



To: Town Council

Fr: Paul Bockelman
Town Manager

Dt: May 2, 2019

Re: Town Manager Report for May 6, 2019

Town Manager Update:

- Coffee with Town Manager: The next Cuppa will be on Friday, May 10th with Interim Finance Director Sonia Aldrich at Kelly's Restaurant. We will focus on the FY20 budget.
- Appointments:
 - I have referred my appointments for the Energy and Climate Action Committee to the Town Council on April 22nd.
 - I have interviewed candidates for the following boards and committees: Council on Aging, Historical Commission, Human Rights Commission, Leisure Services and Supplemental Education Commission, and Local Historic District Commission.
 - I am scheduled to interview candidates for the Conservation Commission.
 - Sitting with the designated Town Councilors, I will be interviewing candidates for the Participatory Budgeting Commission and Ranked Choice Voting Commission.
 - I and the Planning Director sat in on Councilor interviews for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals.
 - Attached to this memo is demographic data for all people who submitted a Community Activity Form (CAF) from December 1, 2018 through May 2, 2019. It lists the information provided by those who chose to answer the demographic questions.
- Community Participation Officers (CPOs):
 - The CPOs are working on a neighborhood cleanup day on May 4th from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. It's a busy day with a lot going on so we appreciate that most Town Councilors have volunteered to be the leaders at each of three locations:
 - North Amherst Meeting Point: [Mill River Recreation Area](#)
 - Central Amherst Meeting Point: [Outside of Jones Library](#)
 - South Amherst Meeting Point: [Amherst Montessori School Parking Lot](#)

- CPOs were at the Amherst Survival Center for Community Lunch last Friday and were able to recruit some volunteers.
- Town-Gown:
 - Strategic Partnership Agreement: Staff are meeting internally and with representatives of the University on a renewal of the Strategic Partnership Agreement negotiations.
 - Hampshire College: We continue to monitor the situation at Hampshire College. The Interim President confirmed that he expected the College to be roughly half the size it is currently – in terms of both students and staff – during the 2019-2020 academic year. The second round of layoffs was significantly smaller than anticipated with no faculty and 24 staff being let go. This is in addition to people who have resigned or found employment with a neighboring institution. Three of those staff members live in Amherst. I met with representatives from the three cultural institutions that surround the College (Yiddish Book Center, Hitchcock Center for the Environment, and Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art) to listen to their concerns and share the Town’s perspective. I look forward to continuing to have open lines of communication with Interim President Rosenthal.
- Sustainability:
 - The Town has worked with Eversource to secure three additional electric automobile charging stations at no cost to the Town. These stations will be located in the Pray Street parking lot, the Ann Whalen parking lot, and the lower level of the Boltwood garage adjacent to the two existing stations.
- Conservation and Development:
 - Valley Community Development Corporation held an informational meeting for immediate and close abutters on April 24th.
- Public Safety:
 - The Police Department has developed a pattern of behavior by the operators of Porta. Based on the Department’s investigations, the Board of License Commissioners revoked the restaurant’s license.
 - Recruitment for fighters to fill the two existing vacancies is moving forward with interviews held this week.
 - The Fire Department is seeking call firefighters.
 - The Fire Chief has taken the lead as the Town moves to review its operations to comply with OSHA standards, which now applies to municipalities.
- Human Resources:
 - We have initiated a search for the Director of Senior Services position.
 - Maria Racca submitted her resignation as a Data Analyst for the Town. She has worked for over 28 years and is instrumental in the development and production of the annual town budget. She has contributed greatly to the Town and knows as much about Town finances as anyone. She will be missed.
- Public Works:
 - Roadwork has begun on West Bay Road, a short stretch of sidewalk on East Pleasant Street (funded by Housing Choice funds), and completing the work on Main Street. This last project will be done after graduation so as not to interfere with local businesses. Work in Amherst Woods will continue, as well.

- Work on the multi-use path on East Hadley Road has begun. This is an important investment to serve an area with critical need. One of the goals is to create a safe route for users to get to the newly renovated Groff Park.
- Community Services:
 - LSSE: Working with the School Department, LSSE will again provide free breakfast and lunch to all day camp and sports program participants. Lunch will also be at Mill River Recreation Area via the UMass Food Trucks program. LSSE is also working with the School Department to ensure that no children are turned away from the School's summer program due to lack of resources.
 - Senior Center: I attended the Council on Aging meeting on May 2nd and discussed the work of the Town Council and the anticipation of the Director's retirement.
 - Health Department: The Health Department is working closely with the School Department educating the community about communicable diseases, especially measles which is one of the most contagious diseases. The Public Health nurse presented at the last Regional School District meeting. The Town and School District have established a good integrated system that has maintained excellent public health in the Town.

Major Capital Projects:

- North Common Restoration/Main Street Parking Lot: On hold.
- Groff Park: The play structures and equipment have been ordered. DPW has done great work in preparing the site and removing trees as per the design. Work has begun and we are hoping the project will be completed by July.
- DPW/Fire: Developing options for a site for the DPW.
- Schools: Awaiting word from the MSBA, which is due in December.

Project Update:

- East Street School: With the Council's vote on the East Street School, we are preparing a Request For Proposals, which will be issued within the next month.
- Station Road Bridge:
 - The Town submitted plans to the Department of Transportation on December 20th for the proposed temporary bridge. DOT has reviewed and returned comments with the latest comments coming from the hydraulic and design sections on March 25th. They state "Boston Bridge has reviewed your concept and considers it acceptable at this time." This acceptance is conditioned on addressing comments made previously by DOT. They note that the geotechnical report is still being reviewed in Boston. A bridge has been identified and has been purchased.
 - We have completed the bidding and procurement of a new bridge and will finalize the purchase the week of May 6th. We remain optimistic that the bridge can be obtained and installed by the end of May.
- Downtown Parking: The consultants are nearing completion on their parking utilization counts and have begun analysis of the data. The first public meeting was held April 11th

and about 30 people attended. Parking continues to be a major topic of discussion for the business community and general public.

- Puffer's Pond Parking and State Street Changes: DPW is preparing to do the work to change the direction of State Street and rationalize the parking around Puffers Pond.
- Mill Street Bridge: We anticipate the State will open the Mill Street Bridge in the very near future. There will be a ribbon-cutting and Town Councilors will be invited once we know the date from the State.
- North Amherst Library: I have integrated the proposed changes into the Town's capital plan in a future year. A group of residents has expressed interest in raising funds privately to help pay for this project.
- Downtown Recreation Working Group: No updates.
- Dog Park: The Dog Park Task Force submitted a grant application to the Stanton Foundation.
- Solar on the Landfill: No updates.
- Medical Marijuana: No updates.
- Recreational Marijuana:
 - Next round for retail were announced in April with proposals due by June 1st. I will use the same process as last time with the goal of signing HCAs (if any) in July.
 - A cultivation of marijuana establishment has been proposed for 555 Belchertown Road. A community outreach meeting was held on April 10th.
 - RISE on Meadow was approved by the state and will have its final inspection on May 6th. The may be open as soon as May 10th or 11th. Traffic and safety issues have been reviewed with the Police Department, Fire Department, and Department of Public Works.

Finances and Budget:

- Audit: The Town Council Audit Committee met with the Town's auditor on April 26th and reviewed the audit and management letter.
- Amherst Community Television: The Interim Finance Director and I appeared on Byline with Stan Rosenberg and discussed the budget. The "air" date is May 10th.
- Regional School District Budget: The Town Council reviewed the Regional School District budget separately. There was a public hearing on the budget on April 4th and the Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend the budget to the full Town Council. The Town Council approved the budget.
- FY19 Budget: We anticipate closing out FY19 with a balanced budget. There will need to be some transfers between departments to cover the snow and ice deficit of \$114,622. We will review these actions with the Finance Committee in June.
- FY20 Budget: Finance staff finalized work on the FY20 budget. We will be going with our plan to utilize Overlay Surplus funds to balance the budget. The full budget can be found here: www.amherstma.gov/budget and presentations on the budget will be made to the Town Council on May 6th and a more detailed presentation will be made at the Finance Committee's public hearing on May 21st.
- Community Service Funds: An RFP to establish a summer drop-in program at Groff Park will be issued the week of May 6th. This grant would go to a local nonprofit organization.

- PVTA Funding: I have agreed to a contract with the PVTA to extend the service with later runs on two routes (30 and 31) from May 10th to September 2nd. The cost to the Town is \$12,931.
- Room Occupancy Tax: On the Town Council agenda on May 6th. See associated memo.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- May 7th at 2:00 p.m. – Finance Committee – Public Safety, Community Services (posted as a full Town Council meeting)
- May 8th at 2:00 p.m. – Community Resources Committee Zoning 101 (posted as a full Town Council meeting)
- May 9th at 2:00 p.m. – Finance Committee – Schools and Library (posted as a full Town Council meeting)
- May 14th at 2:00 p.m. – Finance Committee – Conservation & Development, General Government (posted as a full Town Council meeting)
- May 16th at 2:00 p.m. – Finance Committee – DPW and Enterprise Funds (posted as a full Town Council meeting)
- May 20th at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- May 21st at 6:30 p.m. – Finance Committee public hearing on FY20 Budget (posted as a full Town Council meeting) – **Note: public hearing to be held in Bangs Community Center**
- May 23rd at 2:00 p.m. – Finance Committee – Capital Plan and CPAC (posted as a full Town Council meeting)
- May 27th – Memorial Day Holiday
- May 28th at 2:00 p.m. – Finance Committee
- June 3rd at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- June 10th at 6:30 p.m. – Public Forum on the Capital Improvement Plan
- June 17th at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- July 4th – Independence Day Holiday

Other events:

- May 18 – Downtown Live United Day
- May 22-26 – Town Fair
- June 13-15 – Taste of Amherst
- June 21 – Community Band concert
- July 18 – BID Summer concert series
- July 25 – BID Summer concert series
- July 26 – Community Band concert
- August 1 – BID Summer concert series
- August 8 – BID Summer concert series
- August 16 – Community Band concert
- August 27 – First Day Celebration
- September 19 – BID Block Party

Community Activity Forms

Demographic Information as Reported Voluntarily by the Applicants

December 1, 2018 through May 2, 2019

Community Activity Forms (CAFs) were submitted by 131 people from December 1, 2018 through May 2, 2019.

Of those people, 116 people filled out some or all of the optional demographic data.

A review of those 131 CAFs showed the following information:

- Age (113 answered this category):
 - 10 self-reported in the 18-29 age range;
 - 16 self-reported in the 30-39 age range;
 - 22 self-reported in the 40-49 age range;
 - 16 self-reported in the 50-59 age range;
 - 27 self-reported in the 60-69 age range;
 - 18 self-reported in the 70-79 age range;
 - 4 self-reported in the 80+ age range;
 - 18 left the field blank.
- Gender: (111 answered this category):
 - 56 self-identified as male;
 - 54 self-identified as female;
 - 1 self-identified as a transgender man;
 - 20 left the field blank.
- Racial/Ethnic Background: (94 answered this category):
 - 83 self-reported as White/Caucasian;
 - 3 self-reported as Black/African-American;
 - 1 self-reported as Hispanic/Latinx Descent;
 - 2 self-reported as Puerto Rican/Cuban
 - 2 self-reported as Indian-American;
 - 2 self-reported as Asian-American;
 - 1 self-reported as Salvadoran;
 - 37 left the field blank.

- Languages Spoken: (96 answered this category):

46 self-reported being proficient or familiar with one or more of the following languages (in addition to English):

- 26 in Spanish;
- 11 in French;
- 3 in German;
- 3 in Italian;
- 2 in Arabic;
- 2 in Bosnian;
- 2 in Croatian;
- 2 in Japanese;
- 2 in Latin;
- 2 in Russian;
- 2 in Serbian;
- 1 in Armenian;
- 1 in Farsi;
- 1 in Hebrew;
- 1 in Portuguese;
- 1 in Science;
- 1 in Yiddish;
- 14 multi-lingual (3 or more languages);
- 85 left the field blank.

