

Selectboard

<http://www.southhadley.org>

FY 09 was another year of changes for the Selectboard. We began and ended the year with an Interim Town Administrator with less than three months of a Town Administrator in between. Unfortunately, Michael Szlosek did not feel South Hadley was the right fit for him. We are very thankful for the continued services of Barry L. Del Castilho who again came out of retirement to assist us and to Personnel and Chief Procurement Officer Jennifer L. Wolowicz for stepping in as Interim as of June 1, 2009.

Our long time Administrative Assistant Lisa Napiorkowski left Town Hall to become the Assistant Director at the Council on Aging. We thank her and the Council for sharing her until Laura Krutzler could be trained. We wish her well and know she will succeed at the Council.

The ambulance continued to be discussed throughout the year although with not quite as much animation as the previous year. With the Town's limited oversight (our ambulance was only in District 2) we transitioned from a full time director to co-directors representing each of the Districts with hopes that the two Districts could find a way to combine their expertise and serve the community. In March, when we realized this would not happen, the Board voted 3 – 2 to exit the ambulance direct oversight a year earlier than planned by relinquishing control as of July 1, 2009. Our ambulances were sold to District 1. We continue to hope merger of the two services will be accomplished in the future and offer our assistance to the Districts if needed to achieve this goal.

Ledges Golf Course was continuously on our agenda as we interviewed and hired Ryan Richard as our General Manager in September and then accepted his resignation in March. The Board then appointed Michael Fontaine as Interim General Manager and Marissa Kulig as Golf Pro. The water looping project at the course was finished a year early. We were granted a waiver from the Architectural Access Board (AAB) for the slope at the front door of the clubhouse and presented satisfactory alternate plans to the AAB in order to be in compliance with State regulations.

Justin LeTellier was hired as Cable Studio Manager in September. He has made good use of the contracted funds from Comcast to upgrade the studio and meeting coverage. Justin worked with the Cable Advisory Committee as they began their preparation for negotiating a new contract with Comcast.

In September, we voted to extend the landfill daily tonnage limit. In June, we signed a new contract with South Hadley Landfill Inc. to extend and expand our landfill. If the expansion is approved by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) we will have a place for our trash to be disposed for many more years. Our thanks

go to DPW Superintendent James Reidy for negotiating this for the Town.

Throughout the year the Charter question was debated and reviewed by the Charter Commission and South Hadley residents. The proposed change to a Mayoral form of government was ultimately defeated at the Annual Election in April, but the conversation about ways to improve local government continued. At the Annual Town Meeting May 9, 2009, Town Meeting members approved an article creating a committee to review the operations of Town Meeting and report back to the assembly with recommendations for change. The search for a new Town Administrator was scheduled for September with the hopes of having a permanent candidate in place by January 2010.

The FY 2010 budget went onto our agenda in November and remained there throughout June. Although South Hadley remained fiscally sound, the nation and the state were not as fortunate. With no solid "cherry sheet" information, we continued our Annual Town Meeting into June and still had to complete Town Meeting without firm figures necessitating a fall 2009 Town Meeting to balance the FY 2010 budget. We thank the many departments who fine tooth combed their budgets to find the cuts necessary to achieve this.

The Special Town Meeting in October appropriated \$330,000 to purchase the Toth Property on Newton Street for possible future school expansion. The Selectboard agreed with the Housing Authority to not dispose of property on East and School Streets but to retain them as possible sites for affordable housing.

The Beachgrounds Park renovations were completed on time and under budget. It is a wonderful addition to the Falls area of South Hadley.



Town Common Gazebo – Photo by Janice Stone
The Town Common was rededicated on September 14, 2008. In early spring a group wanting to start a Farmers Market on the Common approached the Selectboard. These are now held on Thursdays in conjunction with the

concerts sponsored by the Village Commons and Recreation Department.



Farmer's Market on Town Common - Janice Stone
Another group requested permission to start a Community Garden on a portion of the Town Farm property. GRO-South Hadley was started with the assistance of the DPW and volunteers.

We continue to work with Holyoke Gas and Electric and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regarding the development of the Lower Riverfront Park and Texon Building.

In March we were notified that South Hadley had been awarded a "2009 E-Government Award" from Common Cause of Massachusetts. This recognized communities that have made government more accessible to the public via the internet. We thank the Website Committee for making this possible.

South Hadley was also recognized as a HEART Safe Community because all town buildings have AED devices and staff trained to use them. Our thanks go to Phyllis Lacoste for coordinating the fundraising effort with District 1 Fire Chief William Judd.

Throughout the year the Selectboard continued to award bids, one day beer and wine licenses, hold hearings, appoint committees and review policies.

None of this would have been possible without the many talented and dedicated staff and volunteers of South Hadley. A special thanks to Barry L. Del Castilho for coming out of retirement for the third time. We look forward to his guidance and that of Jennifer L. Wolowicz as we begin the process of searching for and hiring a permanent Town Administrator.

Respectfully Submitted
Carlene Hamlin
Greg Sheehan
Selectboard Chairs for FY 09

Ambulance Service

We submit herewith the report of the Ambulance Department(s) from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009. Our ambulance services (Town of South Hadley, Fire District No.1, and Fire District No.2) answered a combined total of 1,958 calls:

| <u>2008</u> | | <u>2009</u> | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| July | 134 | January | 130 |
| August | 156 | February | 135 |
| September | 172 | March | 187 |
| October | 193 | April | 167 |
| November | 160 | May | 187 |
| December | 184 | June | 153 |

TOTAL EMS / AMBULANCE CALLS: **1,958**

As the statistics show, FY 2008 was no different than many previous years for the Emergency Medical Services System in the Town of South Hadley and the two Fire Districts. The number of calls went up in fiscal 2008 vs. 2007 with a percentage increase similar to prior years. However this year was certainly a significant year for South Hadley EMS in that it marked the end of one ambulance service and the beginning of two new ambulance services handling emergency calls in Fire District No.1 and Fire District No.2.

The Town of South Hadley like so many other area communities began its ambulance service back in the 1940s. Over those many years emergency medicine changed drastically in the United States. The Town of South Hadley Ambulance Service changed with the times and provided life saving services with a team approach utilizing Police Officer/EMTs along with Firefighter/EMTs, and more recently Firefighter/Paramedics. Advancements during these years have allowed for rapid response, quick assessment, and advanced care in the pre hospital setting. Many lessons learned in Viet Nam regarding appropriate care by first responders followed by rapid response to area hospital emergency departments and trauma centers are now being deployed in our country. The first EMTs were certified in the early 70s in Massachusetts with the promulgation of new legislation that dictated how emergency medicine was to be delivered across the Commonwealth. Firefighters, Police Officers, and other emergency personnel were now staffing ambulances for the first time as certified Emergency Medical Technicians, more commonly known as EMTs.

One of those first EMTs was Firefighter Kenneth McKenna of South Hadley Fire District No.1. Ken along with other dedicated Firefighter and Police Officer EMTs staffed the ambulance and responded to calls during those transitional years. Not long after becoming a newly certified EMT, Ken was asked to be South Hadley's Ambulance Director and head up this essential public safety department. Ken served as the Town of South Hadley Ambulance Director for approximately 30 years working both on the ambulance saving lives, as well as