



Shaun A. Suhoski, *Town Manager*
Email: ssuhoski@townofathol.org

Heather J. Brissette, *Administrative Asst.*
Email: selectmen@townofathol.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
RE: Town Manager's Report
DT: March 22, 2016

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

Budget Update: I have distributed the latest revenue projection for the FY17 budget. There are a couple of items that remain in flux, but, this represents a likely target so long as the state legislature does not reduce the proposal aid allocations from the Governor. I look forward to presenting a balanced budget proposal for the Selectboard and FWAC on April 5.

South Athol Road Demolition: The Town received two bids for the demolition and I awarded the contract to Mallet Excavating, LLC, of Athol, for the low bid amount of \$26,040. The contract documents are being processed and I anticipate the work to be complete within 60 days. Town Counsel will file a lien for the final cost of work against the property which appears to be headed towards a tax title status.

Director of Planning and Development: I am pleased to announce the appointment of Eric R. Smith, AICP, as the Town's next Director of Planning and Development. Mr. Smith emerged from a field of roughly 20 candidates that were screened to three finalists. I recently interviewed each of the finalists – who also made informal appearances before the Board of Planning and Community Development – and reviewed writings samples from the two candidates that provided same. He begins on April 11 and will attend your second meeting of that month.

Mr. Smith has a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Michigan as well as a bachelor's degree with a double-major in geography and environmental studies from Western Michigan University. More importantly, he has a mix of small town planning experience (nearly ten years in Mashpee and Ashburnham) as well as positions with regional planning commissions (currently he is principal planner with the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission in Worcester).

He brings expertise in zoning and Mass. land use regulations as well as strong research, writing and consensus-building skills as demonstrated by successful collaboration with the Cape Cod Commission during his tenure in Mashpee. Athol will be well-served by this individual.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Continued contract negotiations with four unions.
- Attended Capital Planning Committee meeting.
- Convened development review group for Heywood Healthcare's planned expansion of Athol Hospital.
- Met with Finance Team regarding budget development.
- Met with Guardian Energy to scope out lighting improvement projects in partnership with NGRID incentive program.
- Attended "All Boards" meeting at Athol-Royalston Middle School.