



June 17, 2016

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.

Tiger Trolley/PVTA; Recent reports from the Pioneer Valley Transportation Authority (PVTA) would demonstrate the Tiger Trolley (TT) continues to be a seriously underperforming community circulator route. The ridership is about half of what is needed to sustain the service by federal standards. Oddly enough the X90 which was originally slated to be a “temporary” bus through South Hadley while the Willamansett Bridge between Holyoke and Chicopee was undergoing repairs is increasing in popularity

As it stands now the X90 will remain coming across Memorial Drive (Route 33) in Chicopee down James to South Main in South Hadley and then over the Vietnam Veteran Memorial Bridge (116) to the Holyoke Transportation Center. As you know we have even been asked to add permanent bus stops near Town Hall. I take this as a good sign the route is safe from being dropped.

There has been communications with PVTA Director of Operations and Planning Josh Rickman about our discussion about rerouting the TT to the 116 bridge, as opposed to the 202 bridge as a means of increasing ridership. Josh explained he would make it a part of the Route Committee discussion, but as it is a substantial change to the existing route it would require an October public hearing. I will update you when I hear more.

On another PVTA note, I used the X90A today to drop my car off at the dealer for service and again to pick it up. It took about 25 minutes to go from the BJ's Plaza in Chicopee to Town Hall in South Hadley (the same for the reverse trip), it was a back twenty five both ways. I found the trip pleasant, the route map on the PVTA website easy to navigate, the drivers were very pleasant, the buses were clean, about fifteen other riders each trip, all in all not bad, but would not want to do it every day and commend those who choose to use mass transit or must use it every day. It was clear by my fellow rider's comments to each other, familiarity with the system or the drivers, they do use the service regularly and it is critical to them and their personal economic viability.

There were eight people at the corner of Pleasant and Main when I arrived at 8:45 waiting to go on to Holyoke, one person waited with me to access the return trip. Radom sampling at its best, but I would say there is a demonstrable need in South Hadley for mass transit.

Harper's Time and Attendance, July 1 we will move to the automated time and attendance system. I would like to thank Jennifer Wolowicz, Jackie Iskander, all the managers and staff who participated in the trainings. This system will expand to other sites outside of Town Hall in the near future, but we

continue to work the bugs out and understand all the advantages the system presents. In particular I am looking forward to the automated time off approval, as we leave yet another paper form.

We had test group for the last few months which included Claudia Frappier, Laura Krutzler and Maureen Cronin, thank you to each of the “test” subjects, as well. This system will allow us in the future to really drill down on time use, more accurately track leave and in general add a level of control to the payroll process. It also eliminates an input procedure which could potentially produce a human error and they are never cheap.

Performance Based Evaluation, The PBE’s have been consuming a great deal of time as of late, but are so important for me to have a more well-rounded understanding of the successes and challenges which face our department managers. The overwhelming majority of managers continue to hone their skills, it is not to say we have no blemishes or there is no work to do, but it seems to be going in a good direction.

One of the most difficult tasks in the process is trying to understand the responsibilities of each manager, recognize their skill sets and make a judgment as to how they truly fill their mission, without getting into personalities, likes or dislikes irrelevant to performance. Keeping the review on the up and up and tied to the goals set forth previously.

Training remains key and there has been an uptick in the last two years especially in regards to providing those tools. Every manager has attended some significant training this past year, either related to management or their craft. I will have the final written evaluation summaries for review by the end of July. Thank you to the department managers for the time they dedicate to this important task, on top of all the other responsibilities they are saddled with.

Pioneer Valley Bike Share, Last meeting I distributed the MOA for the South Hadley Selectboard to vote and sign, hopefully at this next meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity for South Hadley to move its profile ahead as a community which is committed to offering a diverse modality of transportation. Pedestrian and bike safety has risen in the public discussion in South Hadley. This is greatly due to the BWC and the Selectboard working together to gather the low hanging fruit and plan a strategy to pick from all the branches no matter how high when it comes safety for these forms of transportation.

The Town of South Hadley will be the fifth community to join and will be part of Phase II which reasonably will expectedly be a few years off, but the important issue is we are in line. This will be just another component part of the efforts, thanks to all the advocates.

DHCD Visit to the Falls, It was very exciting last week to have Laura Schaefer from DHCD Office of Sustainability walking and getting to know the Falls. The RDA members including, Chairman Tony Judge and Kathy McCabe from McCabe associates, were on hand to update Ms. Schaefer on the RD Planning. I spoke later with Laura and she was impressed with the concepts and the understanding of the volunteer RDA. She encouraged the group to use the resources in town department particularly the Planning Department and said she looked forward to the completed plan.

The content of the discussion will likely be part of the presentation scheduled for Tuesday evening. I know members of the Selectboard and the Planning Board are all anxious to grow their understanding of the plan and will add their input to the developing plan.

Western Mass Developers Conference, I recently spoke with Andy Yee who is working tirelessly to change the direction of the former Woodlawn Plaza (new name is being explored). Andy will be at the Western Mass Development Conference by way of an invitation from Governor Baker who will be the luncheon speaker. These are the types of connections where South Hadley benefits. Andy has great passion to make the retail center something which will serve and reflect the Town of South Hadley well.

We also will have 27 Gaylord Associates manning a booth to pitch their property to perspective developers. Selectboard members DeToma and Brezinsky, RDA members and our Planning Director Richard Harris will be at the Mass Mutual Center to pitch South Hadley. This is the type of gathering where you never know who or what you will come upon, but just being there is part of the battle.

Please note I will be off June 24 and June 27, but you can always reach me by phone. Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael J Sullivan

South Hadley Town Administrator