



**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  
DT: April 21, 2015

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Dear Board,

Please see the following update through April 21.

**Establish New Health Insurance Contribution Rate for New, Non-union Employees:** As part of the Town's effort to contain the skyrocketing cost of the health insurance budget item, I am requesting that the Board of Selectmen vote to establish a new health insurance premium contribution rate for new, non-union employees of 70 percent effective immediately and that no "indemnity" plan option be made available.

Thereafter, new non-union employees would contribute 30 percent of the cost of the Town's HMO plan offerings.

Discussions with the collective bargaining units are ongoing regarding current employees, however, the change for new, non-union employees is a policy matter for the Board of Selectmen. It will also clearly define the desired policy outcome with respect to future employees who will have the benefit of considering the health insurance contribution rate prior to accepting employment. The 70 percent contribution rate is near median for MIIA communities and remains competitive.

***Suggested Motion:*** I move that the Board of Selectmen establish a 70 percent contribution rate towards the Town's HMO plan offerings – and eliminate the "indemnity" plan option – for all non-union employees hired on or after April 22, 2015.

**Templeton Road Water Pressure:** Residents that were "bypassed" by the water main extension and booster station project on Templeton Road came before your Board previously to discuss their dismay at the apparent change in location of the booster station that precluded any improvements to water pressure. In response, DPW Supt. Doug Walsh, Water Dept. manager Andy Tessier and I met with the impacted neighborhood (invitations sent to each of the six properties bypassed and on the Town water system) with three property owners attending.

The residents made a strong case for mitigation and the team recommends a limited program to provide a maximum reimbursement of \$2,500 per property (maximum obligation \$15,000) for installation of measures to increase their water pressure. If authorized by your Board, the Town Manager – with Town

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Counsel drafting the appropriate release and waiver language – would make this program available to the impacted properties within the existing available funds.

**Surplus Property Designation:** Last fall your Board authorized disposition of a roll-top desk and safe from the Town Hall. These items generated over \$500 and have been removed from the building. There remain several unused, unneeded desks and miscellaneous furniture in Liberty Hall that should be declared surplus and which will then be disposed of to the highest bidder.

***Suggested Motion:*** *I move that the Board of Selectmen declare the several wooden desks and miscellaneous items located in Liberty Hall to be surplus property and to further authorize legal disposition of same by the Chief Procurement Officer or its designee.*

**Miscellaneous Items:** Some other items include:

- Reviewed and issued reappointment letters to incumbent board and committee membership interested in continued service.
- Completed formal contracts with Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief.
- Participated in mediation session through Mass. Agricultural Mediation Program relative to Brandywine Farms (Silver Lake School).
- Attended Finance and Warrant Advisory Committee meeting.
- Met with Montachusett Enterprise Commission and BOH Agent regarding status of receivership program properties.
- Conducted additional Finance Team meetings regarding budget and investment policies (for May 5 meeting).

W/E	SAT.	SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WEDS.	THURS.	FRI.	TOTAL
4/17/15	3.0		9.0	12.5	10.0	9.0		43.5