



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

December 8, 2020

Good evening:

Over the last several weeks we completed the Town Hall walk through of Departments which is posted on the website. Jaime Rooke filmed each office with their staff members and has prepared a video presentation which will help to inform the public about our internal functions while the buildings are closed.

My major focus this past month has been the posting, recruitment, review and vetting of Police Chief candidates, their resumes, including discussion with interview panel advisors and scheduling of the interviews which begin tomorrow on Dec. 9, 2020. Conversations with candidate's references, determination of interview process, drafting and tailoring of interview questions and solicitation of various departmental perspectives on community issues has been achieved through a series of conversations and communications all of which are designed to give perspective when selecting the successful candidate.

Interviews have also been scheduled for the Council on Aging Director position and a decision will be made by year's end regarding that position.

I have appointed Christine Johnston to the Town's Board of Health at the request of that Board. Ms. Johnston has a Masters in Public Health and is currently employed by Springfield College as the Assistant Director of the Alcohol and Other Drug Education and Health Promotion program.

I have also appointed Mr. Joseph Williams to the Housing Authority. Mr. Williams is employed in the banking industry as a portfolio manager in the commercial lending office of a local bank. Documentation relative to these appointments, which are subject to your review, has been forwarded for your consideration in advance of tonight's meeting.

The Financial team submitted the annual tax recapitulation to the Commonwealth and it was approved by the DOR on Dec. 1, 2020. Unfortunately, that office continues to struggle making progress on major projects, as so many time consuming tasks are in arrears and they are short staffed.

We continue to work collaboratively with Finance and Human Resources on a variety of long term projects, Capital Improvement Plan, Compilation of Fixed Assets, Master Plan, Employee Guidelines Handbook, and Financial policy updates, etc. The major delay affecting all of these projects is the inability to separate from the day to day matters that demand an immediate response. For example, a multitude of labor relations matters (7 or more) have required attention in the last month, many of which are Covid related questions. Further discussion of these and other matters may need to be scheduled for an Executive session in the new year if unresolved. The pandemic draws down our resources in many ways. Also, submission of fraudulent DUA claims under names of Town employees continues to demand a great deal of time by our HR Department.

There has also been considerable discussion over the last thirty days regarding the implementation of shared health services with Longmeadow, governed by the terms of an Inter Municipal Agreement, zoning bylaws, possible violations of Special permits, Animal Control reporting, scheduling of dangerous dog hearings, media inquiries etc. Work on these matters is continuing.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. McNally
Town Manager