



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

February 9, 2021

Good evening:

Since our last meeting, Police Chief Jeff Dalessio has officially retired and Chief Mark Williams has begun his employment with the Town. The transition was seamless and Chief Williams has begun an analysis of the Department's personnel, capital and operational needs. He has also proposed and I have approved a formal audit of the evidence room as a prudent action due to the transition.

Mary Beth Dowd, the Town's new COA Director has also taken her office. She has settled in nicely with staff and has continued the many programs to assist the community during Covid. The COA hosted the vaccine clinic on February 3, 2021. The COA has developed and prepared a monthly program, taped by ELCAT for broadcast to the community. Each month covers a variety of activities and is an uplifting and joyful presentation. Mary Beth has met with her Board and all staff and will assume management responsibility for the Town SWAP Program when it is reinstated. Additionally, she has assisted elders in need of health and social services in recent emergencies affecting them and is in process of grant research to obtain laptops for seniors.

Joan Iwanicki began her employment with the Town as the Human Resources Manager on February 1, 2021. She will be working with all HR matters and training with Elaine Grimaldi for a few days into February.

Negotiations are ongoing with the administrative labor Union which has an expired contract. This Union has requested mediation and I will report at the next Executive session on that progress as well as on the strategy for pending matters in litigation once I hear back from counsel retained for this purpose. PLH, the Plaintiff in the solar case has filed a new complaint against the Zoning Board of Appeals. The allegation is that the ZBA wrongfully failed to overturn the Planning Board's denial of site plan approval. The Town will be defended by Atty. Michael Pill.

Draft operational and capital budgets have been submitted recently by most Departments. They are being consolidated for evaluation and will be revised as necessary before submission to the Council or its Oversight Committee. Our free cash has been certified by the Commonwealth, the report was forwarded to you by email when received. The FY 20 audit was completed and received by Steve Lonergan. Once the audit and the management letter is received and reviewed, we will determine next steps regarding financing options for FY21 capital projects. The audit report also addresses and satisfies the bylaw requirement to audit the office of the Town accountant which became vacant during FY20.

The outdoor skating rink has opened and is being used by many Town residents on a schedule of 2 hour blocks devised by Donna Prather. Their efforts and those of the Recreation Commission cannot be overstated. The Director and her Deputy, Geordie Emmanuel, have submitted a plan to reorganize their Department's internal staffing structure to enhance Department operations. Their plan proposes (for initial consideration) a better use of Department resources by creation of a Program Coordinator position with enhanced responsibilities, such as budget development, marketing, publicity, special events attendance and management. Upgrading the software used by the Department for registrations and payments has eliminated the need for some of the labor intensive administrative tasks. As noted in a previous email, Geordie Emmanuel was named to the top 30 under 30 by the National Parks and Recreation publication.

The Town's Covid vaccination clinic for Phase 1 groups was successfully completed between Jan.11-22 at St. Michael's Hall. Phase 2 vaccinations have been authorized and will begin at the rate of 100 per week. We expect and hope that number will increase as more doses of vaccine are distributed to us. The Town will administer the vaccine one day per week at the COA. This process began on February 3, 2021 and was successfully completed through the efforts of the Health

Department, Fire Department and COA personnel.

We have received preliminary grant approval for the acquisition of two generators that I reported on some weeks ago. MEMA has approved our request and it has been forwarded to FEMA for final approval. However, the item will remain on our capital plan until final funding is approved.

I have formed a Capital Advisory Committee to review and make recommendations regarding capital projects for FY 22. Ryan Quimby will again serve as Chair and we will begin our review in mid-February. In addition to Ryan, there are two council members, Michael Kane and Ralph Page, and two members of the community, Jim Broderick of the Finance Oversight Committee and Kristi Reale, a CPA and partner in a local accounting firm. Steve Lonergan and I will also participate in the meetings.

The Planning Board revoked the Special Permit of Pampered Pets on North Main Street after a hearing on January 19, 2021. There is information previously transmitted to the Council regarding the issuance of kennel licenses in Town.

Compilation of information for the 2020 Town Annual report is underway by all departments.

Remaining areas of library will be carpeted soon due to generosity of Friends of Library, probably at the end of February or early March. I attended their Board meeting on Feb. 1, 2021 to thank them for the gift and explain some of the policies and priorities of the Capital Planning aspect of the Town's budget. They were appreciative and expressed a willingness to continue cooperative efforts in the future.

The Town Fire and Police Departments participated in an Honor Guard for MSgt. Scott Blais on January 28, 2021. Many Town residents lined Maple Street which served as the procession route as MSgt. Blais' remains were escorted back to East Longmeadow following his death on January 17, 2021 while on a training mission in Hawaii.

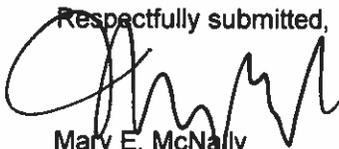
The Eastern Hampden District of the Department of Veterans Services Board meeting was held on January 28, 2021. Plans are underway for Mr. John Comerford to make a video presentation, broadcast through Elcat to explain the services provided by his office and the limitations thereon.

The Master Plan Steering Committee is also meeting on a continuing basis, working on a new Master Plan through the auspices of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission grant. A visioning session is planned for Saturday, February 13, 2021 from 10-12 by zoom. It is hoped that many Town residents will participate in that meeting to give the Town the benefit of their input about the issues that will be incorporated in the Master Plan.

The Department Heads had a very collegial meeting on January 29, 2021 during which they provided updates to the group regarding ongoing projects and activities in their respective areas of responsibility.

The Board of Directors for Westcomm met twice this week, to review and revise the District Agreement and also to review the FY 22 budget and finalize details on purchase of former Salter College building in Chicopee for an operations center.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary E. McNally
Town Manager