



Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager  
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**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen  
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager  
RE: Town Manager’s Report  
DT: June 21, 2016

Dear Board: Please see the following update:

**Town Awarded \$593,022 in Community Development Block Grant Funds:** Planning and development director **Eric Smith** and I were joined by grant consultants **John Ryan** and **Linda Overing** to receive the Town’s latest CDBG award.

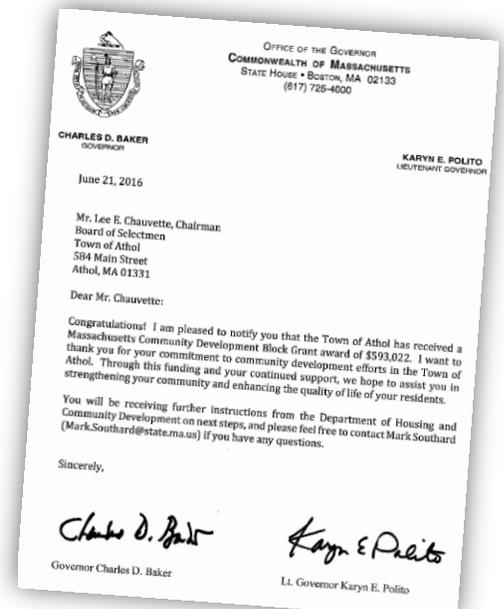
These funds will allow the final phases of work in the Grove and Highland Street neighborhood to be completed and will bring the infrastructure improvements down to Main Street Ext. and the Upper Common.

I offer a “thank you” to Linda and John for their continued excellence in developing and implementing Athol’s CDBG applications in an increasingly competitive environment.

**Technology Grant:** As briefly discussed at your last meeting, the Town has received notice from the Executive Office of Administration and Finance that our grant application for \$13,440 to replace various computer workstations and initiate IT planning has been approved. The state awarded \$2 million against requests totaling \$16 million from across the Commonwealth.

Working with **Kala Fisher** and our IT consultant I noted that the municipal inventory of PC workstations included nearly a dozen aged four years or older; all of which will be replaced. I am also in discussion with the regional school superintendent about an MOU to share IT services at a reduced cost while also improving planning and procurement with greater economies of scale.

**South Athol Road and Route 2 Interchange:** **Doug Walsh**, Athol’s representative to the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee, confirmed that the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has approved my request for planning assistance relative to



developing a new interchange with Route 2 that will serve the Town in the decades to come. The project is tentatively budgeted at \$45,000 (Federal Highway Administration @ \$36,000 and MassDOT @ \$9,000).

This is an example of why it is important for Athol delegates to participate in the various regional committees to which we may be assigned as it builds stronger relationships and can help to advance projects within the smaller communities of the planning area.

### Miscellaneous Items:

- Conducted pre-construction meeting with Guardian Energy and COA director **Cathy Savoy** relative to LED lighting retrofit at Senior Center and for Lord Pond Plaza parking area (program for LED retrofit of Town Hall still under negotiation as it may require cash subsidy).
- Met with potential hotel investors and agent from national hotel chain, EDIC chairman **Jim Meehan**, developer **Steve Goodman**, broker agents from Sullivan & Hayes, and North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce executive director **Mark Wright** and tourism director **Mia Haringstad** re: EDIC land at Exit #18 and potential location.
- Attended regional economic development study forum at Red Apple Farm with representatives from Athol to Ayer.
- Participated in steering committee meeting for a proposed community development corporation initiated by the North Quabbin Community Coalition.
- Attended Heywood Healthcare's presentation at Athol Library outlining substantial new investment in Athol and North Quabbin region (note: site plans for 52,000+/- ft<sup>2</sup> hospital expansion have been formally filed with the Board of Planning and Community Development, Conservation Commission and Zoning Board).
- Completed preparations for and attended Annual Town Meeting. I wish to especially thank **Heather Brisette** for her consistently good work on the warrant and motions along with **Nancy Burnham** and town counsel **Mark Goldstein**.
- Participated in monthly meeting with the Friends of the Senior Center.
- Met with Athol LLC full partnership including Steve Goodman, **Michael Friedman** and **Ezra Katz**, together with Jim Meehan.
- Attended North Quabbin Community Coalition annual meeting.
- Completed contract extension for transfer station manager **Larry Adams** through December 2017.
- Attended School Building Committee meeting (project at substantial completion).
- Met with Dept. of Housing & Community Development senior staff to discuss Athol's longer-range vision for CDBG and downtown reinvestment.

