



## TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

December 13, 2022

Good evening:

It's been business as usual with some interruptions for holiday celebrations since our last meeting. The annual Veterans parade and wreath laying ceremony on November 11, 2022 was a significant and important event to honor all Veterans. Abigail Reyor sang the National Anthem, Connor Knee and Adler Johnston played taps. These students from East Longmeadow High School performed beautifully. This year's ceremony included a rededication of the Vietnam Monument to include and honor Major Frederick W. Dauten who was shot down while serving in Vietnam.

The Eastern Hampden County Veterans Board met yesterday to interview three applicants for the vacant Veterans Service Officer position.

As you know, the Town's annual reports to the Dept. of Revenue have been accepted and the tax rate (\$19.20) has been approved. This rate is a reduction of \$1.20 per thousand dollars of value from last year's rate and was made possible primarily by the Town's receipt of federal ARPA funds. This reduction in the tax rate is evidence of the powerful impact your federal tax dollars can make our community. Further detail on this and other subjects is available from the Finance Director in his report. Unfortunately, the Town will soon be without the services of Steve Lonergan. He is leaving the Town's employment at the end of this calendar year. We appreciate his efforts over the last 2.5 years and will most definitely miss his professional expertise and dedication to improving our financial operations.

Our online permitting project is ongoing. Planning Director Bailey Mitchell has been an integral part of this process. He has also been working diligently to prepare the Master Plan Implementation matrix for use as the Town's internal guide to accomplishing the goals identified in that report. Contributions are necessary from a number of people to make this a successful endeavor. Bailey has an introductory report for you tonight. We intend to make updated progress reports to the Council at regular intervals. There are numerous other significant matters pending in the Planning Department, all of which Bailey is managing responsibly. He is also working on a comprehensive review of all of the Town's zoning and is working on our pursuit of Green Community status.

Berkshire Design Group, Inc. has continued their efforts regarding the Heritage Park design in cooperation with the DPW. The schematic plan, permitting needs and schedule are subjects of continuing discussion. We look forward to the Town's eligibility for Parc grant funding to assist in financing of Heritage Park redevelopment next year after the initial design phase is completed.

Additional negotiation sessions continue with the Town's Fire Department Union. A meeting was conducted this morning to review progress and continue discussion.

The COA, Library and Recreation Departments continue to host various holiday events for the community. This year's Police "Stuff the Bus" was a great success as well.

Meetings of the School Building Committee continue on a regular basis. Please attend this forum to learn about this major development for the Town if your schedules allow.

I am saddened to announce that Bill Johnston has resigned from the Board of Assessors after serving in that capacity since 1989

Respectfully submitted,