



January 17, 2014

Honorable Selectboard;

Please accept this as an abridged accounting of recent activities of the Town Administrator on your behalf and related to various projects and initiatives.

**Budget Update;** I have now met with all the major departments and have a scheduled meeting with Appropriations for January 30 to discuss the preliminary findings and a **draft** budget. The objective of the meeting will be to review the department request, provide a revenue update and speak to the presentation changes I will be implementing.

The initial findings would indicate some areas of concern, but nothing so far we cannot adjust within the expected revenue budget. Retirement costs to Hampshire County will increase \$145,000 and the schools will increase by about \$300,000. The school increase is interesting because it is both substantial and modest. Substantial because \$300K is a lot, but modest in regards to a school budget increase by way of state average percentage.

The “enterprise Budgets (Water, Sewer, Solid Waste, Ledges) have not received the necessary attention, but will in the next two weeks. These budgets are important, but my concentration is on General Fund Budgeting first and so far no critical situations in that arena.

**Harper’s Payroll;** It is with great pleasure I would like to announce that we have reached a milestone in our evolution of payroll ...Harper’s Payroll is operating and producing our payroll. There were very few errors and all people who either are responsible for input or auditing of the output have indicated they like the system very much.

Thank you to Assistant Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz for coordinating much of this initiative and to everyone involved. It should be noted that a special note of gratitude should go to Julie Gentile who has been beyond dedicated and reached a new level on being conscientious as an employee by guiding this effort to success. We truly could not have made it happen without her intelligence and personality. This enhancement will prove to be efficient, but more importantly a significant tool to protect the town. Thank you Jen and Julie.

**Art Show II:** Mary Ann Wordsworth’s watercolors are in place and I cannot wait for you and others to see them, they are beautiful. She is a gifted artist and SoHa resident as well. We will be hosting a small reception beginning at 6:15 to honor her work and open the show in the Selectboard Meeting Room. I hope you are all able to come a few minutes early to meet Mary Ann and her family.

There will be light refreshments served and there will be opportunity to discuss with inspiration with the artist. If you know of any artists or art lovers please encourage them to attend the opening.

I would like to thank Laura Krutzler and Jen Wolowicz for helping to coordinate the show and the opening.

**CEDC;** The Community Economic Development Committee met January 16<sup>th</sup> to hear a presentation from Patriot Care and Baystate Compassionate Care . There were a number of concerned residents in attendance and asked very good questions. The question of emissions was asked and it was explained that the air emitted into the atmosphere would likely be clear going out than when it came in. The use of sophisticated charcoal filters and other technologies will contain any releases.

Hearing how heightened security from medical marijuana facilities in neighborhoods in Washington D.C. actually helped to lower crime was heartening. The overall reaction was positive and the CEDC took a vote and unanimously added their support to the project.

Other points of conversation were Falls-centric and include Texon, Fibermark and the libraries (old and new). There was also comments made about the Redevelopment Authority and the progress being made in that regard. I believe it to be a very helpful and informative meeting.

**Professional Development Day:** We had a very informative and enjoyable afternoon. The focus was about having a healthy workplace by having healthy employees. Hampshire County Health Insurance Trust provided the presenters. The presentation did include some helpful tips on how we need to stay healthy and how we can incorporate small changes in the workplace that can go a long way.

**Potpourri:** The skating rink is in place, cold weather headed our way, and we will just add water. Our hope is to keep it open (weather cooperative) through the February school vacation as best we can.

The Fibermark agreement has been signed about \$25K less than Forbes and Wheeler estimated. The building will be razed by the end of February.

Texon demo permit has been issued, the ConsCom has work extremely hard to make all the regulations available and put a consent order in place to make this building go away.

Thanks you for your patience and I will see some of you tomorrow at “Bag the Community”.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Sullivan

Town Administrator, South Hadley