



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

February 27, 2024

Good evening:

Kim, Rebecca and I have been meeting with Department heads over the last few weeks to begin planning the FY25 operating budget. To date, we have met with nearly every department to discuss their Level 1 submissions and discuss their budgets line by line. I want to thank our department heads and their staff for their cooperation in creating a comprehensive and sustainable budget. We look forward to many more meaningful conversations before the draft budget is submitted.

Following the votes from the last Council meeting, the Town of East Longmeadow expects to enter into contract with Westfield Gas & Electric Whip City Fiber for the Fiber to the Home project this week. This project is a very exciting opportunity for the community to provide another option for internet service. Crews from Whip City's design team (PVC) will be out performing preliminary survey work and data collection in the coming weeks.

On January 25th, The School Building Committee unanimously voted to select Fontaine Brothers, Inc. to oversee the construction of the new high school and natatorium. Fontaine Bros. is based in Springfield and has completed many similar projects in the area including Minnechaug Regional High School and West Springfield High, both built through the MSBA program. Their experience, expertise and local team, made them the preferred choice. Construction is scheduled to begin this summer.

The Westcomm Board of Directors recently voted to enter into contract with D.A. Sullivan of Northampton to complete the renovations at the new headquarters building on Shawinigan Drive in Chicopee. The construction cost is approximately \$15.5M, with a total project cost of \$18.5M. Construction is scheduled to begin this March and the building will be ready for occupation at some point in the Spring of 2025.

On Thursday, February 22nd, the State Fire Marshall, John Davine, held a press conference at the East Longmeadow Fire Department to discuss fire safety and smoke detectors. The event was very well attended by Fire Chiefs and Fire Service personnel from across Western Massachusetts. Thank you to all that attended and to those presenters who stressed the importance of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and the important safety role they play. Special thanks to the Emcee for the event, ours truly, Chief Paul Morrissette.

I would like to congratulate Deputy Fire Chief, Chris Beecher, who, along with 33 of his peers, graduated from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's Chief Fire Officer Management Training Program on January 24th. He successfully completed an intensive, 14-week course with a wide array of topics including executive leadership, municipal finance, planning and budgeting, grants and emergency management and strategic planning, to name a few. Congrats, Chris!

Also from the FD, congratulations to James Goldrick on his recent promotion to Captain. Jim was deservedly promoted to Captain (also on January 24th) after 7 years with the East Longmeadow Fire Department. Jim has recently earned Fire Officer II status, Fire Instructor II certification and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience as the new leader of Group B. Congrats, Jim!

Rebecca had a kick-off meeting with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) for the creation of the Center Town District. Part of this grant process will be creating a steering committee to assist staff with the creation of the bylaw, as well as facilitate public interaction. We are currently populating this committee with residents from various backgrounds to create a well-rounded district that suits the community well. We are also expecting Planning Board and Town Council participation, in an ex-officio capacity, throughout the process. The current schedule has a completed project at the end of the calendar year.

The East Longmeadow Cultural Council received 42 requests, totaling \$32,176 to fund cultural events in the Town for 2024. The allocation received from the Massachusetts Cultural Council totaled \$11,849. This allocation was able to award or partially award funding for 21 of the events to be held this year. A partial list of these grant recipients include: Celebrate EL, Rotary Summer Concert Series, 4th of July Parade, EL High School Model Congress, Springfield Symphony Orchestra, SSO Musical Petting Zoo (EL Public Library), Ms. Senior Massachusetts Musical Review (COA), Painting Seascapes (EL Public Library) and Sculpting with Wool (Norcross House). Thank you to the Cultural Council for all they do for our community and its residents.

Upcoming Events: Presidential Primary – March 5th

Coffee with the Town Manager – March 6th 10:30am at the COA

Westcomm groundbreaking – March 14th 11:00am at 645 Shawinigan Drive, Chicopee

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas D. Christensen
Town Manager