



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: January 3, 2017

Dear Board: Please see the following report for your meeting on January 3:

Water Treatment Plant Chlorination System Upgrades: Following recommendation of the Supt. of Public Works, Water and Wastewater Manager and project engineers Tighe & Bond, I have awarded the contract for this project to Winston Builders Corporation for the base bid of \$248,889 and the contract documents have been prepared. This was the lowest of the following four bids received:

Contractor	Base Bid	Deduct Alt. #1 (NaOH System)
Winston Builders Corporation, Westboro, MA	\$248,889.00	(\$51,000.00)
Bay State Regional Contractors	\$270,993.00	(\$15,000.00)
Dankris Builders Corporation	\$349,800.00	(\$117,800.00)
Pride Environmental	\$439,252.00	(\$86,737.00)

This will be a major improvement to the chlorine-based disinfectant delivery system from both a safety and operational standpoint. The contract allows for 120 days from January 9 to reach substantial completion with project close-out expected no later than the end of June.

Municipal Modernization Act: Local Speed Limits: Included in your packets is information from MassDOT relative to a change in state law that gives towns (through their boards of selectmen) greater discretion on establishing speed limits within town boundaries, including:

- 25 mph** speed limit in any thickly settled or business district (currently 30 mph)
- 20 mph** speed limit in approved “safety zone” (currently none applicable)

The Fire Chief, regional school district Superintendent and Athol Hospital leadership all expressed interest in exploring a reduced speed limit along that portion of Main Street and the traffic safety team (police chief, fire chief, public works superintendent, town manager) met in December to begin discussion on the topic.

The purpose of introducing this topic is to gauge the interest of the Board in establishing a town-wide 25 mph speed limit for all thickly settled or business district areas, and, more specifically, to further explore designating the Main Street corridor from the high school to the hospital as either a “safety zone” (with a 20 mph limit) or confirming its status as a “thickly settled” or “business district” and adopting the 25 mph speed limit.

If the Board has an interest in advancing this discussion, the traffic safety team can develop a recommended process that includes public input for the Board’s later consideration.

(Interestingly, through discussion with MassDOT, we have learned that the reason there is no “School Zone” designation for the high school is due to the fact that such zones are only available to schools housing students up to grade eight.)

Energy Conservation Projects: Further to the efforts of the Energy Committee and legwork of Planning Director Eric Smith to salvage Green Community grant funding, I executed a contract with B2Q to manage the following energy efficiency projects, all of which are grant funded:

- Public Works Garage New Hot Water Heating Pipe Insulation (600+/- feet)
- Millers River Environmental Center New Hot Water Heating Pipe Insulation (300+/- feet)
- Millers River Environmental Center Boiler Hot Water Temperature Re-set Controller

B2Q is the project expeditor that will oversee the completion of the work by subcontractors in conjunction with the building managers.

MART Advisory Board Report: The FY16 audit of the Montachusett Area Regional Transit Authority (MART) through the period ending June 30, 2016 has been completed by Stowe & Degen and found no issues of non-compliance. A copy is in the Board’s office for review.

Also at the Advisory Board meeting in December, it was announced that the new Wachusett Station commuter rail link at Route 2 and 31 in Fitchburg is now operational with a 360-space parking area. There are shuttle buses available from Gardner to the station as well. For more information log on to MART’s Web site <http://www.mrta.us/about/locations/commuter-rail-parking> or call 978-345-7711.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Met with Director of Planning and Development and Chamber of Commerce Executive Director regarding potential grant for downtown development
- Reviewed health insurance options with Finance Team (researching options to bring before IAC to contain costs in FY18)
- Met with Memorial Building Committee to begin assessing capital needs and general building maintenance; Staff-level discussion regarding same
- Requested de-briefing session with state MassWorks grant staff to plan for summer 2017 funding round; meeting to be scheduled in February.