

Jeff Cyr, Chair
Andrea Miles, Vice-Chair
Renee Sweeney, Clerk
Carol Constant
Nicole Casolari

Town Administrator's Report to Selectboard December 19, 2022

Administration, Finance and Operations

- The South Hadley Cultural Council applied for the \$2500 Mass Cultural Council Festivals & Projects Fund for the SHOWCASE South Hadley festival. Awards will be given out in February. The Selectboard approved \$25,000 towards the project. Thank you to SHCC Treasurer Ira Brezinsky for putting the application together.
- The Town Treasurer is looking at moving funds into higher yielding short term investments to take advantage of rates over 4%. Cash flow will be taken into consideration.
- The Fiscal Year 2023 tax rate has been certified by the Bureau of Accounts for South Hadley. Thanks to our Assessor for all her hard work!

Community

- The Baby Bonds Task Force, chaired by TA Wong, released its report on December 12th with an event featuring State Treasurer Goldberg, Senator Feeney and Rep. Vargas. Read the report: www.mass.gov/doc/baby-bonds-task-force-findings-report-0/download
- A big THANK YOU to Senator Jo Comerford, who will no longer represent South Hadley starting in January 2023. Welcome to Senator-elect Jake Oliveira!

Planning

- The Community One Stop for Growth portal is open as of December 14th. This is a single application portal and collaborative review process of grant programs that make targeted investments based on a Development Continuum. Full applications are due in June 2023. Under this program, South Hadley has received 2.71 million in MassWorks for the Newton/Lyman Street projection 2020. The Town will explore what opportunities to prioritize. Towns can send in Statement of Interest letters now until March 17 to get feedback on potential projects.
- The Housing Production Plan Community Forum attracted about 30 residents on Monday. This is part of the process to update the town's Housing Production Plan, which expires this year. The consultant, Outwith Studios, outlined the process, presented data and then led smaller breakout discussions. The Project website: <https://shhousingplan.org> (with link to survey)
 - The public engagement process includes public meetings, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and public outreach.

- Initial research shows that a household needs an income of more than \$100,000 to buy and \$80,000 to rent the average home in South Hadley. The median homeowner income is just under \$100,000 and the median renter household income is under \$50,000.
- Chapter 40B is the state's affordable housing zoning law. Under Chapter 40B, the Town has to have at least 10% of its housing units be defined as affordable. For more info: www.chapa.org/sites/default/files/Fact%20Sheet%20on%20Chapter%2040B%202011%20update.pdf.
- The total housing units in South Hadley as of 2020 is 7,439 and the total affordable housing units are 424, or 5.7% of units. Because the Town is under 10%, it means that developers have the right to appeal an adverse local decision to the State. A community can achieve "Safe Harbor" from this right to appeal by producing units.
 - Permanent Safe Harbor - produce 320 units (get to 10%)
 - Safe Harbor for 1 year - produce 37 units (or .5% increase)
 - Safe Harbor for 2 years - produce 74 units (or 1% increase)

Public Health

- The State reached agreements with CVS and Walgreens related to the opioid epidemic for \$230 million. This is the third such agreement (\$500million from Johnson & Johnson and \$130million from Walmart/Teva/Allergan). The Town does not yet have the distribution schedule.
- The state has announced another round of free COVID-19 tests and Personal Protective Equipment to municipalities via the local Boards of Health. Based on our population, South Hadley is eligible to receive up to 9000 iHealth Labs at-home rapid antigen tests in boxes of 2. This is a first come-first serve, so the Town will be placing its order soon and then distributing these to departments. They will be available at municipal buildings.
- Waiting to hear if the state will continue funding wastewater testing for COVID. The program had been extended until the end of 2022 but the town received kits to use in January. The data produced by BioBot is posted on the Town's website.
- The number of reported COVID-19 cases (PCR tested) went from 7 to 15 in the last week. Data is posted www.southhadley.org/1026/COVID-19-RESPONSE. Fully vaccinated individuals for the town as of December 5, 2022 are:

Age 0-4	15%
Age 5-11	66%
Age 12-15	78%
Age 16-19	40%
Age 20-29	51%
Age 30-49	77%
Age 50-64	88%
Age 65-74	above 95%
Age 75+	above 95%

Public Safety

- There was a fire on Ethan Circle on December 11. Thanks to the first responders from South Hadley as well as Hadley, Granby, and Westover. Thankfully there were no injuries.