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MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
RE: Town Manager's Report
DT: July 19, 2016

Dear Board: Please see the following update:

Treasurer/Collector Appointed: As the Board is aware, following a reopened search, I have appointed **Melissa A. Murphy**, of Bernardston, to the position of Treasurer/Collector subject to obtaining the required surety bond.

Ms. Murphy is currently the payroll coordinator and assistant treasurer for the Erving School Union #28 (comprised of four elementary schools) since 2014. She also served as the part-time town treasurer in Bernardston for a year and has completed the first component of classes for certification (she will complete the second of three installments this summer). She has prior experience in the banking world.

Ms. Murphy had excellent references and was very knowledgeable in two interviews including principal assessor **Lisa Aldrich**, interim Treasurer/Collector **Barbara Barry**, town accountant **Christine Mailloux** and the Town Manager. She begins her duties on Monday, August 8 with an annual salary of \$62,606.96 (Grade 15, Step 2).

I want to thank assistant treasurer **Bridget Jowder**, and assistant collector **Susan Sargeant**, for stepping up their efforts during this difficult period and for also embracing several reforms in office procedures.

Legislation Approved for Special Revenue Accounts: State Rep. **Susannah Whipps Lee** and state Sen. **Anne Gobi** announced that the Governor had signed into law two initiatives that establish a pair of special revenue funds for the town of Athol, namely, (1) a fund for recycling proceeds from receivership or rehabilitation loans, grants or appropriations, and (2) a fund for recycling proceeds from demolition liens, grants or appropriations.

These funds may be expended by the Town Manager in consultation with the Vacant and Abandoned Building Committee and will require an annual report to the Board of Selectmen.

Establishment of the special revenue funds (rather than the prior revolving fund) was a recommendation of the MassDOR with respect to the demolition program, and, the receivership fund will now allow the Town to repurpose the HomeCorps grant funds back into property stabilization.

Receivership Reimbursement: At the Board's last meeting a policy decision to buy-out the Montachusett Enterprise Corp. receiver's \$12,363.22 lien on 1768 Main Street was voted and since implemented. One argument made was that keeping MEC financially stable would allow the continuation of receivership action and additional reimbursements.

Since then, the Town has already received an additional reimbursement of HomeCorps grant funds through the MEC; this time in the amount of \$32,470.39 as the bank holding the mortgage at 41 Lewis Street has paid off the receiver's lien and reacquired control of the now rehabilitated property. Hopefully, the improved property can be sold by the bank and returned to active use.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Met with staff from DHCD invited by planning director relative to downtown planning grants.
- Met with school superintendent and facilities manager regarding timeline and process for cleanout of abandoned elementary school buildings.
- Attended school building committee meeting.
- Completed second interview and reference checks for new Treasurer/Collector.
- Conducted second walk-through of Pleasant Street School with MOC Head Start.
- Further worked on draft RFP for three in-town elementary school buildings (target date to Selectboard is August 8).
- Held monthly department head meeting.