

Town Administrator's Weekly Report
September 7, 2016

Each week, when the Select Board has a scheduled meeting, the Town Administrator provides a report to the Select Board members.

This report provides an overview of the Town Administrator's week and updates from Town Departments and Offices on various programs and initiatives. The weekly report also includes information about construction projects and a schedule of upcoming community events.

August and September are times when I take vacation, and the last report that I presented to the Board was dated August 17. Since that time, I have visited family in Sacramento, California and friends in Sandwich, Massachusetts for some much-appreciated family and personal time.

Here is the report for the week of September 7, 2016.

Projects

Bay Road Bridge: MassDOT reported that the final expanded design is completed, and the design is being used for construction estimates. The environmental permit process is underway. I checked with the Hadley Conservation Commission, which has not been contacted. No specific word on when the project will commence. I will provide an update on the construction schedule when it becomes available.

Route 9 Widening Update: ET & L Corporation, the contractor, has finished the water main work. Road construction will proceed from Whalley Street to the Farm Museum.

Future Road Widening: Representatives of MassDOT will meet with the Select Board on September 7 to plan for the next phases of the overall Route 9 widening project. A rotary is planned for the Northampton side of the Coolidge Bridge for 2018. The Route 9 widening from Middle Street to East Street is scheduled for 2020. The anticipated costs for Hadley infrastructure upgrades is incorporated in the revised Capital Improvement Plan.

MassDOT is exploring the concept of a three-lane road east of Middle Street (as opposed to a four-lane road). This issue needs to be discussed by the Select Board at their meeting of September 7.

Public Safety Complex HVAC Control: Work is nearing completion.

Public Safety Complex Roof Update: The bids for the project were received on August 29, and the apparent low bidder's price exceeds that available budget by \$20,000. The Select Board will need to approve a transfer from the Building Maintenance Fund (30-490-5800-C12), which has a balance of \$92,492.87 to fund the project adequately. The Municipal Building Committee has earmarked \$47,000 from this fund, leaving \$45,492.87 available for this purpose.

The bid will be awarded at the September 7 meeting.

Municipal Buildings: Capital requests for 5 municipal buildings were received in the capital planning process. The requests are being evaluated and incorporated into the Capital Improvement Plan with an eye toward affordability, need, and management capabilities. (i.e., how many major construction contracts can we manage at any one time).

The Municipal Building Committee has developed a list of projects, and I will assist with procurement.

Land Requests For Proposals Update: The two responses were received for the Center Hadley Requests for Proposal for land, and none were received for the RFP for land in North Hadley. The bids were being clarified, ranked in order of responsiveness, and are ready for presentation at this time.

Owners Project Manager: The Notice to Proceed has been sent, and the OPM firm is employed. A kick off-meeting is being scheduled, and the OPM will start working with the Council on Aging and the North Hadley Fire Substation Ad Hoc Committee.

Wage and Classification Study: In process.

Commonwealth Compact: The Town was awarded technical support for two projects: (a) development of a financial management team and (b) a safe route to school project. The Department of Revenue has notified us that the projects have been approved, and we will be notified of our next steps. I consulted with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue for an implementation schedule, and they advised that they are taking communities in sequence. Hadley is expected to be helped in late summer 2016. More recently, DOR has stated that they will commence work with Hadley in the next two weeks.

Electricity Net Metering Credit Agreement (Phase 2): The second solar installation on Mill Valley Road is nearing completion, and we are working with the developer, Nexamp, to implement the net metering credit agreement under SREC 2 for 30% of our municipal electrical load, resulting in a 16% discount on many municipal electrical accounts. (We already have a net metering credit agreement under SREC 1 resulting in a 21% discount for 70% of our municipal electricity.) Future savings over 20 years is estimated to be \$150,000 to 300,000. We expect this project to go live in the next 45 days.

Electricity Aggregation Project: The public notice period has concluded, and Good Energy will submit the Hadley electricity aggregation plan to the Massachusetts Department of Utilities. Once the DPU gives their approval, then Good Energy will conduct a bid process for electric rates. Assuming a favorable outcome, Hadley residential electricity users should start seeing a discount on their electricity bills.

Departmental Functions

Capital Improvement Plan Update: The updated five-year Capital Plan is being prepared, and will be presented to the Select Board, Capital Planning Committee and the Finance Committee at the next meeting.

State of the Town: The Select Board, School Committee, and Finance Committee are preparing materials for presentation at the public forum, scheduled for September 13. The results will help shape leadership decisions concerning the strategic five-year plan.

MS4 Stormwater Permit: Marlo Warner and I met with the Town of Amherst, PVPC, and a representative of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to continue coordinating a regional response to the MS4 stormwater permit, and I attended a PVPC orientation. The Town has applied for a new State Revolving Fund to pay for the cost of the new 5-year permit. There is another orientation meeting on Monday, October 3 at 10:00 a.m. at PVPC, which we intend to attend.

Compliance will require a coordinated effort by the Town of Hadley, as many departments share responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the permit. A coordinating meeting involving most of Hadley's departments and board is being arranged for the October department head meeting.

Public Records Law Update: The state has passed a law reforming public records law with an effective date of January 1, 2017. We have attended training to help Hadley comply with the new requirements. I will encourage department heads to participate in further training, and I will be bringing action items to the Select Board in the coming months.

Municipal Modernization Act Update: The Governor signed into law a wide-ranging overhaul of municipal laws in an effort to aid cities and town perform their functions more efficiently and effectively. The new legislation covers municipal finances, operations, assessing functions, enforcement, and procurement – to name a few broad categories of what the act covers. There are many new tools to help town improve their functions, and I will be bringing action items to the Select Board and Town Meeting in the coming months.

Upcoming Projects and Events

State Primary: September 8, 2016 at Hopkins Academy. Registered voters are encouraged to turn out.

Public Forum on Hadley's Future: September 13, 6:30 p.m., Hopkins Academy.

Fire Association Chicken BBQ: September 16 at Young Men's Club.

Wine Tasting and Tunes: September 22 at the Council on Aging.

Special Town Meeting: The next town meeting is October 27. A preview of the warrant articles will be offered on October 20.