



To: Town Council  
Fr: Paul Bockelman  
Town Manager  
Dt: June 13, 2019  
Re: Town Manager Report for June 17, 2019

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### **Town Manager Update:**

- Coffee with Town Manager: The last Cuppa Joe with Paul was on June 14<sup>th</sup> at Jakes at the Mill with Assistant Town Manager David Ziomek. The next one will be on July 19<sup>th</sup> with location and guest to be determined.
- Appointments:
  - I have referred my appointments for the Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, Historical Commission, Human Rights Commission, LSSE Commission, and Local Historic District Commission to the Town Council.
  - There is one vacancy on the Participatory Budgeting Commission. It is a Town Manager appointment.
- Community Participation Officers (CPOs):
  - CPOs participated/organized the following community building events:
    - Juntos We Play - North Village Housing on June 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - Garden Party and Barbecue - Butternut Farms on June 1<sup>st</sup>
    - 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Human Rights Youth Heroism Awards – Mill River on June 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - Garden Party and Barbecue - Olympia Oaks on June 8<sup>th</sup>
    - Juneteenth Celebration – Jones Library on June 19<sup>th</sup>
  - CPOs continue to work with the Amherst Survival Center on an initiative named Feed Democracy.
  - CPOs have been attending meetings of the Residents' Advisory Committee.
- Eversource Work: Eversource will be replacing 26 high-tension wire structures along its right-of-way corridor. 14 of these structures are in the Town of Amherst. There will be no customer outages during this work, which will occur from July 1 to December 31. They are visiting abutters and others who may be impacted by the work.
- Town Hall and Workplaces:
  - The Town's Safety Committee continues to focus its efforts to ensure Town staff are safe in their work areas. Some of the steps we have taken include regular fire/evacuation drills, threat trainings, wound management, and others.
  - The Police Department is prepared to do trainings for the Town Council and other boards and committees at a time that is convenient for the Council.

- The Police Chief will be conducting an assessment of public areas of Town Hall and the Bangs Community Center. We will use this information to make further improvements.
- We are installing key-card system to replace the physical keys that are now in use. This has numerous advantages for convenience, flexibility, and safety. Towns staff are doing the work, saving thousands of dollars in contractor costs.
- Town-Gown:
  - Staff are meeting internally and with representatives of the University on a renewal of the Strategic Partnership Agreement negotiations. This will not be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup>, so we are discussing an extension with the University.
  - The University and Amherst College have been cooperative in sharing their fields this spring to cover the needs of the School Department due to the conditions of the Region's fields.
- Economic Development: The Economic Development Director is leading a discussion among staff to determine steps the Town can take to become, and be perceived as, business-friendly.
- Public Safety:
  - The Police Department has conducted its sergeant's test and I will be interviewing the six candidates who have scored the highest.
  - We have hired three police officers who will start at the Police Academy on July 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Fire Department had one resignation.
  - I have hired two firefighter/paramedics.
- Human Resources:
  - I will be appointing Sue Audette to serve as Temporary Town Clerk in accordance with Section 3.3(b) of the Town Charter.
  - Director of Senior Services Nancy Pagano will be retiring at the end of the month after 47 (!!!) years of service to the Town.
  - Principal Assessor David Burgess will retire at the end of this month.
  - Town Clerk and Clerk to the Council Margaret Nartowicz will resign effective June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - I am working with the Principal Assessor to develop options to fill this function after his retirement at the end of June.
- Public Works:
  - Roadwork is completed on West Bay Road. Residents of Applewood sent me photographs of their walking group making a safe crossing to Hampshire College. East Pleasant Street. Line painting is next on the list. Sidewalk work on Main Street, which was halted during the commencement weeks at the request of local business owners, has begun again and roadway paving is in the near future.
  - Work on the multi-use path on East Hadley Road continues. One of the goals is to create a safe route for users to get to the newly renovated Groff Park.
- Community Services:
  - LSSE:
    - Independence Day Fireworks will bring a lot of changes. Due to construction behind the stadium at the University, the viewing area has been moved to south of the stadium. LSSE, Police, Fire, and the University are reviewing traffic plans. LSSE is exploring the option of a beer garden that would be segregated from the viewing area but open to the public. It would be located in the Town of Hadley, so permits will be sought from that town. The University is supportive of this effort. It will be managed much like the beer garden at the Taste of Amherst.
    - Outreach: Special efforts to create programming in the community includes:

- Butternut Farms on June 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Olympia Oaks on June 8<sup>th</sup>
- Senior Center: The retirement reception for Director Nancy Pagano will be held on June 14<sup>th</sup>. It is certain to be a well-attended event.
- Health Department: The Health Director has taken a leadership role in the search for a new Director of Senior Services and will be supportive during the transition.
- Conservation and Development:
  - We are working to secure a grant to install a playground and other amenities at Kendrick Park.
  - There was a meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Jones Library about 40B.
  - The sustainability coordinator organized two well-run community involvement sessions under the State's Municipal Vulnerability Program. I, along with two councilors, attended one on June 8<sup>th</sup> at Crocker Farm School.

**Delegated Authority** (May monthly report):

- Short-Term Event Uses of Town Commons: None
- Short-Term Parking Requests: None
- Short-Term Road or Sidewalk Closures: None

**Major Capital Projects:**

- North Common Restoration/Main Street Parking Lot: On hold.
- Groff Park: Construction work continues. The construction company has completed grading and retaining wall/rocks are being put into place.
- DPW/Fire: Developing options for a site for the DPW.
- Schools: Awaiting word from the MSBA, which is due in December.

**Project Update:**

- Jones Library: The Trustees of the Jones Library received a bequest of \$273,000 and the Trustees voted to use the funds for the building project. Congratulations!
- East Street School: With the Council's vote on the East Street School, we are preparing a Request For Proposals, which is being reviewed.
- Station Road Bridge: The temporary bridge has been purchased and delivered. DPW is prepared to do the installation, which should take a couple of weeks, depending on the weather. We are awaiting final approval from the State Department of Transportation.
- Downtown Parking: Parking study is progressing. We anticipate a near-final draft in the coming weeks and the second public meeting later in June. The issue will likely come to the Town Council after Labor Day.
- Puffer's Pond Parking and State Street Changes: Work is nearing completion on the new road configuration on State Street. This change will start on June 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Mill Street Bridge: There was a ribbon cutting on Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at the site of the bridge. The Town's State Senator, State Representative, State Highway District Commissioner, Council President, Superintendent of Public Works and I all spoke.
- North Amherst Library: No developments.
- Downtown Recreation Working Group: The final draft of the report was delivered to the Group on Thursday. Final revisions are being made and will be shared out. The Regional School Committee will hold a meeting on this topic on June 25<sup>th</sup>.

- Dog Park: The Town's grant application to the Stanton Foundation was rated very highly. We anticipate funding so that the project will go out to bid in July. Council action may be needed to permit construction of parking within the public way.
- Solar on the Landfill: No updates.
- Medical Marijuana: Herbology on University Drive was approved by the ZBA for its special permit for both medical and recreational marijuana stores.
- Recreational Marijuana:
  - Next round for retail were announced in April with proposals due by June 1<sup>st</sup>. I will use the same process as last time with the goal of signing HCAs (if any) in July. The internal review group is reviewing all proposals.
  - The cultivation facility on Belchertown Road is moving forward with the applicant formally purchasing the land.

### **Finances and Budget:**

- Amherst Community Television: The Council President and Councilor Steinberg and I met with Amherst Community Television to discuss cable casting and recording Town Council meetings and committee meetings. There has been a reduction in staff at Amherst Media, but they are confident they will be able to meet the requirements of the contract.
- FY19 Budget: FY19 will be closed with a balanced budget. The Town Council is scheduled to vote on some transfers to cover snow and ice and other deficits. We will fund these items from surpluses in other accounts.
- FY20 Budget: The Finance Committee presented its recommendations to the Town Council on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. It will present its recommendation on capital and CPAC on June 17<sup>th</sup>. The Town Council has until June 30<sup>th</sup> to adopt a budget.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

- June 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council Open Meeting of the Residents at Bangs Center
- July 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- July 4<sup>th</sup> – Independence Day Holiday
- July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- August 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- August 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. – Town Council meeting
- September 2<sup>nd</sup> – Labor Day Holiday

### **Other events:**

- June 19 – JuneTeenth Celebration
- 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