part of the FFY 2022 MUNICIPAL ROAD SAFETY Grant Program. This annual grant is used to fund traffic enforcement and education initiatives focusing on impaired driving, distracted driving, seat belt enforcement and speed enforcement. The department also received funding to purchase one additional portable speed sign board which they hope to purchase this winter and deploy by spring. Starting in December, additional officers will be assigned as part of the nationwide "Over the limit, under arrest" proactive enforcement to deter drugged/drunken driving.
- SHPD received a \$5,300 grant award for FY 22 from the United States Department of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Office as part of the competitive grant program to assist police departments to attain accreditation. SHPD was awarded funding to offset costs associated with the membership dues and training from the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission, Inc as well as software needed to ensure compliance with written policies and standards.

Public Works & Facilities

- The Town has received the draft report from BETA Inc. on the traffic study for a truck exclusion on Spring, Hartford and Ludlow Roads and are finalizing the submission to MADOT for approval to move forward with the truck exclusion on those roads.
- DPW finished the installation, calibration and operator training on our closed loop ground speed computers now installed in all of the DPW material spreaders.
- Fall yard waste collection has ended. The Town had three versus the usual two collection rounds.