



JTH HADLEY

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Assistant Town Administrator Report

January 19, 2016

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

Our Wellness Committee held a coloring contest to cast a spotlight on how coloring can reduce stress for adults. We had 11 contestants and their art was displayed on the door of our Operations Center in the main hallway and all the employees were able to vote for the best one. Missy Couture's was chosen as the winner and she received a gift card. I participated but let me tell you it isn't as stress free as you would think!

Jackie Iskander, Payroll & Benefits Coordinator is back in her office after an unplanned water issue that damaged the carpet, shredder, printer and desks. We were able to get a quick turnaround from MIIA for the insurance claim and the work was completed so that Jackie and Gloria Congram, Benefits Administrator could get back into the Payroll & Benefits Office. This event was yet another example of the aging building that we are working in and we are thankful that this occurred on a weekend so that employees were not in the office when the ceiling collapsed.

In October the town received two public record requests, one for a copy of our annual salaries and another one for our Use of Force Policy. I am happy to report that both of these requests were responded to in a timely fashion by myself and Chief LaBrie. I bring this to your attention because this was not a regular public records request. This was a project of journalism students at Northeastern University. Professor Mike Beaudet's investigative reporting class conducted this experiment to highlight how cities and towns in the state respond to requests for government records from average citizens. The requests we received came by from "Ben Thompson" and included a PO Box and a Gmail e-mail address. I didn't think anything of the request when we received it until December when I saw a friend of mine post the link of the story on Facebook. Come to find out my friend is the Professor who conducted the test and so I e-mailed him to inquire how South Hadley did and his response was "Congrats to South Hadley for passing the test with flying colors. Both the payroll and the use of force policy."

According to the article in the Boston Globe "A solid majority — 58% — of the Commonwealth's 351 municipalities did not respond within the 10-day limit set by state law when they received a written request for two records that are almost universally considered to be public."

We are currently advertising for an Equipment Operator and a Plant Attendant under the DPW. The Equipment Operator will be a hybrid position as it will be assigned to the Parks or Highway division based on the work load of the DPW. This is another initiative by Administration to keep personnel costs down as we continue to see increases in health insurance & retirement costs.

We are also advertising for an Emergency Dispatcher position for the Police Department and interviews will be starting the week of January 19th. The interview panel will consist of myself, Lt Steve Parentela and Kim Ottomaniello, Police Chief Administrative Assistant.

Our January Professional Development Day was held on the 15th and we learned about Behavioral Change and Nutrition & Maintaining Functional Movement. Sean Maher from Maher's Mobile Personal Training was our presenter and he provided a great deal of information for us to utilize in our everyday lives as we all try to live healthier.

Respectfully,

Jennifer L. Wolowicz
Assistant Town Administrator, South Hadley