

Andrea Miles, Chair
Jeff Cyr, Vice-Chair
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Lisa Wong
Town Administrator

***Town Administrator's Monthly Report
September 2024 - Supplemental***

Administration, Finance and Operations

- **Collector/Treasurer:** The tax title auction of 144 Pearl Street last month resulted in a winning bid of \$65k. The Town was able to recover almost all of the back taxes and fees, as well as pay for all of the auction and foreclosure expenses. The Town received payment of \$187,573 in back taxes for the property at 573 Granby Road, which brings them current.
- **Administration:** Performance Based Evaluations are being conducted for each employee with the aim to have most objectives set by the end of September.
- **State Earmark:** The Town is working on contract documents for the \$50k earmark for Ledges planning. The Town will work on the scope of services and procure a consultant this fall.

Building and Zoning

- **460 Amherst Road:** The Zoning Board of Appeals has made a finding to uphold the Building Commissioner's decision that the preexisting non-conforming use has not been abandoned.
- **Mount Holyoke College et al:** In cooperation with the District 2 Fire Department, inspections on all dormitories at the college were completed prior to the start of the fall semester. The positive working relationship between the department and the fire district has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the issuance of state mandated certificates. A similar relationship exists with District 1 and has helped similarly for all places of assembly throughout town.
- **Wayfinders:** Project has been renamed "The Clover", and will be promoted and marketed as such. The architect, Dietz & Company, submitted the project for building permit on 6/26/24 and financial closing process to take place over Dec 2024/Jan 2025. This is ultimately at the discretion of the State. Tentative construction start is looking to be early Q1 of 2025 with lease up in the Fall of 2026.

Human Resources

- **New Hires:** The Human Services Department has hired Maryana Hunter-Gasperini as the new Cafe and Kitchen Assistant at the Senior Center. She started on September 16, 2024, and has had various roles in food services, including Atkins Farms and Smith College.

- **Recruitments:** The Police Department is accepting applications for a Dispatcher, and the Building Department is accepting applications for a PT Local Building Inspector/Code Enforcement. For full details and to apply visit: <https://www.southhadley.org/jobs.aspx>
- **Senior Tax Credit Workers:** interested and eligible applicants can begin submitting applications beginning October 1, 2024 for a new round of assignments anticipated to start January 1, 2025. To apply and find more information: <https://southhadley.org/1396/Senior-Tax-Work-Off-Program>

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Planning and Conservation

- **MVP 2.0 Seed Project - Affordable Housing Trust:** The Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department is seeking a qualified consultant to assist the Town in the establishment of an Affordable Housing Trust. Town Meeting approved acceptance of MGL Chapter 44, Section 55C at the June 19, 2013 Special Town Meeting. However, thereafter, a Board of Trustees was never appointed by the Selectboard. Responses are due Sept 27.

Public Safety

- **Police Staffing Study:** Public Forum date is set for October 23 at 6pm at the Senior Center

State and Regional

- **PVTA:** The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority's released ridership data from its free fare summer. Systemwide fixed route ridership in August 2024 was 46.5% or over 200k rides higher than August 2023. Paratransit ridership in August was 2,789 or 19.19% higher over last August. PVTA surveyed 415 non-riders to assess perception and found: 79% have a good impression of PVTA, 88% feel PVTA is a necessary public service, and cited reasons for taking their car over transit such as confort, convenience, and that buses do not go where they want to go or are not frequent enough. PVTA joined several other Regional Transit Authorities in an application for fare free service on fixed route buses and the paratransit system. The avoided strike last month was resolved with a ratified contract with salary increases of 6%/4%/4%. PVTA is evaluating the impact on operations, especially in years 2 and 3.

Selectboard

- **Dangerous Dog Hearing:** The Town received a notice of appeal to appear on Sept 30. The date needs to be confirmed by both parties. Then if the Magistrate hearing goes in favor of the Town/Board's finding, the owners have the right to submit a further appeal to the District Court.
- **ARPA:** The Selectboard is finalizing decisions around the funds, which need to be voted on by the end of December 2024 and spent by December 2026.
- **Trash/Recycling Carts:** The Capital Planning Commission approved recommendations to Town Meeting to allocate up to \$740k towards the purchase of trash and recycling bins. The Selectboard will discuss the size of bins.