



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW  
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Town Manager Report

Good evening and Happy New Year to all:

We are off to a busy start in this new year; Town Departments have submitted their operational budgets for review and I have begun discussing them with the respective Dept. Heads and Finance Dept. this week. Our January Department Heads meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. My remarks to the group will cover my philosophy and expectations about professional conduct by and between departments and communication and cooperation among all employees regardless of their status. I have asked our HR Director pro tem to work with me to characterize the existing Town employment culture, identify areas to improve and establish a working environment that is positive, inclusive, respectful and cooperative at all times.

Preliminary negotiations are underway with two labor Unions regarding upcoming contracts, Civil Dispatch and UMEEL

The ADP payroll project rolled out with the Dec. 22, 2019 payroll which was paid on January 8, 2020. The various issues identified by Departments are being reported to ADP for resolution. Information on any and all requests from Departments for progress on these matters will be the subject of a weekly email from our Finance office until the glitches are resolved. There are many varied schedules among our Town Departments as well as a systemic inability (with this platform) to recognize work anniversary dates or step increase dates which have caused concern among employees.

Progress continues in our HR department. FMLA and COBRA training modules were conducted on Jan. 9, 2020, by a trainer from the Employers Association of the Northeast. Unemployment Claims training was held on Jan 2, and an ACA compliance training been scheduled to assist in updating our procedures and well as to centralize these functions uniformly in the HR Department.

My office has begun an effort to review vacancies on Town Boards and Commissions. I appointed Erin Lynch to the Conservation Commission in early January and I intend to conduct interviews with other interested parties regarding vacancies on other Boards and Commissions. Notice of open seats will be advertised as required by the Charter.

The Health Department received a Massachusetts Municipal Public Health Shared Services Grant in an annualized amount of \$50,000 pending negotiation of a final work plan. This grant is renewable for a five year period. On last Friday, the Health Department Director and I met with our colleagues from Longmeadow as well as with a representative of the DPH and representatives from the consulting firm (Health Resources in Action, HRIA) which will conduct a very specific scope of services in the nature of Project Management, data collection and general oversight. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the health needs assessment work plan referenced above. A prior Community Compact grant awarded in May of 2019 in the amount of \$55,500 provided the seed money for this initiative. I would just add that these grants are evidence of the Commonwealth's view that shared services create better efficiencies for local Boards of Health.

The Aimee Petrosky and I also met last week with Longmeadow's Town Manager and DPW Superintendent to hear a presentation by a potential vendor regarding waste disposal, waste collection and recycling collection and disposal. As you know, the contracts for these services expire in June and there is a significant increase in recycling fees, which will increase our costs in the next fiscal year.

Conversation continues regarding opportunities for dispatch consolidation. The ribbon cutting ceremony at the Chicopee site, known as Westcomm took place on December 20, 2019. Chiefs Morrissette and Dalessio and I attended the ceremony and briefly toured the dispatch operations center after remarks from City and State officials. We subsequently met with Springfield's Fire Commissioner to discuss the opportunity of a merger with the City of Springfield. Various practical issues exist in both situations and must be resolved before any decisions can be made. However both sites present a significant opportunity for fiscal savings to East Longmeadow based on incentives and available grant funding. Any future operational assessments must also be quantified for a thorough evaluation to take place. Another meeting was held on January 8, 2020 with the Director of Westmass, the respective EMS Chiefs and Town Managers from EL and Longmeadow to further vet the operation and opportunity. The Emergency Management staff and I also continue our discussions with Christine Wingfield, Regional PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point) Coordinator for EOPSS 911 Department in this regard.

The Fire Department reports that it answered 3600 calls for service in 2019, 78% of which (2799 calls) were for Emergency Medical service.

Building Dept. still seeking an electrical inspector, and is interviewing candidates for its newly created admin position.

Police Dept. reports the retirement of Scott Skala in late December, 2019. Scott was a 26 year veteran of the PD.

IT is working on a major upgrade to the MUNIS software. The Department also reports that the one to one project (chromebooks) has moved along quite well, various defects in the devices have been covered by warranty. New switches and wireless access points have been installed at the COA and will be installed at Town Hall and the Library in the near future.

The relocation of Town offices is scheduled for February 4, 2020. Accounting, HR, Town Clerk and Health Depts will be impacted. The DPW is coordinating the physical relocations.

I have received several responses to my solicitation for legal services beginning this month. I will be evaluating those proposals in the near future.

General fund free cash was certified by the DOR on January 2, 2020 in the amount of \$1,688,773.00.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. McNally