



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: December 20, 2016

Dear Board: Please see the following report for your meeting on December 20:

MRPC Route 2 Studies: An organizational discussion led by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) to review the proposed scopes of work for the following two studies was held in Liberty Hall on Monday morning:

- A feasibility study for a new interchange at South Athol Road and Route 2, and
- A “before and after” look at Route 2 safety improvements and crash data along a longer stretch of Route 2 that includes Athol.

Representation from public works, fire, police, planning, selectmen and MassDOT were present. The MRPC will work with local officials and the scope of work will yield various alternatives for consideration. There is no pre-determined outcome. There will be public meetings held as information is developed by MRPC.

As noted in my report on December 5, I plan to request the planning board and town planner initiate a review of zoning along the South Athol Road corridor as well as other key commercial routes (Route 2A, Route 32 south of Millers River, and Daniel Shay's Highway) to facilitate preferred future beneficial use.

An additional interchange with Route 2 would be a prime long-term achievement for the town of Athol as traffic increases with development at Exit 18, in my opinion.

Request for Proposals: Ellen Bigelow and Riverbend Schools: There were no formal responses to the RFP for these school buildings. Both NewVue Communities and HAP Housing advised that they were not able to submit at this time, but, expressed a continuing interest in the properties. I recommend we seek additional feedback from the developers and look to revisit an RFP with a spring 2017 timeline.

Sanders Street School: As the Board is aware, the Municibid auction for this property did yield at least three bidders, however, the old deed references to the former pond and brook require a new metes and bounds description. We are getting costs and will need to determine whether funds are available in the current fiscal year to update the plan and property bounds. I'll report back on this early in 2017.

Pleasant Street School: The reuse committee held its first meeting and is gathering information on the property. In the meantime, the DPW assisted in contacting a plumber to winterize the property and I have notified the Police Department of the various vacancies so patrols can be watchful.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Conducted Department Head meeting; discussed FY18 budget environment
- Safety Team and Traffic Safety group met for initial discussion on new law allowing cities and towns to establish reduced speed limit zones within the community (information sheet to be distributed for future discussion)
- Attended Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting organized by Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director John Duguay
- Participated in scoping session for MRPC-initiative to secure federal Economic Development Administration grant for industrial / business space inventory including conceptual plans
- Met with Finance Team re: budget matters
- Attended Pleasant Street Reuse Committee meeting
- Attended FWAC meeting
- Attended Senior Center luncheon and holiday music event
- Met with Housing Task Force regarding two properties of concern