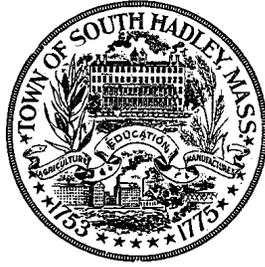


TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY

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May 31, 2013

South Hadley Selectboard
116 Main Street
South Hadley, Massachusetts

Honorable Selectboard;

Please accept this as an abridged accounting of administrative activities during the recent weeks in South Hadley Town Hall;

COA Renovations, Roof Replacement and Air Conditioner Upgrades; Town Hall was out in force to discuss and learn about the over half million dollar upgrades recently completed (oh so very close) at the Council on Aging Center at the former Woodlawn School. Planner Harris, ATA Wolowicz, Building Inspector Church and I, met with the Lachance Heating and Cooling, B&G Mechanical, Jim Mazcek (PVPC), Climate Engineering, Trimco Roofing Andy Barr (OPM) and other project participants to review the work completed, assess future needs and collect the future maintenance/warrantee protocols in to our centralized system. The key guest of honor was our host Director Trybus.

The team had the opportunity to get on top of this project literally and figuratively (you may be able to see ATA Wolowicz up on the roof near the exit door of the second roof in the left picture).



The membrane has a twenty year warrantee and we received failure instructions to contact Trimco as to any leaks. There is a few "punch list items we requested, including the installation of a scupper drain on the front side of the cupola stand to allow better drainage for standing water in that area.

We did fire up all the roof top units and after some minor, but expected adjustments the chillers were doing as advertised on the hottest day of the year (so far).

We asked and received all the technical specifications for both equipment on the roof and in the center which was replaced or repaired, what we could not get information from the contractor, we took digital pictures.



This project will come in below budget, but there are some significant priority needs at the center which we will be encouraging your approval to move forward on.

Director Trybus is engaged and certainly knowledgeable about the needs for her operation. First and foremost felt the food service storage area needs to be repaired. There was damage done to a ceiling from a leak several years ago, and now that the roof is repair Mass Elder Affairs expects it to be fixed within the calendar year or soon. Failure to comply could cause grant money to be delayed or withdrawn from the lunch program due to the conditions. I am told the agency has been very patient.

There are also some significant opportunities to remove widow units in the future to lower energy consumption, a need to address some interior cooling units drainage and repair an entrance way. I am fairly confident if we are allowed to use the remaining “town” funds for these projects we could make serious impact on the needs. There will be a little more than \$40,000 in the fund when this phase is completed.

Congratulations all around on to those who found the money (Selectboard) and those who did the work, great job!

Mass Inc Fellows Meeting: As some are aware I was invited to attend a statewide meeting of Mass Inc (a supposed policy think tank for the Commonwealth, but they did invite me) to discuss how manufacturing centers have suffered through the downturns and how innovative thinking is leading some cities, towns, neighborhoods out of the darkness.

Anyone who has seen how infusions of federal money and restoration of public confidence has helped Lowell rise from the ashes cannot help but think of ways to apply templates of success from this community to the one they serve. At the forefront is the creative economy or arts and industry as some refer to it as, I have not figured out how to apply the template to South Hadley Falls, but I get closer every week.

It also served as an opportunity to broaden the range of persons who can be called upon for input. In the future I will be inviting John Schneider and Ben Foresmen to visit South Hadley Falls so they may give some “think tank” advice on some strategies to increase reinvestment in the village.

MunicipiBid; I wanted to make you aware that I have made a managerial decision to take the “pool” vehicle of the road. We are between insurance and repairs spending about \$1,000 a year and the vehicle is unused 95% of the time. For example it has not even been moved in three weeks and I am told it was covered with snow for almost nine weeks, which alone suggests at the very least it is not being used 25% of the time and could be as much as 90%. Chief Labrie also has a vehicle we should add to our on-line auction through MuniBid.

This Commonwealth recommended no-cost auction service is easy to use and will turn your unused equipment and vehicles in to more cash than anyone would expect. ATA Wolowicz is contacting other departments and

seeing what equipment might be obsolete, but sought by others. This is yet another sustainable approach, turning equipment headed to the scrap heap into cash for the town.

Memorial Day Ceremonies; It was good to see such a large and respectful crowd out to honor the Town of South Hadley's contributions to keeping our nation free. From the Civil War to the most recent conflicts South Hadley has sent its daughters and sons to serve this country. Collectively you deserve to be proud, individually you deserve to participate in the fruit of their labor.

Kyle Whelihan and the other youth participants gave everyone great confidence for what our future holds. I thank the Selectboard members for allowing me to march with you for this special day.

Landfill; I continue to meet with various interested parties about best practices and ancillary means of making a landfill pay for itself and beyond. Clearly there are some very innovative ideas out there and also within South Hadley. I assure you I will keep trying to, learn more about the possibilities and the possible obstacles to success. The composting issue continues to be discussed with DEP which I believe to be a strategic benefit for the town, although at some juncture we will have to close the book on that specific issue I do not believe now is that time.

Bonding; I had a very productive and insightful discussion with Treasurer Hamelin, Dave Isenthal (Bond Advisor) and Town Accountant Sutton regarding some of our short term, long term and even "longer" term borrowing needs. We discussed at length using "bank qualified municipal" bonds. This series usually has a quarter of a coupon point lower rate, but you are limited to only bonding ten million or less in one calendar year. It would allow us to gradual increase the cost of borrowing and smooth the impact to the taxpayers. The bond fess for three borrowings as opposed to one, Mr. Isenthal feels would be still produce a substantial overall savings to the taxpayers and is doing the bond runs to consider that issue.

Dividing the borrowing over three calendar years will give the town a lower rate, lessen the impact immediately and not adversely impact cash flow. This is a safe method of borrowing given the new reimbursement dynamic with the MSBA and MLA. We also will had a discussion about level debt versus level principal, as means to get closer to a rolling debt schedule. I have already engaged the Appropriations Committee Chair Tom Terry (as per SB Chair) and we will have some follow up conversations in regards to this issue. Considering these new approaches may help us get us closer to a capital project schedule, including major projects. The goal would to invest without debt exclusion votes.

I hope to have more information on this in the near future, for the short term needs we will be issuing some BANs at historically low rates.

On-line Permitting; Tech Specialist Dolittle, Chief Assessor Couture visited the office on Friday to update me in regards to the On-line Permitting project. They are taking reasonable and professional steps to include all constituencies. Their outreach to the Districts with a webinar for View Permit was received well by all in attendance according to their report.

I congratulate and thank them for their extreme diligence and thoughtful strategy they are employing to make this happen. The road of change is litter with uninspired attempts of success. The "group", especially these two professionals are not going to be left on the side of the road for this project, they will make it happen.

Thank you for your support and guidance,

Michael J. Sullivan
Town Administrator, South Hadley