



**Shaun A. Suhoski**, Town Manager  
Email: [ssuhoski@townofathol.org](mailto:ssuhoski@townofathol.org)

**Heather J. Brissette**, Administrative Asst.  
Email: [selectmen@townofathol.org](mailto:selectmen@townofathol.org)

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen  
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager  
RE: Town Manager Update  
DT: November 3, 2015

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Dear Board: Please see the following update for your meeting tonight.

**Special Town Meeting Warrant:** The Board is requested to include two articles for the December 7 Special Town Meeting: (1) to transfer funds for the initial payment of \$100,000 towards the settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency relative to the cleanup of lead contamination at the former rod and gun club, and (2) to transfer the duties of the Planning Board to the Board of Planning and Community Development (which would become the “de facto” planning board for the Town) as allowed under Chapter 9 of the Town Charter. The requested articles and my rationale document are attached.

**Community Compact Application Pending:** We received the following response from Sean Cronin, Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services, relative to the Town’s Community Compact application that was filed on September 28. His message was sent to 130 cities and towns that have applied for the designation.

*I wanted to provide you with an update regarding your Community Compact application. We have received over 130 applications, so the review has taken somewhat longer than we originally anticipated. I assure you that your application is under active review and, in most cases, the relevant state agency / agencies have contacted you. In some cases, the complexity of the application requires some back and forth with the community, which adds to the review time. Once we approve your application, it will be forwarded to the Lt Governor’s office. Her office will then be in contact with you about setting up a compact signing.*

*Thank you for your application and interest in the Community Compact Cabinet initiative. We look very much forward to working with you on the best practices that will be part of the compact between your community and the Commonwealth. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding your application.*

*Sean R. Cronin  
Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services  
Division of Local Services*

Athol’s application focused upon best practice planning for housing and economic development, and (optional) best practices in regionalization and shared services. Once the compact is approved and signed the Town would be eligible for technical assistance in these categories and will receive bonus points or consideration in a myriad of grant programs. A copy of our narrative is attached for your reference.



**Town-owned Property Auction:** The Town is working with Paul T. Zekos to set-up an auction of Town-owned property. We hope to finalize a date in December that works for the auctioneer and our tax title attorney prior to the holidays.

It appears that we will auction roughly one dozen properties running the gamut from the Maroni Building, to vacant lots, to a former car dealership to four single family homes. Here is the preliminary listing of properties (see additional detail attached):

- 1) Exchange Street (Parcel 30-244): vacant, paved area used for parking by private sector abutters
- 2) Exchange Street (Parcel 30-253): vacant, overgrown lot between Maroni Building and Steel Pub
- 3) 25 Exchange Street (Parcel 30-250): vacant commercial building showing signs of deterioration
- 4) 40 Maple Street (Parcel 23-94): vacant lot (house demolished); developer interested
- 5) Off White Pond Rd. (Parcel 51-30): vacant 17.36 acres of land abutting Route 2
- 6) Union Street (Parcel 13-171): vacant land; steep slope to Miller's River
- 7) Main Street (Parcel 32-266): vacant lot; likely unbuildable; wet; between CVS and Dona's Pizza
- 8) 232 Pequog Ave. (Parcel 13-155): single family house
- 9) 104 So. Athol Rd. (Parcel 29-37): single family house
- 10) 209 South Street (Parcel 30-346): single family house
- 11) 232 South Street (Parcel): single family house (landlocked behind 224 South Street)
- 12) 156 Daniel Shays Hwy. (Parcel 18-90): former car dealership

**INFORMATIONAL: Reorganization of Building and Wiring Departments:** Attached for review is a proposal that I plan to present at your next meeting to streamline the organizational structure of the code inspection departments and staff.

In short, a Dept. of Inspectional Services would be created with the Building Inspector as the department head, serving as the administrative supervisor to the Office Manager, Wiring Inspector, Gas / Plumbing Inspector, any other alternate inspectors and the Sealer of Weights and Measures. The FY17 budget would reflect this change. Under the Town Charter this reorganization requires Board of Selectmen approval. I am requesting it be scheduled for discussion and vote at your November 17 meeting.

**Miscellaneous Items:**

- Attended EDIC, BPCD and Planning Board meetings regarding STM article; also discussed transfer of certain school buildings to EDIC for future use planning/disposition.
- Met with Licensed Site Professional and DPW Supt. Doug Walsh concerning status of MassDEP issues at former Rod & Gun Club; discussed same with second LSP during Montachusett brownfield tour.
- Attended Heywood Healthcare ceremony concerning acquisition of Petersham property for the North Quabbin Retreat.
- Attended MART finance and advisory board meetings.
- Held Finance Team meeting and additional meeting with new ARRSD business manager Lynn Bassett and Superintendent Tony Polito.
- Read "Yoko" to Mrs. Arpide's second grade class at Pleasant Street School for Community Reading Day.
- NOTE: New LED School Zone (20 mph) signage installed on Pleasant Street; prior school zone signs re-used for Lake Ellis Road.

