



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

March 14, 2023

Good evening:

I am pleased to report that work continues on the renovation of leased space at 382 North Main Street. Unfortunately, efforts were a bit delayed by weather and DPW capacity. A walk through is scheduled for next Wednesday and hopefully soon thereafter we will arrange the move of Finance, Human Resources and Assessors Departments to that location. These moves will provide significant and necessary relief to our space constraint issues in the Town Hall.

Some of the Broadband committee members, Ralph Page and Tom Christensen met to review the current options available to the Town for completion of the fiber to home project. I have asked Tom to prepare a report for your perusal which briefly describes the actions taken so far, next steps and basis for the recommendation. The funds for a feasibility study (35k) have been previously approved but not spent to date. The scope and breadth of the project was discussed in detail with the Council some months ago when Ryan Quimby and Don Maki explained the benefits of pursuing a Municipal Light Plant for the Town as a first step to improving access for everyone. Plans are underway to have the necessary vote to establish a Municipal Light Plant on the June ballot.

Multiple meetings have occurred over the last month regarding Westcomm operations. Last Friday, the Board of Directors hosted a regional meeting with public officials from several Western Mass communities in an outreach effort to inform them of the advantages of joining the District. Member communities were represented to explain the benefits of joining the District and to provide testimonials regarding improvements in service as well as to highlight some of the problems to anticipate and plan for in their upcoming budgets. Representatives from the Commonwealth's 911 office were also present to answer any questions and address concerns regarding the reliability and sourcing of funds to support the Development grants as well as the Support and Incentive grants which fund a substantial portion of the District's expenses. A tour of the new facility was also conducted to demonstrate the growth potential of the District.

Management review of department operating budgets were completed with a very few minor changes. The draft budget will be ready for submission at the April meeting. The Capital Advisory committee has begun their schedule of meetings as well, seeking to evaluate and give priority to various projects recommended by each Department for inclusion in next year's budget.

The Town has engaged Western Mass Development Corp. to assist with preparation and application for a MassWorks grant to fund the Chestnut Street pump station improvement plan, estimated at \$2.398 million dollars. This agency has a great track record of success with many communities in Western Mass and we are optimistic that it will successfully assist East Longmeadow.

Planning Director Bailey Mitchell has submitted the Town's final Energy Reduction Plan for your acceptance. As you know, this document is the final requirement for submission in order for East Longmeadow to become a green community.

The Town has received \$120,082 in Opioid Settlement funds from our participation in the class action claims brought by the Massachusetts Attorney General. These funds have certain limited, dedicated uses, substance use prevention and victim assistance e.g., which must be appropriated from free cash as needed. For now, they are in a separate revenue account and more funds from other named defendants are expected in FY24.

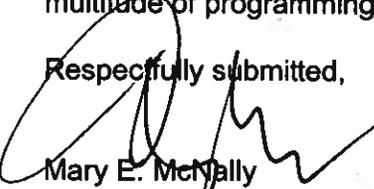
Negotiations with the Town's Fire Department Union have not yet resulted in an agreement and may

be the subject of future mediation. Negotiations are continuing with the UPSEU units as well.

The School Building Committee voted its Preferred Schematic Design for submission to the Massachusetts School Building Authority last week. Meetings on this key project continue on a regular basis, two last week on March 7 and 9 and including another community forum planned for March 16, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the High School auditorium. Please attend these meetings in person or online to learn about this major development for the Town if your schedules allow.

Our Library, Recreation and Council on Aging Departments continue to schedule and perform a multitude of programming events to enhance the quality of life in Town.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary E. McNally
Town Manager