

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Administrator
DT: April 30, 2010
RE: Administrator's Report

The following is for the Board's information and/or action:

- 1) Temporary DPW Employee (seasonal) – Greg Morse has requested authority to hire a seasonal employee to fill a vacancy. The position was advertised with 11 responses. Following interviews the following candidate is recommended for appointment. Funding for this position is through the betterment fund.

Recommended Action: Move to ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Michael Riel, of Sturbridge, a seasonal maintenance worker at the Dept. of Public Works at the rate of \$10.25 hour for 40-hours per week effective May 17, 2010.

- 2) Historical Commission Re-Appointment – As you recall, the Board recently rescinded an appointment to the Historical Commission that was made in error. Attached is the March 12, 2010 letter-of-interest from existing commissioner Joseph Ouellette who desires re-appointment. I have met with Mr. Ouellette on two occasions and find him to be an ideal candidate for re-appointment. Also, I spoke by telephone with the candidate appointed in error to express regret about the Town's error and to request whether he might be interested in other vacancies.

Recommended Action: Move to ratify the Town Administrator's re-appointment of Joseph A. Ouellette to the Sturbridge Historical Commission.

- 3) Route 131 Reconstruction – On April 26, the DPW Director, Police Chief and I met with the project director and resident engineer from MassDOT as well as the project superintendent from Amorello to discuss the phasing of work and local concerns relative to the roadwork.

Amorello plans to initiate and complete milling and base course pavement beginning at Rt. 20 and working southerly towards Southbridge. It is expected that milling and base course paving from Rt. 20 through the traffic lights at Sturbridge Plaza will be completed this season with the balance of work to the Southbridge town line completed in the next construction season.

The project also includes drainage upgrades which will proceed southerly in a continuous manner throughout the project as well as the installation of a sidewalk with a six-foot width to promote pedestrian safety.

At the request of the town and local business community, the digital signboards will be modified to delete reference to seeking alternate routes. Further, the contractor will advise property owners in advance of any work that would temporarily block access to their property.

The state and contractor agreed to quarterly progress meetings so that information can be provided on the Town's Web site as the work progresses. Greg Morse has worked with the state's resident engineer in the past and reports a good communication and working relationship.

The pavement milling is expected to begin in the next couple of weeks. The signboards will advise of particular dates.

In sum, the meeting was very productive and the Town will greatly benefit when the new infrastructure is complete.

- 4) Southbridge Landfill – Provisional Permit Approved – MassDEP has approved a Provisional Permit for the expansion of the Southbridge landfill by Casella. The documentation provides for a 21-day public comment period and a copy is attached. I have forwarded electronic copies of the MassDEP notice to the staff for the Board of Health, Conservation Commission and Planning Board for review and comment.

There remain many questions concerning this project and I expect to have a comment letter prepared for your May 10 working session in order to meet the deadline.

- 5) Miscellaneous

Conservation Commissioner Edward Goodwin has received a Certificate of Achievement for completing the "Fundamentals for Conservation

Commissioners” training program offered by the Mass. Association of Conservation Commissions. Congratulations!

Whereas May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month, Trish McCleary, a local resident and founder of the “Ribbons Across America” effort, has adorned the Town Common with lime green ribbons to bring awareness to Chronic Lyme Disease and those who have lost their battle with tick-borne disease. The ribbons will remain up until May 28.

Also, amongst other things, during the past week I:

- a) met with Town Counsel and the Town Moderator to review Town Meeting matters,
- b) met with the Conservation Agent and members of the Conservation, Trails, and Public Lands Advisory committees to discuss roles and responsibilities,
- c) met with technology committee staff, the architect and contractor at Town Hall to review needs for local cable technology and the new server,
- d) met with the Local Emergency Planning Committee,
- e) met with the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the Sturbridge Tourist Association, Town Planner and Finance Director to discuss roles and responsibilities with respect to the town-owned public restrooms together with budgetary matters,
- f) conducted a negotiating session with the DPW union (SEIU),
- g) was briefed by the Town Planner on the many exciting and ongoing planning and project initiatives in Town,
- h) met with the chair of the Board of Health relative to various issues.

There remains much more to learn, however, I feel very welcomed by the community and enjoy the busy pace of the office.