



Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
RE: Town Manager Update – Week Ending 1/16/15
DT: January 20, 2015

Dear Board,

Please see the following update including an action item request to call a special town meeting.

Request for Special Town Meeting: Attached is a timeline prepared by the Town Clerk that would accommodate a Special Town Meeting on **Monday, March 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.** in Memorial Hall. The Clerk has confirmed the availability of the Moderator. I currently have four warrant article requests which need to be timely decided, namely,

- 1) Request for Town Meeting authority to file special legislation to create a “special revenue fund” for Recaptured Funds from Demolition Liens or Related Grants,
- 2) Request for Town Meeting authority to file special legislation to create a “special revenue fund” for Recaptured Funds from Rehabilitation or Receivership Property Liens or Related Grants, and
- 3) Request that the Town to adopt the provisions of MGL c. 64G, §3A for a six (6%) percent excise on hotel and motel rooms, and
- 4) Request that the Town vote to adopt the provisions of MGL c. 64L, §2 to impose a local sales tax upon the sale of restaurant meals originating within the Town (by statute 0.75 percent).

The first article relates to the Mass. DOR report (page 27) suggesting that the revolving fund for vacant and abandoned buildings should have been created through special legislation. The second article would create a special revenue account for any recaptured funds through the receivership grant.

The third and fourth articles would initiate the framework for new revenue in future fiscal years as described in a memorandum dated January 7 and attached hereto. These local revenue sources will be vital to the Town’s ability to maintain level services in FY16 and beyond. There is a May 1 deadline for adoption if the program is to be implemented on July 1, 2015 (FY16).

Also, because of the need to finalize the Town’s FY16 budget proposal by April (for the Annual Meeting), this decision will either allow a projection of \$85,000 in new revenue – or not – for the FY16 budget.

Recommended Action: *that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting for Monday, March 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Memorial Hall and open the warrant. Further that said warrant shall close on Thursday, January 29 at 4:00 p.m.*

Beyond those four articles, I have queried department heads as to any other needs at this time. The only outstanding item may be whether the Memorial Building Committee seeks stabilization funds for all or part of the necessary repairs to Town Hall.

A joint meeting of the MBC, FWAC and CPC is being held at 6:00 p.m. in advance of the Board of Selectmen's meeting and more information may be forthcoming.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Attended public auction of town-owned properties yielding in excess of \$200,000 gross proceeds. A final tabulation will be provided after the 30-day window for closings has passed.
- Held coordination meeting with acting Fire Chief and Building Commissioner re: state request for information on Providence Cliff House and sent email response regarding same.
- Attended MART Finance and Advisory Board meetings.
- Met on site with Building Commissioner, Community Development Director and owners of proposed micro-brewery to be located in former Plotkin warehouse on Marble Street.
- Met with Chief Anderson regarding future staffing levels due to potential retirements.
- Met with Finance Team (response to MassDOR report is under development) and attended Capital Planning Committee's first meeting for FY16.
- Held first meeting (ground rules) with police union.
- Participated in ARRS strategic plan finance sub-committee meeting. The sub-committee has identified the high "choice out" numbers from the district – at a cost of over \$2.2 million – as a primary concern that must be addressed in the new strategic plan.
- Attended North Central Mass. Development Corp. presentation on its manufacturing survey of north central Mass.

W/E	SAT.	SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WEDS.	THURS.	FRI.	TOTAL
1/16/15			9.0	12.0	9.0	11.0	4.0	45.0