



Selectboard Chair Greg Sheehan and Jennifer Wolowicz  
The Personnel Officer acts as the professional advisor to  
the Personnel Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer L. Wolowicz  
Personnel Officer/Chief Procurement Officer

## **Information Technology (IT) Department**

The Information Technology department continues to fulfill its crucial role of supporting the Town's current information technology and planning ahead to meet its future technology needs. As noted in last year's report, in FY 2008, the Selectboard formed a Technology Committee to review and assess present technology and advise the Selectboard on the design and purchase of new technology. The committee was broken down into subcommittees in the areas of Customer Service, Infrastructure and Security, MUNIS, GIS, Staff Training, Interdepartmental Communications, and Website Development. The twelve-member committee met twice and, among other things, researched the cost and benefits of various options for providing internet connectivity in the years ahead. Some of the options discussed include a fiber optic network to be provided by SHELD, a VPN network, and retaining the current internet access provided by Comcast. Obtaining wireless internet access for Town Hall was identified as a high priority.

The town's website ([www.southhadley.org](http://www.southhadley.org)) continues to serve as a resource to residents and a clearing house for information on local news and events. On March 19, 2009, Common Cause of Massachusetts recognized South Hadley's commitment to providing access via the internet by awarding the town an e-Government award. To qualify, a town or city must post their governing body's agenda and minutes, budget information, general by-laws, and town meeting warrants and results. South Hadley was one of 119 municipalities throughout the Commonwealth to meet these criteria. As this Town Report went to press,

Town Meeting members had voted to create a Town Meeting Electronic Communication Advisory Committee to make recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of electronic communications to Town Meeting members. The IT Department looks forward to working with this group to implement their recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,  
Daniel J. Evans  
Information Technology Director

## **Intervenor Status Committee**

The Intervenor Status Committee (ISC) was formed by the Board of Selectmen in 1995 to advise the Town on the relicensing of the hydroelectric facilities at the Holyoke Dam. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a new license to the Holyoke Water Power Company (HWP) for the Project in August 1999. Subsequent to issuance of the license, the dam and the license were transferred in 2001 from HWP to Holyoke Gas & Electric (HG&E). As a result of the efforts by the ISC and other Town officials, the license included certain conditions binding on the license holder which affect the Town regarding Channel Marking, the Texon Building redevelopment, creation of a riverfront park, Cove Island, and erosion control.

Development of the Comprehensive Recreation & Land Management Plan (CRLMP) in consultation with numerous parties including the Town of South Hadley was a key condition imposed on the license holder by FERC. Intended to address the dam's impacts on the impoundment area, this plan interconnects many of the other conditions and issues involved with relicensing of the Holyoke Dam.

The past year saw the ISC continue efforts toward implementation of the license, CRLMP, and related project plans. ISC members work towards facilitating cooperation among the participating agencies to expedite projects. In this vein, the ISC functions more in the capacity as a mechanism for coordinating the various departments and agencies of the Town that have jurisdiction over specific aspects of the licensee's activities.

During the fourteenth year of its functioning, the ISC concentrated on efforts to work with Holyoke Gas & Electric to implement projects required by the CRLMP and the license. Three principal aspects of the CRLMP and license conditions occupied the ISC this year: monitoring efforts by a Holyoke developer to redevelop the Texon building and property, development of a system of parks stretching from the Gatehouse above the dam to the 116 Bridge, and management of the impoundment area in the vicinity of the Bachelor Brook/Stony Brook Resource Conservation Area.

- Development of the Lower Riverside Park project continued to be delayed pending a decision by the MassDEP on the HG&E appeal of the Conservation Commission's Order of Conditions. As the year ended, it appeared that this delay would end soon with a decision by the MassDEP expected in a matter of weeks. HG&E was preparing to rebid the project (along with the Upper Gatehouse Park project) for construction during the Fall 2009.
- Efforts to revitalize the Texon building seemed to fade as the Holyoke developer who had expressed strong interest in a multi-use redevelopment had not executed any of the agreements for the properties. Thus, it looked at year's end as though the next step for the Texon building is likely to be demolition by HG&E.
- Within the Holyoke Dam Impoundment Area, Holyoke Gas & Electric has established a Permitting Program. Development of a Mount Holyoke College boathouse and dock north of Brunelle's Marina and adjoining the Bachelor Brook/Stony Brook Resource Conservation Area required approval under this program. As part of the proposed boathouse and dock project, Mount Holyoke College announced its intentions to utilize the facility not only for its own athletic programs but also for several community rowing programs. Therefore, the ISC and Selectboard worked with Mount Holyoke College and Holyoke Gas & Electric to obtain the approvals necessary for this project to go forward. During the middle of the year, the necessary approvals were granted and during the Spring, Mount Holyoke College began preliminary work to develop the facilities.

The Members of ISC, Selectboard members, and the Town Administrator continue to participate in meetings regarding the license requirements including development of plans for the riverfront park. Efforts have been undertaken to expedite the various approvals required for the riverfront park to be developed.

Respectfully submitted,

John Scibak  
 Ted Belsky  
 Marilyn Ishler  
 Janice Stone

Richard Harris  
 James Reidy  
 Jennifer Wolowicz

## Old Firehouse Museum

The Trustees of the Old Firehouse Museum submit their 33<sup>rd</sup> annual report for Fiscal Year 2009.

The Old Firehouse Museum, located at 4 North Main Street, South Hadley, is open from May through September on Sundays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on Wednesdays during July and August.

In addition to the regular visiting hours, the Museum had excellent attendance during the Canal Village Potpourri in April.

Last year's theme was 'Collected Treasures' which is a potpourri of collections owned by the members of the Historical Society. On display is African Art, Brewery items from the past, old dolls, banks and much more.

This year's theme is 'Life in Canal Village' with artifacts depicting how people lived during that time period. It is interesting to see the old school benches, the small coal stove and the furniture that was used during that era.

This spring, with some of the monies left over from the Massachusetts Travel and Tourism Grant, the former Children's Museum room was completely refurbished with new ceiling tiles and grid, freshly painted walls and brand new carpeting. When that task was completed, the entire room was transformed into the Canal and River Room. The working model of the inclined plane was given a prominent place and artifacts pertaining to the canal or the river are now prominently displayed on the walls or in the room.

The Trustees appreciate the support from the Town of South Hadley in keeping the Old Firehouse Museum a valuable Town asset. We also extend our thanks to the South Hadley Historical Society, the South Hadley Historical Commission, the Canal Park Committee and the many volunteers and friends who make it possible to keep the museum open and free to the public.

The Trustees would also like to extend a hearty welcome to Diane Laroche, who was recently appointed trustee of the museum. She is certainly well acquainted with the Firehouse Museum, having lived her entire life in the shadows of the Firehouse and being the daughter of Stanley Bacus, longtime "custodian" of the Museum. The flagpole near the museum was erected in his honor some time ago. The trustees are also very grateful to Donald Gagne, a South Hadley native, who installed the suspended ceiling in the new Canal Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Lacasse, Chair  
 Robert Blaney  
 Todd Calkins  
 Brian Duncan  
 Wayne Gass

Brenda Griffin  
 Diane Laroche  
 Bonnie Randall  
 Josephine Wojnarowski

## Personnel Board

In Fiscal Year 2009, the Personnel Board continued to work with the Selectboard, Town Administrator, (subsequently, Interim Town Administrator again) and Personnel/Chief Procurement Officer on various issues involving non-union town employees.