



TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

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FISCAL YEAR 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

TO: The Citizens of Southbridge
FROM: Ron San Angelo, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report

SOUTHBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN MANAGER

JOINT 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Southbridge Town Council is comprised of nine members elected by the Town at large to serve three -year staggered terms. All general, corporate, legislative, policy making and appropriation powers of the Town shall be vested in the Town Council. The following are the members of the Town Council for FY 2017-2018: Denise Clemence, George P. Steeves, Esteban Carrasco, Jr., Monique Manna, Kristen L. Auclair, Marc DiPietro, Wallace MacKenzie, Richard Nash, and Jorge Morales Jr.

Town Council adopted the 2017-18 Southbridge Town Budget, the 2017-2018 Capital Management Plan and the Green Communities initiative. Council also approved application for CDBG Grant and grant funds, began the process for consolidating fire and police dispatch, established Goals and Objectives for the Town Manager, and developed numerous other policies that will benefit all the citizens of Southbridge.

Town Manager – Town Manager shall be the Chief Administrative officer of the Town and shall be directly responsible and accountable to the Town Council for the effective administration of all town affairs placed in his or her charge by the Council and by the Town Charter. Ron San Angelo is the Town Manager.

TOWN MANAGER

Dear Citizens of Southbridge,

I am pleased to state that the Town of Southbridge has had another very successful year. The Town Council had established a strong list of Goals and Objectives for my office and I am proud to say that as a team we have made tremendous progress. While these Goals and Objectives are for the Town Manager, the success of these accomplishments belongs to the whole team of Department Heads and employees who have worked hard to provide quality services to the Town of Southbridge. I am very proud of this team and the dedication they have shown in their everyday work for the people of this community.

BUDGET and FACILITIES

Balanced Budget - Town Manager works with all Department Heads and the Town Accountant to bring forward a balanced budget to the Town Council. This allows the town to move forward in a fiscally prudent manner.

Town Council adopted the town budget unanimously on 5/22/17. No changes were adopted from what the Town Manager had proposed in his budget presentation on 3/27/17. This budget was the work of the Town Manager, all town Department Heads, the Town Finance Director, and the Town Council. Budget cuts are made every year as the town's Finance Director and I review each department's budget. Town Council thoroughly reviewed each line item of the budget and did not change any line in the budget as proposed by the Town Manager.

With the support of the Town Council, the Town Manager has reduced the town's dependency on landfill revenues for the last two years. Town Council members have supported the Town Manager's efforts by voting to reduce our dependency on Landfill Royalties by \$850,000 in the FY 2016-17 Budget and by \$920,000 in FY 2017-2018 Budget. The Landfill Financial Plan for Closure was developed by the Town Manager and given to all Town Councilors on 5/25/17.

The town continues to look for alternative revenues. We received \$200,000 of grant funds through the Green Communities Program for reducing energy costs and \$35,000 to analyze combining the DPW and School Facilities Management Team in an effort to reduce cost and improve efficiency. We also received two new grants, one for the new electric car and one for the electrical charging system. We were approved for a \$45,000 grant for additional funds for IT at our local school system and we are looking forward to future revenue from the solar agreement with Melink that has been approved by our Planning Board. The town takes advantage of any grants that would help our community. This work is to keep future tax rates as low as possible.

Waterline to Charlton – The town will be developing a waterline from Southbridge to an area of Charlton. Town Manager worked with the State Department of Environmental Protection to get a state grant for \$5 Million dollars and \$5 Million dollars from Casella Waste Systems Inc. to fund this project. This will save Southbridge over \$10 million dollars of potential liability. This agreement is a huge long-term benefit for the taxpayers of Southbridge.

Energy Savings Through Efficient Lighting for Town Departments – This program has been completed and all town-owned buildings have new energy efficiency lighting. We worked with the utility company to develop a program that saves tax dollars and improves energy efficiency throughout Town buildings. As Town Manager, I brought forward a program that will result in huge savings to the taxpayers of Southbridge. The total net cost to the Town of Southbridge for this project is \$471,158, with an **estimated annual savings of \$125,550** for a simple payback period of 3.75 years.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Hiring of a Full Time Town Planner - The Town Manager studied the need for a full time Town Planner and added the position in the town budget that was approved by the Town Council. The current planner was part time and did not have the qualifications needed to fulfill this role in town government. A qualified Town Planner was hired.

Why is this position important to the Town? The reason that so many towns have full time professional Town Planners is because the use of town land is critical to the town's tax base.

Important Town Functions:

- Reviews Site Plans, Approval Not Required Plans (ANR) and Subdivision Plans with project proponents to ensure compliance with Town's Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Control Regulations, as well as M.G.L. Chapter 41, Sections 81A-81 GG and M.G.L Chapter 40A, and other pertinent regulations and best development practices;
- Provides guidance to project proponents and associated professionals in navigating the Town's permitting processes;
- Acts as staff to the Planning Board and represents the Planning Department to other Town Boards and Committees as needed. This will require attendance at frequent night meetings
- Takes the lead in preparing amendments to existing Zoning Bylaws and Subdivision Regulations in accordance with the Town's priorities as shown in plan recommendations (Master Plan, E.D. Plan, Downtown Plan, etc.), and or as otherwise necessary or desired
- Plays a large part in implementing plan recommendations in general
- Keeps the Town up to date on important land use legislation
- Participates in updating various comprehensive planning documents as needed, including, but not limited to: Master Plan, Urban Renewal Plan, Housing Production Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, etc. through completion of research, interdepartmental discussions and public participation process.

Professional Development – Whenever possible, the Town Manager should provide the opportunity for professional development of employees. Town Manager should meet regularly with Department Heads to ensure a team environment and do his best to motivate employees to succeed in their goals and objectives.

As Town Manager, I need a staff that is willing to learn and improve their productivity. All town Department Heads have had basic training with regard to procurement and development of town websites. The Fire Chief was sent for extensive Emergency Management training and as a result will be better able to improve public safety. Our Recreational Director was also sent for training on a town-wide bicycle program through a grant that improves recreational opportunities for town residents and also provides free bicycles for town use. Department Head meetings are held every two weeks to ensure that everyone works as a team.

OPEN and TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT

Communication with Town Council and Citizens - Town Manager keeps Town Council and citizens informed of government activities and promote positive events happening throughout Southbridge.

As Town Manager, I have attended numerous Town events and have appointed very high quality people to boards and commissions. I have attended many town events including the Memorial Day Parade, the Latino Parade, Read Across America, Southbridge Business Partnership meetings, Senior Expo, Opening day of Little League, numerous school events, Gateway Players Theater events, served food for the Meals on Wheels Program and so many others.

As Town Manager, I am very proud of my relationships with the Latino Community. Together we have formed a Town Manager's Latino Advisory Group that meets on a regular basis to discuss issues affecting minority populations. I have also participated with the organizers of the Latino Parade to make sure they have the town resources needed in order to make the event successful. On numerous occasions, I have met with the members of a Latino women's group that meets at our Community Center to update them on town

issues. Working with a number of others, we have worked to hold open meetings to discuss education issues with members of the Latino community. Latinos regularly state that they are very happy to have a Town Manager that they feel comfortable working with.

Recreation Director Steve Roenfeldt and I have worked hard to improve our town parks including Henry Street where many children, including those in the Latino community, congregate for fun.

Utilize All Sources of Media – A goal of the Town Manager is to utilize newspapers, newsletters, town website, and social media to increase positive communication with all parties. Every effort is made to highlight the Town in a positive way in order to improve the reputation of the Town. This helps to increase property values and attract business to our community.

Town Hall Facebook - Information has been given out to thousands of Southbridge residents and all feedback has been very positive. The page has been used to help create a positive image of the Town and has kept people informed of all the great things that are moving forward. Town Councilors, Town employees and citizens have asked that events be added to the page. Over a 1,000 residents have liked the page and there have been over a 100,000 views.

Press Releases – I have issued numerous press releases to local newspapers to highlight the great things that are happening in Southbridge. The more positive events we introduce to the newspapers the less space they have for articles that are negative. Within the last year, significant increase in positive news was seen about our Town and has improved the reputation of our community. Releases have included the following topics: Red Ribbon Week, New Handball Court at Henry Street field, Christmas Window Decorations, BMX Bike and skateboarding training event, and many others.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Town of Southbridge works with all own businesses to improve their opportunity for successful operations within the community. Economic Development Director and I are very pleased with the improvement of the relationship between the town and the business community. Local manufacturers are working well together and we have held numerous meetings with area businesses leaders. The relationship is outstanding and we appreciate the support of all business leaders in working together to improve business in our town. The New Southbridge Business Partnership is growing and expanding every day and will be a long-term asset to our community as we work to increase opportunities for our retailers. Economic Development Director is also meeting with a group called Cross Link who fosters new potential entrepreneurs who want to start business in Southbridge, including home based businesses.

Town Manager has developed a great relationship with Franklin Realty the owner of the Southbridge Hotel and Convention Center. This relationship has resulted in the Town of Southbridge leasing land from Franklin Realty. This land is used by our Police Department for parking at a very low cost. The owner is also working with the Town Manager to donate land for a River Side Park that is a Goal and Objective of our Master Plan

LONG-TERM TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Master Plan - As Town Manager, I have been working with my Department Heads to continue to implement the Southbridge Master Plan and work with all citizens to facilitate the completion of the goals and objectives that have been established by the community. The Town's Master Plan had been sitting on a shelf since September of 2013. Since I have been employed by the Town of Southbridge, Department Heads and I have worked hard at implementing various components of the Master Plan. The implementation plan can be found in the Town Manager's office for anyone who may be interested. We will continue to move this forward into the future.

Southbridge Airport – The diner at the airport has been reopened and is very successful. This is adding new traffic at our airport and residents can now watch the planes come in and enjoy breakfast or lunch. The Airport Administration building is now completed and we are in the process of leasing space to a new tenant. The new sewer line to the airport has been completed and will be a long term asset to the Town of Southbridge.

Redevelopment of Mary E. Wells Jr. High Building - Completed Purchase and Sale Agreement with Arch Street Development to redevelop the school into quality rental units for our seniors. This project has now been approved by the Planning Commission and has been approved for numerous state tax credits. The current plan is to get approved for one more round of state tax credits and then to begin construction in 2018.

Town Solar Project – Contract for the town’s solar project has been completed and the town and developer are now waiting for a state incentive plan to be established. The contract established a lease and new taxes that may bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Town of Southbridge.

Blight – For the health, safety and well-being of its citizens, the Town of Southbridge believes that it is in their best interest to control Blighted Properties facing foreclosure. The Town Manager is working with the Director of Inspection Services to continue to work to clean-up properties that are blighted.

Building Demolition- There are many old abandoned residential and commercial properties in Town that are in need of demolition. Town Manager is continuing to work with the Building Commissioner to continue efforts to tear down these properties. The following buildings have been demolished in the last few months and we have budgeted an additional \$150,000 to continue this effort. Significant progress has been made and this must continue to be a long-term goal of this community. Our management team reviews on a regular basis all blighted and abandoned properties in order to prioritize which buildings need to be torn down. All relevant Department Heads are involved in this process.

Task Name	Start	Finish	Resource Names	% Work Complete
784 Main Street	3/1/13	9/15/17	Andy Pelletier	100%
215 Morris Street	8/1/17	9/1/17	Andy Pelletier	100%

Regional Dispatch - Town Manager, Police Chief, and Fire Chief recommended joining the regional dispatch on April 27, 2017 to the Joint Protection of Persons and Properties/Town Council Subcommittee. Months of work by all area Town Managers, Town Administrators, Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs, and Dispatchers went into the project. A full discussion of the positive and negatives of joining the region were discussed and the PPP Subcommittee asked for a comparison of costs between going regional or simply combining our local Police and Fire dispatch systems. After long discussion and review, the decision was made by the Town Council to move forward with consolidating the local Police and Fire dispatch. Efforts at planning for this consolidation are ongoing.

Rail Trail - The town is currently working with the State of Massachusetts to secure an \$800,000 Federal Grant that was reallocated to the state in order to deal with erosion and surface treatment on our local rail trail. DPW is leading the effort on this project. The Rail Committee is aware of this project as well. An Engineer is funded through the Mass DEP Wetland Fines Program that has assessed fines on Casella. The Engineer is working to secure the state grant funds. If this grant is approved, we will be addressing the erosion, improving the surface, and possibly expanding the length of the trail. We also applied for a DCR Grant for rail trail improvements to clean the brush between Foster Street and the Rotary. We are waiting to hear if the grant is approved by the state.

Fire Station Report - Town Manager proposed funding a Feasibility Study to determine the need for a new fire station and the Town Council approved it. Fire Building Committee is ready to meet to move the Facility Study forward. The location of a new Fire Station and what the future needs of the building will be are all part of the Feasibility study and developed experts in this field.

EDUCATION

Positive Relationship with Southbridge School District –Town Manager has made it a priority to work in cooperation with the School Superintendent. The Town Manager has worked with the Town Council to provide funding for Chrome Books, schoolbooks, and other important Capital items. The Town's Administration and School District Administration have developed a solid partnership that will benefit the community as a whole and most importantly the students within the school district. The Receiver and I meet bi-weekly to discuss issues that are important to the Town and the school system. As you know, the Superintendent and the state were very appreciative of the funding that the Town gave the district during the budget process. Town Council has also played a key role in this process by supporting the efforts of the state in making progress to improve the educational opportunities of our children. Some of the key areas where we work together: Budget development, Capital Planning, school security and safety, snow removal, transportation issues, technology upgrades, payroll, and insurance issues.

ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT

Office Staff: Karen Harnois, Finance Director/Town Accountant
Larisa Morrison, Assistant Town Accountant

Functions of the Accounting and Finance Office include keeping a complete set of books for the Town, validating and recording cash receipts, examining and approving budget expenditures in accordance with voted appropriations and filing required reports in a timely manner. Town Accountant serves as the Ex-Officio member of the Southbridge Retirement Board. Finance Director oversees the functions of the other financial departments of the town and works with the Town Manager to create and present the annual budget of revenues and expenditures and other related forecasts. The office coordinates the completion of the annual audit, reviews the audit reports and gathers responses from applicable town and school departments as required.

Included in this report are financial statements from the FY 2016 audit. I would like to highlight some of the key events for fiscal year 2017:

Melanson, Heath completed its first audit of a three-year cycle for the Town.

- Finance office continued to work with the school as changes were made due to the state takeover and turnover of school finance personnel. The Receiver was replaced and the Director of Finance position was changed from an employee to a vendor. We continue to support the school business office during its transition process.
- General Fund Free Cash as of 7/1/16 was certified at \$2,696,571 and the majority was used for a wide variety of Capital projects and to replenish the Stabilization Fund. The current balance in the Stabilization Fund is over \$3M and no funds needed to be transferred out of the fund for FY 2017.
- Retained earnings for the sewer and water funds as of 7/1/16 were certified at \$1,878,077 for the Sewer Fund and \$2,423,054 for the Water Fund. From the certified amounts, \$1,094,000 was voted from the Sewer Fund and \$500,000 from the Water Fund for FY 2018 Capital projects.
- Town continued its commitment to fund annual contributions of \$250,000 to the OPEB Trust and an additional payment of \$750,000 to the pension system.
- Solar project with Borrego for three solar arrays continued with the Town purchasing power from S-Power and selling the credits to NGRID. The financial process for the allocation of credits to Town departments needed to be refined in FY17.
- New Airport Terminal project has reached its conclusion and the final paperwork is being processed for project closeout.
- FY18 preliminary budget was voted in May 2017 and the general fund operating budget was proposed and voted without the reliance of any Free Cash and a reduction of \$920,000 in Landfill royalty revenues used to balance the budget.
- Town Council approved a positional upgrade in my office to allow the hiring of an assistant town accountant. The employee was hired in March, 2017.
- Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) study was updated for valuation date 7/1/2015 as required for the FY 2016 audit.
- The indirect cost study was updated for FY 2018 with a report completed by an independent consultant.
- Finance Office worked diligently with the State, Town of Charlton and Casella to secure a project agreement and a \$5,000,000 grant from the state to partially fund a waterline in the Town of Charlton for residences with contaminated wells. The Town is going to borrow funds to cover the remaining \$5,000,000 of the project and Casella will reimburse the Town for the loan payments.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

BALANCE SHEET

JUNE 30, 2016

	General Fund	Library Major Fund	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
ASSETS				
Cash and short-term investments	\$ 6,797,832	\$ 142,910	\$ 8,148,882	\$ 15,089,424
Investments	2,777,824	3,015,300	1,462,063	7,255,187
Receivables:				
Property taxes	2,084,285	-	-	2,084,285
Excises	413,248	-	-	413,248
Departmental and other	458,872	-	208,843	665,715
Intergovernmental	122,056	-	1,845,015	1,967,071
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 12,653,917	\$ 3,158,210	\$ 11,662,803	\$ 27,474,930
LIABILITIES				
Warrants payable	\$ 837,960	\$ -	\$ 979,077	\$ 1,817,037
Accrued liabilities	1,072,505	-	169,270	1,241,775
Tax refunds payable	208,700	-	-	208,700
Notes payable	-	-	82,000	82,000
Other liabilities	926,984	-	249	927,233
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,046,149	-	1,230,596	4,276,745
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES	2,918,431	-	138,905	3,057,336
FUND BALANCES				
Nonspendable	-	1,850,782	265,629	2,116,411
Restricted	-	1,307,428	9,678,532	10,985,960
Committed	400,374	-	480,121	880,495
Assigned	418,320	-	-	418,320
Unassigned	5,870,643	-	(130,980)	5,739,663
TOTAL FUND BALANCES	6,689,337	3,158,210	10,293,302	20,140,849
TOTAL LIABILITIES, DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES AND FUND BALANCES	\$ 12,653,917	\$ 3,158,210	\$ 11,662,803	\$ 27,474,930

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

GENERAL FUND

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND OTHER SOURCES, AND EXPENDITURES AND OTHER USES -
BUDGET AND ACTUAL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2016

	Budgeted Amounts		Actual Amounts	Variance with Final Budget Positive (Negative)
	Original Budget	Final Budget		
Revenues and Other Sources:				
Property taxes	\$ 18,379,046	\$ 18,379,046	\$ 18,379,046	\$ -
Excises	1,526,477	1,526,477	1,826,095	299,618
Penalties, interest and other taxes	170,750	170,750	253,191	82,441
Charges for services	2,676,000	2,676,000	3,017,626	341,626
Intergovernmental	23,387,136	23,387,136	23,554,000	166,864
Licenses and permits	260,000	260,000	362,187	102,187
Fines and forfeitures	85,000	85,000	96,615	11,615
Investment income	17,213	17,213	25,763	8,550
Miscellaneous	180,235	180,235	361,651	181,416
Transfers in	3,626,760	3,632,160	3,603,101	(29,059)
Use of free cash	850,000	2,613,938	2,613,938	-
Use of overlay surplus	50,000	50,000	50,000	-
Total Revenues and Other Sources	51,208,617	52,977,955	54,143,213	1,165,258
Expenditures and Other Uses:				
General government	2,721,500	2,721,500	2,317,053	404,447
Public safety	6,068,977	6,252,977	6,210,340	42,637
Education	26,794,541	26,802,479	26,424,183	378,296
Public works	2,083,904	2,083,904	2,052,697	31,207
Health and human services	1,034,512	1,075,912	1,024,703	51,209
Culture and recreation	570,501	570,501	561,035	9,466
Employee benefits	7,662,522	7,662,522	7,388,187	274,335
Debt service	2,579,957	2,579,957	2,481,195	98,762
intergovernmental	1,433,343	1,433,343	1,655,774	(222,431)
Transfers out	258,860	1,794,860	1,800,588	(5,728)
Total Expenditures and Other Uses	51,208,617	52,977,955	51,915,755	1,062,200
Excess (deficiency) of revenues and other sources over expenditures and other uses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,227,458	\$ 2,227,458

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PROPRIETARY FUNDS

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION

JUNE 30, 2016

	Business-Type Activities Enterprise Funds		
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Total
ASSETS			
Current:			
Cash and short-term investments	\$ 3,792,191	\$ 6,776,350	\$ 10,568,541
User fees, net of allowance for uncollectibles	1,605,588	1,514,752	3,020,340
Intergovernmental receivables	117,913	6,105	124,018
Other receivables	-	90,306	90,306
Total current assets	5,415,692	8,387,513	13,803,205
Noncurrent:			
Intergovernmental receivables, net of current portion	391,785	13,354	405,139
Capital assets:			
Land and construction in progress	3,756,138	923,275	4,679,413
Other capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	18,913,770	17,681,687	36,595,457
Total noncurrent assets	23,061,693	18,618,316	41,680,009
TOTAL ASSETS	28,477,385	27,005,829	55,483,214
LIABILITIES			
Current:			
Warrants payable	156,361	428,087	584,448
Accrued liabilities	70,584	83,830	154,414
Current portion of long-term liabilities:			
Bonds payable	908,816	896,528	1,805,344
Capital lease	137,907	-	137,907
Total current liabilities	1,273,668	1,408,445	2,682,113
Noncurrent:			
Bonds payable, net of current portion	5,101,854	10,840,929	15,942,783
Capital lease, net of current portion	458,243	-	458,243
Total noncurrent liabilities	5,560,097	10,840,929	16,401,026
TOTAL LIABILITIES	6,833,765	12,249,374	19,083,139
NET POSITION			
Net investment in capital assets	17,649,364	11,241,291	28,890,655
Unrestricted	3,994,256	3,515,164	7,509,420
TOTAL NET POSITION	\$ 21,643,620	\$ 14,756,455	\$ 36,400,075

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PROPRIETARY FUNDS

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN FUND NET POSITION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2016

	Business-Type Activities Enterprise Funds		
	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Total
Operating Revenues:			
Charges for services	\$ 3,677,611	\$ 3,511,365	\$ 7,188,976
Other	<u>397,584</u>	<u>371,588</u>	<u>769,172</u>
Total Operating Revenues	4,075,195	3,882,953	7,958,148
Operating Expenses:			
Operating expenses	2,466,466	2,990,287	5,456,753
Depreciation	<u>845,172</u>	<u>804,575</u>	<u>1,649,747</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>3,311,638</u>	<u>3,794,862</u>	<u>7,106,500</u>
Operating Income (Loss)	763,557	88,091	851,648
Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses):			
Investment income	5,366	3,103	8,469
Interest expense	<u>(217,252)</u>	<u>(250,646)</u>	<u>(467,898)</u>
Total Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses), Net	<u>(211,886)</u>	<u>(247,543)</u>	<u>(459,429)</u>
Change in Net Position	551,671	(159,452)	392,219
Net Position at Beginning of Year, as restated	<u>21,091,949</u>	<u>14,915,907</u>	<u>36,007,856</u>
Net Position at End of Year	<u>\$ 21,643,620</u>	<u>\$ 14,756,455</u>	<u>\$ 36,400,075</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

FIDUCIARY FUNDS

STATEMENT OF FIDUCIARY NET POSITION

JUNE 30, 2016

	Private Purpose Trust Funds	Other Post Employment Trust Fund	Pension Trust Fund (as of December 31, 2015)	Agency Funds
<u>ASSETS</u>				
Cash and short-term investments	\$ 14,242	\$ -	\$ 40,388	\$ 47,663
Investments	464,935	783,728	41,512,834	-
Accounts receivable	-	-	2,104	69,062
Total Assets	<u>479,177</u>	<u>783,728</u>	<u>41,555,326</u>	<u>116,725</u>
<u>LIABILITIES AND NET POSITION</u>				
Accounts payable	17	-	-	26,035
Other liabilities	-	-	-	90,690
Total Liabilities	<u>17</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>116,725</u>
<u>NET POSITION</u>				
Total net position restricted for pensions and other purposes	<u>\$ 479,160</u>	<u>\$ 783,728</u>	<u>\$ 41,555,326</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

SOUTHBRIDGE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Ronald Plouffe, Airport Manager

We have our occupancy permit dated 9/11/2017 for the new administration building at the airport. It is a modern 2,840 sq. ft. building. There is a fantastic view of the runway and surrounding property. It houses office space for the airport manager. There is a dividable public conference room that is available for rent to civic organizations or anyone who has reason to have functions. Next to the manager's office, there is a pilot's lounge where pilots can do flight planning or just rest for the next leg of their flight. Other amenities include a locker room and a kitchenette. There are also (2) interconnected offices that are available for lease. They are carpeted and have approximately 200 sq. ft. each. One has a transaction window. All offices have direct access from the common corridor. Adjacent to the building is a brand parking lot.

Attached to the new administration building is a new 60ft. by 60ft. hangar that can accommodate up to 4 aircraft. This new space will help to increase our operating income.

The Red Baron Diner is now open with new management. The diner has been busy all summer and provides additional rental as well as additional fuel sales to the airport. There have also been many new people that have never experienced the airport and diner that enjoy themselves.

The vegetation on the West side of the runway was closing in on the 250 ft. distance from the center of the runway as required by the F.A.A.. Approximately 1 ½ years ago Mass D.O.T. brought in a company to kill off the vegetation. This summer the Town funded the clearing of the debris.

We are currently clearing the area south of the "T" hanger because it became a dumping area for old tires and such. We are also still finding debris from the tornado in that area. If and when we develop that area with new hangars, this clearing should save us some money.

The new gate entrance is now operating. I requested this project with Mass D.O.T. back when we first began conversations concerning the new admin building. The reason was safety. With one gate for tenants entering the property, there was an issue with people having to being in the same space as airplanes. Now tenants that have aircraft on the South tarmac can go directly to their airplanes and tenants on the East side can enter the East gate. Mass D.O.T. contributed the cost for this new gate.

As part of the new admin project, Mass D.O.T. installed a new security system that includes several HD cameras. All areas of the airport are covered including all areas inside as well as outside.

The old furnace (30 yrs. Old) needed to be replaced. It has been replaced with a new heat and air conditioning unit. This is necessary because the new operators are planning to be opened all year long. Also, the old single pane windows are being replaced with new sliding double pane windows which will help to insulate the building.

We just completed our annual State inspection and had an excellent review. The State Aeronautical Division conducts annual inspections of all general aviation airports in the state of Massachusetts.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Staff:

Wilfrid Cournoyer, Chairman, Principal Assessor and IT Manager
Mark Genereux, Principal Clerk
Francine Farland, Clerk

Elected Assessors:

Francis Bousquet
Diane Kokoszka

On behalf of the Board of Assessors, our staff, and myself, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the citizens of Southbridge for the co-operation extended to us in carrying out our functions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my staff for their hard work and dedication. They manage a myriad of complex and important functions under rigid deadlines and it is only through their diligent efforts that these important responsibilities are completed. In addition to managing and administering all tax taxation and valuation functions, our staff also administers all of the billing functions of the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds as well as the Information Technology Department.

During FY 2017, the Board of Assessors continued to implement policies and procedures that ensure the Town of Southbridge's taxpayers continued tax equity and operational efficiency. Our ongoing cyclical re-inspection program continues with our property reviewer inspecting parcels to insure that our records and assessments are accurate. This helps insure tax equity as well as being a necessary prerequisite for our certification of values.

During FY 2017 the Massachusetts Department of Revenue reviewed and approved our property values and New Growth. This means that the Town's assessed values represent full and fair cash value for taxation and was certified as such by the Department of Revenue.

The FY 2017 Tax Rate was \$20.57 per \$1000 of assessed value. This rate was determined by dividing the tax levy of \$19,194,079.45 by the total assessed value of all taxable Real and Personal property which was \$933,110,328. The following is a summary from the Tax Rate Recapitulation sheets as submitted to and approved by the Department of Revenue:

Amounts to be Raised

Total Appropriations:	58,992,734.62
Total Cherry Sheet Offsets and other amounts to be raised:	64,808.00
State & County Cherry Sheet Charges:	1,692,932.00
Allowance for Abatements & Exemptions:	<u>200,000.02</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE RAISED:	\$ 60,950,474.64

Estimated Receipts and Other Revenue Sources

Estimated Receipts - State:	24,004,898.00
Estimated Receipts - Local:	13,940,858.95
Revenue Appropriated for Particular Purposes:	3,760,638.24
Other Revenue Sources Appropriated to Reduce the Tax Rate	<u>50,000.00</u>

TOTAL REVENUE SOURCES: \$41,756,395.19

Summary

Amount to be raised:	60,950,474.64
Revenue Sources: Cherry Sheet and other sources	<u>41,756,395.19</u>

TOTAL REAL & PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX LEVY \$19,194,079.45

New Growth Distribution

Proposition 2 ½ allows a community to annually increase its levy limit by an amount based upon the valuation of certain new construction and other growth in the tax base that is not the result of property revaluation. The purpose of this provision is to recognize that new development results in additional municipal costs; for instance, the construction of a new housing development may result in increased school enrollment, public safety costs and so on.

This provision covers:

- New construction, additions, and alterations that result in an increase in assessed value
- Exempt property returned to the tax role
- Net increases in valuation for subdivision parcels.

New Growth is calculated by multiplying the increases in the assessed valuation by the prior year's tax rate.

New Growth

	VALUE		TAX RATE/\$1,000	NEW GROWTH
Residential	2,040,155	X	20.21	41,232
Commercial	643,222	X	20.21	13,000
Industrial	1,076,175	X	20.21	21,749
Personal Property	<u>9,831,000</u>	X	20.21	<u>198,685</u>
TOTAL	\$13,590,552			\$274,666

Tax Levy Limit

The levy limit is maximum amount of revenue a community can raise through real and personal property taxes. The levy limit changes every year based on a formula in the law. The following events result in permanent increases to the levy limit: an automatic 2½ % increase, new growth, and voter approved overrides. The levy limit can also be increased by debt exclusions and capital outlay expenditures, however, neither of these results in permanent increases. The following is the Town of Southbridge's FY 2017 levy limit:

FY 2016 Levy Limit	19,151,014
2 1/2 % Increase	478,775
<u>FY 2017 New Growth</u>	<u>274,666</u>
FY 2017 Levy Limit	19,904,455
<u>FY 2017 Debt Exclusion</u>	<u>218,995</u>
FY 2017 Maximum Allowable Tax Levy	20,123,450

Excess Levy Capacity

FY 2017 Maximum Allowable Levy	20,123,450
<u>FY 2017 Actual Tax Levy</u>	<u>19,194,079</u>
Excess Levy Capacity	929,371

This excess levy capacity is an additional amount that the community has the ability to raise in taxes under the provisions of Proposition 2 ½ but chose not to.

Distribution of Tax Levy

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>VALUATION BY CLASS</u>	<u>LEVY BY CLASS</u>	<u>% OF LEVY</u>
Residential	712,729,477	14,660,845.34	76.4%
Commercial	119,268,171	2,453,346.28	12.8%
Industrial	48,768,400	1,003,165.99	5.2%
Personal Property	52,344,280	1,076,721.84	5.6%
TOTALS	<u>\$933,110,328</u>	<u>\$19,194,079.45</u>	100.0%

Taxable Valuation Breakdown

Single Family	2,699	449,502,500
Condominium	168	12,112,300
Misc. Residential	26	6,139,800
Two Family	672	94,590,300
Three Family	317	45,027,036
Four + Family	254	70,517,300
Residential Land	924	17,373,700
Open Space	0	0
Commercial Properties	196	105,067,900
Industrial Properties	89	47,905,200
Industrial Electrical Generation	5	709,200
Chapter 61	42	77,279
Chapter 61A	33	149,683
Chapter 61B	5	332,550
Mixed Use	89	31,261,300
Individual Personal Property	180	5,261,340
Corporation Personal Property	160	14,673,780
Locally Assessed Utilities	3	23,833,820
DOR Assessed Telephone Company	1	3,773,100
DOR Assessed Gas Pipeline	1	269,400
Locally Assessed Wireless Companies	4	489,040
Solar PILOT	2	4,043,800
TOTAL TAXABLE PROPERTY	5,870	\$933,110,328
TOTAL EXEMPT PROPERTY		\$205,340,100
TOTAL VALUE OF ALL PROPERTY		\$1,138,450,428

Personal Exemptions by Clause

Type	# EXEMPTIONS	AMOUNT EXEMPTED
Clause 17 D	18	3,150.00
Clause 22 - Veterans	46	18,400.00
Clause 22B - Veterans	1	1,500.00
Clause 22C - Veterans	1	1,500.00
Clause 22E - Veterans	14	13,500.00
Clause 37 - Blind	5	2,187.50
Clause 41C - Elderly	9	4,500.00
Clause 41A-Deferral	1	1,384.21
TOTALS	95	\$46,121.71

Motor Vehicle Excise Tax

	AMOUNT COMMITED
2015 Excise Issued in FY 2017	30.73
2016 Excise Issued in FY 2017	158,285.22
2017 Excise Issued in FY 2017	1,509,248.20
TOTALS	\$1,667,564.15

Summary of Water / Sewer Enterprise Funds (From FY 2017 Recap)

REVENUES	SEWER	WATER
User Charges	3,650,000.00	3,447,968.00
Other Departmental Revenue	404,831.00	400,000.00
Investment Income	3,000.00	5,000.00
Retained Earnings Appropriated	7,485.36	79,888.02
Total Revenues	\$4,065,316.36	\$3,932,856.02
COSTS APPROPRIATED		
Expenses	2,979,938.36	2,649,549.02
Capital Outlay	460,000.00	675,000.00
Other- Indirect Costs	625,378.00	608,307.00
Total Costs	\$4,065,316.36	\$3,932,856.02

SCTV CABLE STUDIO

Staff: Jim Cosgrove – Studio Manager
Max Gullekson – Office Manager
Mark Arpin – Cameraman/Editor
Bill May – Production Assistant/Editor
Steve Tieri - Production Assistant/Editor

Cable Studio is basically the Communication Center for both Town Hall, and the Town itself! We cover all Town Council, School Committee, and other related meetings and events. Just this past year we have produced 91 original programs, NOT including the previously mentioned Town Council, School Committee meetings. Some of our original programming includes: several episodes of Town Manager Ron San Angelo's "Celebrating Southbridge" programs, which included interviews with both town & school officials. Ron has also begun a series of programs entitled "Southbridge Business Spotlight" – he has already taped 2 episodes, and plans several more – the most recent spotlight was on the new Chiropractor's office in town. Office Manager Max Gullekson also continues to produce quite a few programs, including information on the latest elections, and a series of helpful shows on growing your summer tomatoes – a great variety of programming, and lots more to come! We have also continued to work with the Jacob Edwards Library on a series of very entertaining & informative programs, including a tour of the Library, hosted by Max and Margaret Morrissey, Library Director, , and several concerts and lectures held there. We purchased a camera for the library last year and have developed a very effective system whereby someone at the library will tape the event, then one of us here at the studio will edit the program for air.

At Margaret's suggestion, we also developed a series of Playlists for the programs that we uploaded to YouTube – that way, a person can choose from Municipal Meetings, School Events, Library events, etc., when they are looking for a specific program to watch – makes viewing on YouTube much easier and allows folks to more easily see all that we have to offer on our Southbridge Community Television YouTube page! Mark Arpin, our cameraman and editor, was instrumental in organizing this project and has been very busy digitizing some of our old videotaped programs so that they can be uploaded to You Tube or played on air!

As for other projects around the studio and office, we have also been making great strides! For starters, we cleaned out a real mess in our adjoining office and have now turned it into an extra office/editing station – this has given us a great deal more room and has enabled us to organize the old equipment that we cleared out. Now that I am full time, Max Gullekson and I have the time for projects like this and we are now photographing each piece of old equipment, looking up the value of each and working with Kim Ferron on having an entire list of this equipment that can be sold on an auction site – that will both gain us a lot of room in our closet, and, hopefully, bring in some cash for our budget. There is a lot of equipment to list, but it will be worth the effort in the end! Other projects that we are working on include bringing in a new A/V vendor to help us with a few improvements to our studio – including MUCH needed improvements to the audio in the Chamber when taping meetings and hearings – this will be taking place within the next few weeks. The studio has also been a bit busy, between Ron's programs and the local Church group who tapes their "Voz de Cristo" (Voice of Christ) program here – great group of folks! We also recently developed some brochures to publicize the studio – it lists some of our programming, mentions the fact that we are always looking for new volunteers and programming. It also mentions that we plan to hold a few volunteer "Workshops" in the near future, which leads me to the next section of this report:

Next Steps

We plan to try to add to our list of volunteers, and that is where the "Workshops" come in – there will be a series of days in which we will offer training in camerawork, editing, etc., to those folks who may be interested in learning a new skill, and hopefully we will find a few folks to help with studio or field camera, editing, etc., and possibly add to our programming, as well. Those events will be advertised soon.

COMMUNITY CENTER / COUNCIL ON AGING

Southbridge Council on Aging, which is a 6 member Board of Directors, holds its monthly meetings at the Southbridge Community Center, 153 Chestnut Street, Southbridge, MA and strives to meet the needs of the Senior Citizens throughout the Community. More than 15,000 seniors pass through the doors of this Community Center/Senior Center yearly, utilizing the facility for socialization, medical information, Social Security information, functions and referrals.

The Senior Center is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. The Center provides many services including, exercise classes, yoga classes, Zumba classes, weekly senior bingo, a wide variety of socialization trips, etc.. Social Security information, Medicare and Medicaid issues are dealt with through the Council On Aging Director, Michael J. Trombley, who is available throughout the day. As requested, a SHINE Councilor is brought in the building for Medicare and Insurance issues as well. In addition, on the first Monday of each month, approximately 50 Senior Citizens and members of the Southbridge Senior Citizens Association meet for their monthly business meeting and luncheon. A speaker is invited each month to provide information pertaining to all types of issues from prescription medications, to Social Security changes, as well as moving assets to family members, Medical information, etc. At some of the monthly meetings an entertainer is provided for their listening pleasure, and, following the speakers presentation, a luncheon is served. The Center also offers glaucoma checks, diabetes, immunization and flu clinics, and a yearly mammogram test is accomplished for the women. These services are offered by either Harrington Hospital or the Webster Visiting Nurses Assoc. The Center's walking and bowling clubs are very active. The Southbridge Senior Citizens Association, which is a friends group that uses the Senior Center daily, sponsored and presented a large-scale yard sale this past year. In addition, an annual August picnic, as well as Christmas Party took place for more than 80 Senior Citizens. The profits earned by their programs help defray costs to the seniors for trips for educational or social events.

Council on Aging works hand-and-hand with the Tri-Valley Elder Services Corp., Harrington Memorial Hospital, Meals on Wheels, home making services, etc. A monthly calendar of events is provided for the seniors, edited by the Program Director. Over 200 copies per month are distributed, for their reading pleasure.

The Municipal budget for the Council on Aging/Community Center for FY 2017 was \$97,996.00. This figure reflects the budget costs of operating the Community Center/ Senior Center, as well as a salary for the full time Director. The Director applied for a Formula Grant in the amount of \$32,650.00, to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Boston MA, in which the Town received the total amount. Of this amount, \$7,200.00 was budgeted to continue an exercise program for more than 100 Senior Citizens within this Community, three days per week, held at the Senior Center. This program has proven to be an exciting one for those who participate. In addition, the sum of \$11,363.00 was paid to the Custodian, who works 18 hours per week. All of the above services are paid for through this grant. In addition, The Council on Aging Department, received permission through the Town Manager's Office, to employ a new position titled Program Coordinator/Outreach worker beginning May 1, 2016. This position is also paid for through the Formula Grant in the amount of \$14,076.00 per year. The total amount of hours for this new position is 18 hours per week. This new position has been a great asset to the COA as well as the Senior Center in general. Many new programs have been initiated with this new position and in time will provide the seniors visiting the center with many more informational options as well as social events.

As Director of the Southbridge Council on Aging, I wish to thank the COA members, as well as the entire Southbridge Town Hall staff for their contribution in making this a very successful year for the COA. I also wish to extend a very special thank you to all COA members for their endless work and desire to make the Casaubon Senior Center a great facility for the senior citizens of Southbridge to live and socialize.

Respectfully,
Michael J. Trombley, Director/Council on Aging

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Administration and Engineering

In addition to the statistics for street, driveway, sewer and water permits along with annual contracts for materials, projects and services, the division is constantly responding to requests for information regarding the town's utilities.

MAJOR PROJECT REVIEWS

A substantial amount of time is spent in project review and guidance. The reviews can be for the Planning Board, Conservation Commission or for town projects. Some of the major projects are as follows:

Overland Street Water and Sewer Replacement

DPW Director provided technical assistance and onsite engineering during the installation of the water line and sewer line on Overland Street. This was phase I of the street reconstruction. The project was funded by CDBG.

Lower Chestnut Street Drainage

DPW Director provided technical assistance and onsite engineering during the replacement of the drainage system on lower Overland Street. This was phase II of the street reconstruction. The project was funded by CDBG.

Clemence Hill Reconstruction

Finish top coat paving was completed in the May of 2017. Some drainage slopes and ditch stabilization remain ongoing. This is a Chapter 90 funded project.

Dresser Street Culvert Design

Engineering has been completed by Tighe & Bond to 90% design for replacement culvert on Dresser Street. Plans have been submitted to Mass DOT for review prior to bidding of the project. This is a Chapter 90 funded project.

DPW Engineering Department has been working many projects in FY17 including bid out projects for DPW and assisting other departments with bid documents and proper bidding procedures. Some of the project bids started and completed in FY17 are listed below:

- 215 Morris Street Demolition (BOH/CDBG) – bid, under construction in summer 2017
- 784 Main Street Demolition (BOH) – bid, under construction in summer 2017
- Central Street Parking Lot (CDBG) – reviewed design
- Police Fence and Gate Project – bid and construction
- Library Gutter Replacement – Bidding and Construction Completed
- Library Plastering Repair – Bidding Completed FY17, Construction Summer 2017
- HVAC Service Contract – bid and awarded
- Wastewater Primary Clarifier Drive Replacement Contract – bid, materials ordered, fall 2017 installation.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Sludge Flowmeter Replacement – materials purchased
- Franklin Terrance Retaining Wall Survey and Design – survey completed, design ongoing
- Guelphwood Road flooding and beaver issue – Guelphwood Road has been closed during FY17 due to flooding caused by beaver activity. Planned beaver removal activities still are ongoing.
- Solar credit reallocation and use to pay off lighting upgrade loans.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Upgrades

Department has been working closely with our consultant (Stantec) on overseeing the construction of the following items:

- Demolition of the Waste Activated Sludge Holding Tank Building (WASHT Building)
- De-commission of unused equipment, and bypass of Biotowers. Demolition and de-commissioning construction was completed in the summer and fall of 2016.

Design of the dewatering equipment and phosphorus removal by chemical addition was completed and bid in the spring of 2017. Construction is starting in the summer of 2017.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) application was submitted and funding awarded for the Biotower replacement and upgrade. The final design for the Biotower replacement upgrade project was completed in the winter of 2016-17. The project was bid in the spring of 2017 and is now in construction in the summer of 2017.

Water Treatment and Distribution Projects

Department has been working closely with our consultant (Stantec) on a coagulant/polymer pilot study. This study is to test the effectiveness of several different pretreatment chemicals in an effort to increase filter run time, decrease process discharge waste, and improve filtration effectiveness.

Department has been working closely and reviewing multiple upgrades and expansions to the water distribution system in Charlton

Department worked with MassDEP, Casella and the Town of Charlton to reach an agreement for the installation of a waterline in Charlton to service residents on Berry Corner, Eleanor Lane and H. Foote Road. Design to occur in the Fall of 2017 with the planned construction in Spring of 2018.

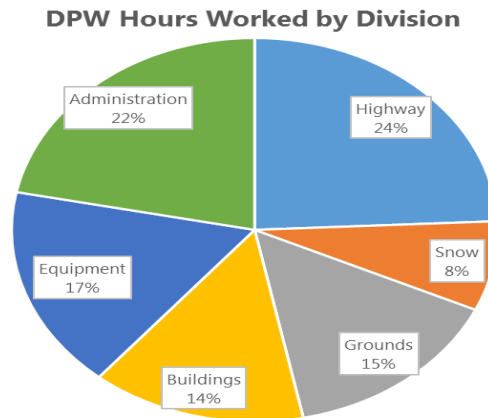
GENERAL STATISTICS			
Driveway Permits Issued	8	House Numbers Issued	4
Streets Accepted	0	Streets Paved	0
Street Opening Permits	55	Sewer Connection Permits	6
Cemetery Burials	42	Water Connection Permits	10
Cemetery Foundations or Markers Set	18	Cemetery Lots Sold	15

OPERATIONS

The operations division has repair and maintenance as its primary mission. It is not adequately equipped or staffed to take on major construction projects. While the demand and desire is there, the operations division does not have sufficient manpower to maintain all its facilities to a desirable level. Accordingly, work is more reactive than proactive.

Seasonal variations and reaction to emergencies strongly influence work activity in the operations division. Emergencies range from damage to traffic signal and to downed trees.

The operations division is staffed with an operation manager, a foreman, two crew chiefs, one building maintenance person, two heavy equipment mechanics, one assistance mechanic, two heavy equipment operators, five maintenance/light equipment operators, and two custodians, for a total staff of 17. One maintenance/light equipment operator resigned and was replaced with a new employee in FY17. Two employees were on workmen’s compensation leave for a total of 670 hours.



*Does not include Managerial and Engineering Department Staff

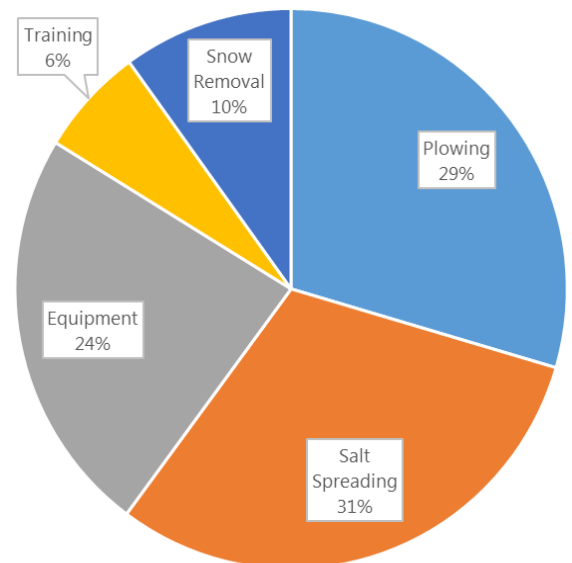
During the summer of 2016, DPW utilized two high school students provided by Center of Hope program at no cost to the Town. These seasonal employees assisted with cemetery maintenance and parks and recreation maintenance.

SNOW AND ICE

Following is a listing of the general actions and expenses incurred by the department for snow and ice. The winter of 2016-2017 was an active winter with multiple snow storm events and frequent icy conditions.

FY17 winter season had more than twice the number of plowable events as FY16 winter season, with a total snow fall of 51.3” as measured at the Water Treatment Plant. Department plowed 12 separate storms, six with in-house staff and six with contractors, and conducted 26 material spreading events. While clearing of the public parking lots and sidewalks is performed after every plowable event, full-scale nighttime snow removal operations were avoided this past season. Sidewalks are cleared by a contractor, with the contractor being called in on eight events.

Snow Breakdown

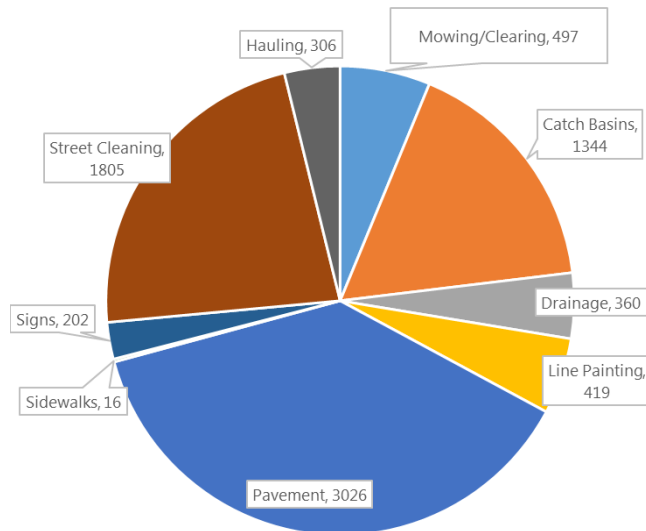


The winter costs were kept reasonable by recalibration of spreading equipment, utilization of in-house staff for smaller snow plow events, and use of the winter compensation program to reduce overtime payments by \$6,595. A total of 160 hours of snow and ice overtime were converted to snow and ice compensation time of 240 hours of paid time off. Minimal amounts of both treated and white salt remain in stock going into the FY18 winter season.

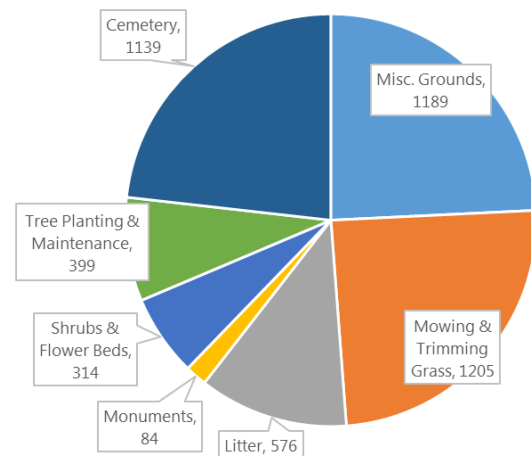
The following table summarizes the winter expenses as of June 30, 2017.

	Appropriation	Expenses	Balance	Net Deficit
<u>Overtime</u>	\$55,000	\$84,085.12	(\$29,085.12)	
<u>Expenses</u>	\$345,000	\$384,852.43	(\$39,852.43)	
Treated Salt (1656 tons)	\$150,000	\$131,445.69		
Salt (2241 tons)	\$125,000	\$147,855.36		
Sand	\$5,000	\$2,800.20		
Contractor plowing	\$35,000	\$88,236.76		
Equipment repairs and other misc. costs	\$30,000	\$14,514.42		
<u>Subtotal</u>	\$400,000	\$468,937.55	(\$68,937.55)	(\$68,937.55)

Highway Task Breakdown, by Hours



Grounds Task Breakdown, by Hours



Spring Clean Up

In the spring all of the sand, leaf litter, and other debris in the roadways must be swept. By the end of the season, 316 tons of street sweepings were collected and approximately 285 tons were removed from the catch basins. This material is removed to the Landfill and utilized for daily cover operations in accordance with Massachusetts Regulations. This is currently done at no cost to the Town. In the near future the disposal costs for sweeping and catch basin material of \$70 to \$80/ton will need to be included in the budget, or approximately \$50,000. In addition to sweeping streets and parking lots, the fields have to be prepared for the spring ball season and Oak Ridge Cemetery and the monuments need to be prepared for Memorial Day.

Parks and Fields
 Summer finds the operations division heavily involved with mowing and trimming approximately 80 acres of parks, recreational facilities and Oak Ridge Cemetery.

Leaf Removal

During the fall, approximately 20.74 tons of leaves were removed from the parks, Oak Ridge Cemetery, and some streets. Removal of leaves from streets has been reduced due in part to a program of free curbside pickup of leaves by the landfill operator (Cassella). In spite of this service and a town by-law that prohibits residents from raking leaves to the street, residents from several areas continue to place leaves in the gutter and these wind up being picked up by DPW.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Department is fully responsible for DPW facility at 185 Guelphwood Road, Town Hall, and Library. Two full time custodians serve the Town hall and Library. Maintenance is also provided on an emergency and planned basis. On occasion, we assist in maintenance repairs to the Fire and Police Stations as well as the Armory and RMV. The senior tax rebate program participants help to clean the DPW facility in conjunction with a crew from the Center of Hope.

Town-wide lighting system upgrades were done as part of an energy efficiency program. Old lighting was upgraded to energy efficient LED lighting. Buildings upgraded include the DPW facility, Water Treatment Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Town Hall, Library, Fire Department, Police Department, Community Center, and RMV (Larochele Way). In addition, the decorative street lights on Main Street were upgrade to LED bulbs.

WATER DIVISION

Water Division is managed and operated by WhiteWater, Inc. under a long-term contract with the town. They provide the necessary personnel and expertise to operate and maintain town-owned facilities and equipment to provide a high quality product for the town.

The system services approximately 16,850 people in the community of Southbridge and extends its service into areas of the neighboring communities of Charlton and Sturbridge. The Town's water is supplied by five surface water reservoirs with a combined storage capacity of approximately one billion gallons. The safe yield of the existing supplies is 4.82 million gallons per day, and the registered withdrawal amount is 2.0 million gallons per day. Average daily consumption for the year was 1.607 million gallons per day. The watershed encompasses a total area of approximately 4.26 square miles in two states, approximately 3,000 acres of which is Town owned.

There are approximately 100 miles of water main throughout the Towns providing water to approximately 4,600 service connections of various sizes. The distribution system also contains:

- 687 fire hydrants
- Approximately 2,325 valves
- Approximately 4600 meter.
- 7 different pressure zones or service areas
- 4 above ground storage tanks with a combined capacity of 4,350,000 gallons

The majority of the system is supplied by gravity; however, it is necessary to use booster-pumping stations in some service areas. There are currently three underground hydro pneumatic pumping stations, an additional pumping station which supplies the storage tank on Dennison Hill and surrounding areas and a pumping station at Mass Avenue which supplies the Massachusetts Turnpike Facilities, etc. in Charlton, MA. There is also a large pumping station located at the Cohasse Brook Reservoir that will pump water from the Cohasse Reservoir to supply the Hatchet Brook Reservoirs in time of low precipitation. The Cohasse pumping station has the capacity to pump approximately 2,400,000 gallons per day to replenish the primary water supply reservoirs on Hatchet Brook.

Statistics

In 2016 the Division recorded a total of 43.55" of precipitation at the weather station located at the Water Treatment plant, the 30-year average is 51.66". In the first six months of 2017, 25.44 inches of precipitations was recorded compared to a 30-year average of 25.57 inches. In the winter of 2016/2017 the weather station located at the Water Treatment plant recorded a total snow fall of 51.30". The Water Treatment Facility produced 555.781 Million gallons of water in 2016; this total was 26.5 Million less gallons than 2015. For the first six months of 2017, 256.949 Million gallon of water was produced, which was down 23.28 Million compared to the same time period in 2016. The Division replaced/added 31 meters in system.

Administrative

The Division completed and returned the 2016 Public Water System Annual Statistical Report form and Comprehensive Report (Stats Report) to the DEP. The Division has extended the agreement "Utility Cloud" to provide the department with 21st century answer to asset management, and work order system. In 2016 all of the department's databases have been converted to the Cloud based system, leading to a system that can give operators up to date field information. This will also allow much better tracking of system asset age, helping to predict the life cycle of components further aiding in Capital planning. The system is currently handling all customer and asset work orders, and manages the following programs: backflow testing, uni-directional hydrant flushing, gate valve exercising, and hydrant painting. During the winter of 2016/2017 the Water Dept. personal assisted the Highway Department with after hour snow removal. This assistance allowed for more storms to be handled with in-house staff only.

Water Treatment Facility

The Filter Plant staff, working with Stantec Engineering, has begun a coagulant/polymer pilot study. This study is to test the effectiveness of several different pretreatment chemicals in an effort to increase filter run time, decrease process discharge waste, and improve filtration effectiveness. Jar testing indicated that 3-5 coagulant and 2 polymers should be tested. DEP approval for the study has been granted and the study is still ongoing at this time.

Reservoir #5 is a gravity fed line that comes directly into the filter plant. After physical upgrades were made to the main line and programming updates were made in the SCADA system, we had a successful season run using that water source. An electrical savings of approximately \$3000 per month was realized. Chemical demands were reduced, also providing lower disinfection byproduct results during that period. The aesthetics of the finished drinking water to the town was also improved during the hot summer months.

The Filter Plant was originally designed with a backwash recycle system that was not put into use due to several operational hurdles. After several modification and upgrades, we were able to put that system to use. We are currently recycling at a rate of 3% of the raw water influent flow. Over time this will result in reduced flows to the waste water system from the Water Treatment Plant.

Mass DEP had requested that we begin replacing flow metering equipment at the Treatment Plant as part of our upcoming raw water withdrawal registration update. Step one of that initiative was to install a new 16 inch raw water mag meter. Previously the Filter Plant had no master meter. The system was designed to operate by taking the smaller "differential pressure" style flow meters on each filter unit and tally the flows to give a total flow. The technology now available allowed us to install the new 16 inch meter in the raw water line, and to date we have observed an approximately 4% improvement in flow calculation/recording. Mag meter replacement on the High and Low service water distribution lines has been installed and programming of those meters is scheduled for July of 2017.

Operators at the Filter Plant have collectively developed a "hand operation" SOP. This is a tool we have chosen to develop and will have on file in case of a cyber-attack. We believe that with this SOP we should be able to run the Filter Plant manually at a minimum capacity to still meet State requirements of water quality without the SCADA system for a short period of time.

Cyber Security - Town's computer service provider GDS has been onsite to provide hardware upgrades at the Water treatment Plant. Department has also asked for bids and has begun the process of a modern cyber

security evaluation for the Filtration Plant from SCADA system experts. This will be an ever evolving process to keep our system protected from threat. Woodard & Curran was the low bid and the program is expected to begin later in 2017.

Raw and finished water pumps have begun to see diminished pumping capacity. We have undertaken a phased rebuilding process of these 4 pumps. Raw water pump #1 was the first to be reconditioned. After the reconditioning utilizing the latest updates to pump parts and coating technology, Raw water pump #1 is now pumping back at designed capacity, and with a 16% reduction in electrical demand. Finished water pump #1 is next on the scheduled for overhaul in late 2017.

Garland Industries had conducted a roof inspection at the Filter Plant and determined that the roof is in need of repair or replacement. After further review, including cost comparison, it was determined that roof replacement was the most cost effective route to pursue. Bidding is scheduled for September 2017.

Reservoirs

The system's five dams were all inspected in late 2016 and they all a passing evaluation. Hatchet pond dam did have a small list of items that needs to be addressed in its spillway to keep the dam in good condition into the future. Fuss & O'Neil has been contacted to draft a scope of work, and allow the town to request bids for the repair.

Mass DEP had requested that we conduct a bathometric survey on all five of the town reservoirs as part of our upcoming raw water withdrawal registration update. This is to give an updated and accurate capacity of the town's reservoirs. The last survey of this type was conducted in the late 1960s. Using modern sonar equipment and GPS imagery, we now have very accurate water volume figures to help calculate capacity as we draw down the reservoirs during times of higher usage. The survey also revealed that we have approximately 1% more capacity than previously thought.

In August of 2016, the State of Massachusetts Drought Task issued a state-wide outdoor water use ban. This was due to the extreme dry pattern that was experienced in 2015-2016. Southbridge water system had a low point in reservoir capacity of 69.4% in November of 2016. This was still within the normal range for our system although it was on the lower side. Precipitation returned to normal levels in the spring of 2017 and reservoir capacity is now running approximately 10% above normal. The State lifted the outdoor water ban in March of 2017.

Distribution System

The Distribution crew replaced 3 hydrants as they were all pre 1945 with 2 port design with no breakaway. We will continue our hydrant and valve replacement program throughout the year. The distribution crew replaced 2 gate valves that were found to be inoperative.

A live insertion valve was installed on Chestnut Street to facilitate the redevelopment project on Chestnut and Overland Street. A live insertion valve was installed on Mass Avenue. The high pressure line going to Charlton has had a history of inoperative butterfly valves. The installation of this valve gives greater ability to shut down the Charlton line in the event of a break A live insertion valve was installed on the high pressure line on Route 169 at the corner of Berry Corner Road during the 16" LS water main extension project. The installation of this valve gives greater ability to shut down the Charlton line in the event of a water main break. Staff conducted daily inspections of the Low Service 16" water main extension. This extension extended the LS water main down Route 169 to the intersection of Berry Corner Road as part of the Charlton/Exxon agreement.

Construction of new above-ground additions to the three booster pump stations is complete. Daily pump station rounds will now be conducted without making a confined space entry. Entries of this type will now only be conducted once a week during maintenance activities utilizing two operators.

Sanitary surveys of all water storage tanks were completed with no deficiencies found.

Ribeiro Construction began the Overland Street water main project on 10/28. Approximately 1000 feet of 8" water main will be added to loop the system from Morris Street to Chestnut Street, and tie in all of the homes on Overland that are currently overtaxing the existing 2" line.

Mass DOT approved and funded a 4" water main installation to service Upham Farms Condominiums (Charlton off of Route 20). The condo complex wells are very much over the secondary limit for sodium due to highway activities.

On May 15, 2017 a vehicle accident resulted in a hydrant hit in front of 309 Worcester Street. The resulting shock caused a water main break approximately 100' downstream. A three foot section of 6" water main was removed and replaced. Hydrant #174 was reinstalled.

Commercial Drive Pumps #2 and #3 had VFD failures during emergency generator exercising activities. It was determined that a defective diode was the cause. The manufacturer supplied the updated repair kits and water department staff effected repairs.

System-wide hydrant flushing was aborted in the fall of 2016 due to the State drought declaration. Normal flushing activity was conducted in the spring of 2017.

All Whitewater contract obligations were met in Fiscal year 2017.

SEWER DIVISION

Southbridge Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) successfully treated 785.8 million gallons of wastewater from July 2016 through June 2017. Annual total treated for 2016 was 770.7 million gallons. This was a relatively dry period of time and the WWTP performed well.

Several major equipment upgrades were put out to bid and replacements were associated with the plant construction activities and equipment replacements were completed this year under Capital improvements.

Although severe high flows were not experienced in 2016, challenges still exist in the operation and maintenance of the wastewater facility and pumping stations during wet weather/high flow conditions. Work continues on repairs needed when found during TV inspection to include short liners, root treatment and grouting work.

Composting operation has been fairly stable during the year with the use of a ground pallet wood product that creates beneficial use finish compost that is marketed by Veolia North America thru a marketing vendor Agresource. Chipped/ground pallets have become the only reliable source of composting amendment to date. The composting operation consumed 7,260 cubic yards of ground pallets in 2016. The finished compost material produced in 2016 meets the Town's DEP permit and can be used as a plant fertilizer or ornamental plant mulch, which material was utilized for this purpose at the AO Park over the summer. Compost is free to Town residents.

There have been odor calls during the wide swings in temperatures during seasonal changes. A meeting was held with DPW, Veolia, DEP, and Stantec Engineering on February 8, 2017 to discuss off-site odor from the WWTP. An informal agreement was reached that when the WWTP upgrades are completed in the summer of 2018, the odor study would be updated to determine what impacts were made to abatement or reduce odors with the upgraded. At that point a direction for odor control could be determined by the Town. The Town-wide odor study in 2009 of all sewer system components was completed and would require significant Capital investment to install odor control equipment. The cost estimate in 2009 was \$5 to \$11 million, depending on what areas were treated.

Millennium Power Plant and the Town of Southbridge continue a good partnership to use WWTP effluent in the cooling tower operations at the power plant.

Regarding the staff, "the folks that keep the plant running 24/7," Veolia is proud to report that the plant staff has a safety record of 6.5 years with no lost time accidents which continues today.

Lastly, plant staff continues to improve efficiencies of the process operations to meet strict seasonal requirements that are in current NPDES permit. Various processes have surpassed 31 years of operation and are in need of Capital improvements or replacements. A six-year Capital recommendation program is in place to keep the planning process moving forward to service the residents of the Town of Southbridge.

The Town's contract operator for the Wastewater treatment and sewer collection system, Veolia North America, continues to work with the Town to provide recommendations for Capital improvement projects that upgrade equipment at the facility and improve processes to meet the ever-changing regulations. Veolia has installed many of the recommended improvements at no additional cost to the Town. Other, more expensive items are put out for bid and installed by outside contractors. The aggressive maintenance program instituted by Veolia as part of their contract operations of the system has extended the life of much of the original equipment, at this time, considered past the end of its useful/designed life.

Following plant upgrades and major equipment replacements were completed in Fiscal Year 2017:

- Rebuilt ABF lift pump #2 and #3 which pumps all the flow received at WWTP into the secondary treatment process.
- Continued ferric chloride feed equipment rental from Kemira for seasonal phosphorus removal and to meet aluminum limit in NPDES permit. No exceedances of permit for Total Phosphorus and Aluminum.
- Several manholes raised or lowered in collection system to road grade.
- Various bids completed for Bio-Tower rehab, new sludge dewatering centrifuges, flow meters, chemical feed system, and primary clarifier drive.
- Headworks step screen rebuilding by manufacturer was completed to prevent failure.
- New service truck ordered for WWTP activities.
- Airport pumping station installation and sewer lines to Airport buildings was completed.

Collection System Activities:

The collection system repair and maintenance is part of PSG/Veolia's contract with the Town. PSG/Veolia strives to complete the work on a rotational basis to achieve the annual goals for T.V. and flushing work. Annual goals (08/01 – 07/31) are 4.5 miles for TV work and 9.0 miles for flushing work.

The following summarizes the collection system activities:

- TV work and flushing annual requirements were met as part of the contract
- In November 2016, Inland Waters installed 4 short liners in the Cole Avenue main sewer line to repair areas of cracked/fractured pipe. Cost of \$7,100.
- In July 2016 and May 2017 Dukes root control treated 7,848 feet of sewer pipe with root intrusion found during TV work in the collection system. Cost of \$12,478.
- In August 2016 Inland Waters installed 2 short liners in the Pinedale Street easement main sewer line. Cost of \$3,550.
- In August/September 2016 Inland Waters grouted pipe joints from Oak Street through the Pinedale main easement sewer line to the High Street main line and cleaned a section of easement line in the wooded/wet area near the old Town Pool area. Cost of \$18,909.
- WWTP personnel responded to 62 emergency calls in 2016. Collection system/pump station represented 38 of those emergency calls and the WWTP represented 24 calls.

Handling and Disposal of Septage and Finished Compost

Septage is accepted from local haulers during normal working hours 7 days per week. It is discharged into a 14,000 gallon underground tank and pumped into the headworks of the plant over a 24 hour period. 88,250 gallons were processed in 2016. Finished compost is disposed of by Veolia's vendor Agresource Inc. 5,637 cubic yards were disposed of in 2016.

NPDES Permit Compliance

A monthly review of permit compliance is summarized in the table below. Current plant design flow is 3.77 MGD. The on-site lab at the WWTP performs short hold time laboratory and process analysis while outside labs perform. The plant performed well as shown in the Table below

Month	Exceedance recorded	Causes
July, 2016	Effluent E-Coli	All processes were checked extensively with no issues noted. The outside lab checked their QA/QC with no issues noted. Unknown cause of high E-Coli results. Retesting showed no issues.
August, 2016	NONE	
September, 2016	NONE	
October, 2016	NONE	
November, 2016	NONE	
December, 2017	NONE	
January, 2017	NONE	
February, 2017	NONE	
March, 2017	NONE	
April, 2017	NONE	
May, 2017	NONE	
June, 2017	NONE	

Flows at the WWTP

Month	Total Flow Treated (MG)	Total Flow Delivered to Millennium Power	Total Blowdown Flow Treated From Millennium Power
July, 2016	53.80	23.80	12.34
August, 2016	52.82	17.45	12.45
September, 2016	49.88	22.25	11.48
October, 2016	58.28	24.09	11.67
November, 2016	54.34	12.02	7.47
December, 2016	64.83	12.50	9.17
January, 2017	80.05	17.10	8.67
February, 2017	67.11	7.12	5.71
March, 2017	69.48	5.64	4.54
April, 2017	98.83	21.39	9.05
May, 2017	71.23	8.32	5.17
June, 2017	65.18	20.30	9.34
12 month total	785.84	191.98	107.05

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Rosemary Scrivens, Director Economic Development & Planning

Department Description/Responsibilities

- Supports local businesses of all sizes and industries and facilitates connections to business assistance resources and tools
- Markets the Town of Southbridge to outside businesses and realtors, which includes maintaining a current inventory of available commercial and industrial sites/properties for sale or lease.
- Develops and implements short and long term economic development strategies, including business retention, expansion, and recruitment
- Administers the Town's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)
- Leads and coordinates the activities of the Economic Development Commission.
- Collaborates with and helps steer the Town's Redevelopment Authority and the Southbridge Business Partnership to encourage active, appropriate membership and to help carry out the department's economic development strategies.
- Performs administrative and professional work in planning, organizing and directing all Planning Board services and activities and in the development of planning and land use controls

FY 2017 Achievements/Activities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & MISCELLANEOUS

- Met on an ongoing basis with businesses of all sizes and types, discussed challenges and connected owners to appropriate resources.
- Continued to grow and enhance the Southbridge Business Partnership by serving on the Steering Committee, taking the lead on website maintenance, community outreach, and business resource connections. The group has grown to 52 partners during FY 2017, and now meets monthly. During this period it sponsored the 4th of July Concert on the Common and started planning to co-sponsor the Town's Oktoberfest planned for September, 2017.
- Worked with two manufacturers to find larger space, to keep them in Town.
- Organized and facilitated MassDOT Road Safety Audits for two downtown intersections. These projects have now progressed to the process to obtain federal and state highway funds.
- Managed the consulting firm that completed the Town's first Economic Development Plan, published in December 2016. The department participated directly in extensive public outreach and event organization in order to get the highest level of public input as possible.
- Participated in ongoing basis on Distressed Property Committee.
- Led the Town's effort to submit a successful application under the Commonwealth's Green Communities Program. This included guiding the appropriate subcommittees and the Town Council through the adoption of the Stretch Building Code, Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy, and the Solar Bylaw. The Town was notified in Feb. 2017 that it had been designated as a Green Community and awarded \$206,130 in grant funds to implement eligible energy efficiency measures.
- Submitted successful grant application to MA DEP under the Electric Vehicle Incentive Program that yielded \$7,500 toward the purchase of a fully electric vehicle to be used as a pool car for multi-departmental staff field work. The application also yielded \$7,500 toward the purchase and installation of an electric vehicle charging station. Took the lead on the research and purchase of the vehicle.
- Re-started the town's Economic Development Commission, which involved carrying over one existing member, and recruiting five new members.

- Participated as a panel speaker for the Greater Worcester Community Foundation event on June 6, 2017.
- Continued to analyze the amount of developable Town-owned industrial land on Commercial Drive, and the market value.
- Connected at least two investors with a historic tax credit expert to try and trigger redevelopment of two old structures in Town. One investor ended up hiring the expert and is proceeding to apply for these tax credits.
- Worked with several commercial building owners to encourage removal of blight, recruitment of desirable tenant businesses, and/or sale of property.
- Provided E.D. presentations at two Rotary Club meetings.
- Worked with two large industrial property owners in Southbridge to submit applications for the Commonwealth's Site Readiness Grant Program. One ended up submitting an application.
- Worked on a MassWorks Infrastructure grant application for infrastructure related to United Lens expansion on Worcester St.
- Started working with owners of the CT Renaissance Faire to find a large, appropriate tract of land as a permanent home for the Faire in Southbridge.
- Participated in CMRPC Regional Brownfields Committee
- Served on Secondary School Redesign Committee – attended four meetings.
- Attended several valuable downtown technical assistance workshops sponsored by the Commonwealth.
- Attended the Commonwealth's Economic Development Summit on Oct. 19, 2016.
- Attended several CMRPC events throughout year, including the Fall 2016 Legislative Breakfast.
- Attended several Chamber events to network with businesses throughout the year.
- For new full-time Town Planner position: researched job description and salary ranges from wide array of sources (other towns, CMRPC, etc.), fine-tuned job description, helped author advertisement, conducted outreach for recruitment, reviewed all resumes, and provided input on preferred candidates to interview.

CDBG GRANT ADMINISTRATION

- FY 13 EDF Grant (1-11 Central St.)
 - Coordinated consultant, Housing Rehab. Specialist and engineering firm to finalize bid documents. Went out to bid, however lowest bid came in much higher than available funds. Closed out project.
 - In May/June 2017 scheduled meeting with Attorney General's office, E.D. & P. Dept, and Inspections Dept. to determine if the office could assist the Town in assigning this structure to a receiver. This would facilitate its repairs and help get it back into productive service. The AG's office said that or the short term they cannot help us with it, however they will re-assess by late calendar year 2017/early 2018.
- FY 2015 Grant activities
 - Three units of Housing Rehabilitation completed
 - Exterior Repairs/removal of blighted condition from 70 Foster Street building (former Water Dept building)
 - Overland Street Utilities Project completed
 - Economic Development Plan completed
 - Road Safety Audit completed and both downtown intersection projects advanced in process of getting federal and state funding.
 - Three Social Service projects completed
- FY 2016 activities
 - Demolition of 215 Morris went out to bid.
 - Reconstruction of Overland St. - Design/Engineering contracted
 - Commercial Rehabilitation (signs and/or awnings) - Preparations made to put projects out to bid

- FY 17 Grant
- Negotiated successfully with CMRPC to put together Town’s FY 2017 CDBG application for minimal costs, by utilizing Local Technical Assistance hours (provided by CMRPC as part of membership) and the \$3,000 allowed by DHCD under the grant.
- Led effort to select projects for the FY 2017 CDBG application, including a project in FY 2017 to hire a “Code Enforcer” to inspect multi-family buildings and “Places of Assembly”. This is the first time the Town has applied for CDBG funds for this purpose.
- Grant submitted and Town awarded \$775,000.

PLANNING

The Planning Board serves as the Special Permit Granting Authority and fulfills all the required planning board duties under MGL 41, §81B, with responsibility to regulate the subdivision of land, oversee the master planning process, act as the special permit granting authority, and make recommendations for additions and changes to the Southbridge Zoning Bylaw.

Corey Bellrose was welcomed to the Board in Fiscal Year 2017.

Planning Board Members

David V. Payeur	Chairman
Lawrence Spinelli	Vice Chairman
Cassandra M. Acly	Member
Corey Bellrose	Member
Cheryl Misiaszek	Member
Paul Musci	Member
Michael Renaud	Member

APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED Plans – These are plans that divide properties and do not need subdivision approval. During fiscal year 2017 a total of 13 ANR plans were approved. A total of \$1,300.00 in fees was received.

SPECIAL PERMITS – the Planning Board serves as the special permit granting authority. The following special permits were approved during fiscal year 2016:

- Dresser Hill Road – Three (3) one-megawatt AC, ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays
- 452 Worcester Street – Permit for livestock (chickens)
- 11 Sandersdale Road – Multipurpose adult day care
- 165 Barefoot Road – Construction and Relocation of Amenities in Southbridge Sanitary Landfill
- 61 Arland Drive – Home-based business for baking pastries.
- 634 Worcester Street – Home-based business for buying and selling motor vehicles
- 80 Marcy Street Plan – New use to an abandoned structure for Age 55+ Affordable Housing

Total Amount \$1,265.00 in fees was received

ZONING BYLAW Changes

- Established the Town’s first Solar as-of-Right Bylaw.
- Re-zoned a portion of Worcester Street for a few parcels that were in more than one zone, which has been approved by Town Council.
- Proposed to re-zone a portion of Foster/Central North Streets, and expand the Central Core Overlay District. These changes not yet considered by Town Council.

The Planning Board also held several work meetings to discuss a moratorium on recreational marijuana activities.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

- 79 Pleasant Street
- 208 Worcester Street – Greek Restaurant
- 80 Marcy Street Plan – Age 55+ Affordable Housing
- North Woodstock Road/Ashland Avenue – Industrial complex

STREET ACCEPTANCES From time to time the Planning Board reviews and approves public ways. During fiscal year 2017 the Planning Board referred Goddard Road to the Town Council for town acceptance, reviewed Harwood Farms Road for eventual acceptance.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Developed a new form and a procedure to alert Inspections Department of land use situations that are non-compliant. Several situations were forwarded during the FY.
- Planning Board members and Planner attended multiple events, including: APA conference, CMRPC meetings & workshops, and Citizen Planner Collaborative trainings.
- Received formal, written approval of Town's Open Space & Recreation Plan.
- Part-time Planner retired at end of FY 2017. Town Council approved in FY 2018 budget to hire a full-time Town Planner/Conservation Agent.

SOUTHBRIDGE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Commission is charged with the responsibility of administering the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, amended to include the Rivers Protection Act, MGL 131 section 40. Proposed projects within 100 feet of a wetland or 200 feet of a perennial stream must be reviewed by the Commission.

Members

Kenneth Pickren	Chair
Maureen Doyle	V-Chair
Wendell Barthelmes	
Natasha Nowick	
Martin Peterson	
Michelle Reese	

Joined: none

Resigned: none

Conservation Commission Administrative Assistant: – Karen Loin

The Southbridge Conservation Commission conducted one or two meetings per month, depending upon the agenda before them. The Commissioners also conducted many site visits throughout the year. Administrative Assistant Karen Loin kept minutes of the meetings, performed research as needed, and completed the required paperwork and forms for each case. She also fielded calls from applicants and their representatives (attorneys and engineers). A description of the business conducted by the Commission follows.

REQUESTS FOR DETERMINATION OF APPLICABILITY are submitted when an applicant wishes to know if a potential project or project area is subject to the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. A site visit is made and the request is discussed at a Public Meeting before a Determination is issued. The following Requests for Determinations were received during fiscal year 2017:

1. Southbridge Recycling and Disposal Park, Inc. – monitoring wells
2. Bertin Engineering for Melink Corporation – 220 Airport Access Road – Map 7 Parcel 1A – installation of a solar array
3. Bertin Engineering for Melink Corporation – 134 Torrey Road – Map 24 Parcel 3

NOTICES OF INTENT are filed for each project subject to the Wetlands Protection Act. Site visits are made and a decision is issued after a Public Hearing is held. If the project is approved, the applicant is issued an Order of Conditions with which they must comply. The following Notices of Intent were received during fiscal year 2017:

1. CMG for YMCA – 115 Marcy Street – Map 48 Lot 225 – remediation of contaminated soil
2. McClure Engineering for John Mandelenakis – 208 Worcester Street – Map 22 parcel 65 - demolition and restaurant construction
3. DC Engineering Survey, Inc. for Eleanor Dion – 310 N. Woodstock Road – Map 82 Lot 2 – installation of a sewer line for a single family house within the riparian zone of a perennial stream (Lebanon Brook)
4. BSC Group for MA Electric – 383 Eastford Road – Map 66 Parcel 4 – installation of 3 utility poles.
5. BSC Group for MA Electric – 64 Mill Street – Map 34 Parcel 147 – installation of a pad mounted transformer, new riser pole, and conduit, to support new solar array.
6. Bertin Engineering for John Szugda – Ashland Avenue and North Woodstock Road – Map 57 Parcel 7 – three commercial buildings.

7. Green Hill Engineering for Mill Street Realty, Inc. – 62 Mill Street – Map 34 Parcel 7 – electrical trench.
8. Bertin Engineering for Melink Corporation – 113 Torrey Road – Map 23 Parcel 1 –solar array.
9. Bertin Engineering for Melink Corporation – Evergreen Street – Map 28 Parcel 1B – solar array

During FY 2017 there were no projects that were denied an Order of Conditions.

The Wetlands Filings Fees for Notices of Intent received during the year totaled \$4370..

EXTENSION PERMITS are granted when the work conditioned in an Order has not been completed within three years. There were no Notices of Intent granted Extension Permits during fiscal year 2017.

CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE are requested and issued after a project is completed to the satisfaction of the Commission. Since many projects are large and stretch out for some time, and because the Commission cannot consider a project complete until turf has been established to ensure the absence of runoff, there are only a few projects each year for which Certificates of Compliance are requested. The Commission must inspect the site, identify unfinished items, and re-check until there is certainty that the wetlands will remain stable and unharmed. The following Certificates of Compliance were issued during the fiscal year 2017:

1. Brookside Terrace (291-0419)
2. Brookside Terrace (291-0309)
3. 126 Hilltop Drive (291-0311 partial)
4. Eastford Road (291-479) work will not be completed – issued to close file

EMERGENCY ORDERS are issued from time to time to expedite remedial work and prevent further damage to wetlands. During FY 2017 the following one Emergency Order was issued.

1. Department of Public Works – Beaver Dam Flooding of Guelphwood Road

ENFORCEMENT ORDERS are issued from time to time when the Commission discovers imminent damage to wetlands, or damage in progress. During FY 2017 2017 the following Enforcement Orders were issued:

1. Hunter Foote – 1-11 Central Street – remove trash near private catch basin that opens directly into Nuisance Brook.
2. Town of Southbridge – sedimentation breach at work on Barefoot Road – sewer line extension near Airport

OTHER ACTIVITIES: The Commission also reviewed logging projects in various areas, promoted conservation of the Town’s open space and other natural resources, and fielded calls from the public regarding wetland damage.

SOUTHBRIDGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The mission of the Southbridge Economic Development Commission mission is to promote a strong and vibrant economy across all sectors in order to increase the tax base and provide jobs, goods, and services to the community. It assists the Economic Development & Planning Dept. with activities to retain existing businesses, recruit new businesses, and establish and sustain a business-friendly environment in general.

This commission was inactive for the last few years, but was re-started in FY 2017 during which five members were appointed. One member had been appointed previously and is still a member. It currently meets on the third Wednesday of each month.

Members (no officers designated yet)

David Livengood
Jonathan Normandin
Dr. Durgesh Vaidya
Dr. Dan Ceballos
Jordan Hoy
Warren Goddard

SOUTHBRIDGE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals operates under the authority of Chapter 40A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth and Section 902 of the Southbridge Zoning Bylaws.

The ZBA holds public hearings and acts on applications for Special Permits, Variances, and Appeals of actions of the Building Commissioner. All meetings and public hearings of the ZBA are open to the public. Hearings are advertised in the local paper and abutters are notified at least 2 weeks in advance of the hearing.

TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE, MA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Members

Lynne Bertrand	Chairwoman
Richard Clemence	Member
Patrick Spinelli	Member
Alan Efromson	Alternate

VARIANCES

- Approval of smaller front side yard setback allowing for 2-car garage construction
- Approval of special permit and variance for development of 80 Marcy Street into age-restricted residential units.
- Approval of variance to permit parking 10 feet from property line at 208 Worcester Street
- Approval to allow reduction of the minimum lot size of 22,500 square feet to 20,400 square feet at the corner of Brentwood Drive and Lebanon Hill.
- Approval to allow construction of a 16'x12' deck within the rear setback requirement of 30 feet

SOUTHBRIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mark DiFronzo, Fire Chief

As a team of highly trained and dedicated professionals, it is our mission to provide the highest standard of service to all those who may seek our help. We are a service provider and we stand ready to provide fire suppression, fire prevention and education, rescue services and advanced emergency medical care. We faithfully provide these important services, promptly and safely, to any person that resides in, works in or visits our community.

As a family of individuals committed to serving others, we always provide for the welfare of our members through a healthy and rewarding work environment. We are dedicated to respect, integrity, compassion and leadership amongst ourselves so that we may proudly serve others.

Our Commitment: To deliver high quality, professional and effective customer service.

Department recorded over 3340 calls in our dispatch center for service. Of those calls, 2681 were EMS related and 741 were fire related. We had a total of 33 structure type fires, 10 car fires, 194 false alarms and 61 other type fires. The rest of the calls we responded to include a variety of other responses that include hazmat calls, numerous public assists and false alarms. Of the EMS calls we transported 2075 patients, there were 9 cardiac arrests, 29 heroin overdoses and 47 motor vehicle crash injuries.

Our Department responded mutual aid to the Town of Sturbridge for a fire at the Public House Motel complex. Lieutenant Jason Cantara, FF. Chris Wilson, FF. T.J. Edwards, and Call Lt. Keith Nichols responded with Engine 2 to assist. On arrival there were heavy fire conditions and reports of people trapped on the second floor. Lt. Cantara and the crew found 3 people on a rear balcony needing rescue. This group overcame a difficult situation to rescue 2 of them and the third was able to escape via a stairway. These well trained firefighters were able to save 2 lives. They were recognized for their heroism and I am proud of their efforts.

We worked closely with the Bicentennial Committee to provide the emergency planning and resources for the events they have scheduled. Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency brought in a mobile emergency operations center for us to use during the parade event and the Fire Department participated in the parade. Members of the department were able to get its first firefighting piece of equipment into the parade like it was in 1956. Tiger 7, which is a hand tub fire unit, led all of the fire apparatus. Department was also able to get the owners of previous town fire trucks to join us. There were 3 generations of Engine 1 and Engine 3, the oldest being from 1943. Fire buffs were truly impressed at seeing this. I would like to thank all of those that came out and celebrated the Town's birthday with this parade.

We continued our Fire Education Programs in the schools with our Student Awareness Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program. This program has been expanded to reach out to seniors and provide fire education, tools and information. This year's theme for Fire Prevention Week was "Hear the Beep where you sleep". I would like to thank FF Gary Peck, who is our S.A.F.E. Coordinator and all of the other firefighters that helped out during the year.

Department took delivery of a new fire engine built by Spartan ERV which replaced the 1981 Hahn engine. This truck was funded in FY 2015 budget and took a year for it to be built and delivered. I would like to thank the Town Council, the Town Manager and the Finance Director for getting this much needed upgrade approved and financed.

Department took delivery of a new ambulance built by Lifeline; vehicle replaced the 2003 Lifeline ambulance. This truck was funded in FY 2016. Due to our hard work at getting this vehicle at a great price, we were able to upgrade all of the cardiac monitors. These new monitors have enhanced abilities and technology allowing our paramedics to provide even better care to patients. Old monitors were no longer

supported by the manufacturer so this was a great opportunity for us to replace them. I would like to thank the Town Council, the Town Manager and the Finance Director for getting this much needed upgrade approved and financed.

Fire Station Building Committee has been reformed and organized with new members. Committee voted to send Lt. Hulyk and I to a seminar on what it takes to build a fire station and we also attended the 2015 F.I.E.R.O. Fire Station Symposium. Symposium highlighted the uniqueness of firehouse design and provided practical common sense explanations of a successful design including: response criteria for vehicles and personnel; site design issues, how to organize the different uses within the building, shared group spaces vs. private spaces, options for bunking, public areas of the building, ADA and code mandated accessibility, site and building security, and mechanical systems and "Containing the Contaminants". This informative session will help us to improve the overall health of emergency responders, how exposures to toxic and carcinogen contaminated materials in the field are transported with the emergency responders back to the station, and how to convey information back to their families at their private residences. Committee is working hard to develop a plan to improve the fire department's vehicle, administration and housing needs.

Department has conducted numerous inspections and investigations. For Fiscal Year 2016 over 500 inspections were completed. We issued 47 burning permits, 278 smoke detector certificates, and 43 oil burner permits. We also do quarterly inspections of all health care facilities, school fire drills and annual inspections of liquor establishments. Lieutenant Inspector Lavoie is very dedicated to ensure the safety of all of the residents of our community. He was elected to a 2-year term as President of the Fire Prevention Association of Massachusetts. In this position, he will be working with State and local leaders and officials to get crucial fire prevention laws and codes approved and passed to benefit the citizens of Massachusetts. I would like to congratulate him on this accomplishment.

Our organization saw the retirement of 2 people: FF Jeffrey Langevin retired on July 13, 2015 after more than 35 years of service; and, FF Roland LaRochelle retired on September 30, 2015 after more than 33 years of service. Both of these individuals were dedicated to the fire service where a call could come in at any time and they would have to leave their family and friends to help someone in need. On behalf of the Southbridge Fire Department, I would like to thank them for their years of dedication and hard work.

Department went through a hiring process to replace those retiring firefighters and one open position. We received over 30 applications for 3 positions. FF Blair, FF Bousquet, and FF Schiessl started in January of 2016. They have been doing a great job learning how the department works and operates.

Fire Department is full of talented people who strive for excellence in all that they do. Our staff has worked hard over the last year to continue to strive and improve the service to the town and allow us to give the people of Southbridge a professional and dedicated fire department. We are very proud to serve the town and we would like to thank the people of Southbridge for their support over the last year.

SOUTHBRIDGE HEALTH DEPARTMENT BOARD OF HEALTH

Andrew Pelletier, R.S. - Director of Public Health

Board of Health – Mission Statement

Southbridge Board of Health, through education, health surveillance, maintenance inspections, response investigations, and implementation of preventative health and environmental programs strives to establish, maintain, promote and improve a safer and healthier quality of life in the Town of Southbridge.

FY 2016 Goals and Objectives

Entering FY 2016 the Board of Health established the following goals that would benefit the health of the Town of Southbridge:

- **Inspectional Services:** Goal = 60% compliance with State Mandates:
Our goal for inspectional services recognized that historically we have been around 50% and we were attempting the improvement without adding additional resources.
- **Regulations:** Draft and adopt solid waste regulations:
FY 2016 saw this goal to approximately 66% complete. One section of the draft regulations have yet to be completed and, thereafter, review and adopt the regulations through the administrative process
- **Vacant Blighted Buildings:** Goal –to remove or rehabilitate 3 vacant buildings through Public Health authority. Department fell short on this goal. Working with the sanitary code and through the Housing division of the District Court the Department of Public Health oversaw the removal of one vacant blighted structure from the town.

Significant Programs

- Tobacco Regulations
In response to a petition by the Southbridge Director of Recreation, Board of Health revisited and amended our Tobacco Regulations further identifying areas where smoking shall be prohibited to include public playgrounds, public athletic fields, and entrances to establishments where smoking is prohibited.
- Zika
With Southbridge population being closely tied to Caribbean and other warmer climates in addition to West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis, Department carefully monitored the evolving “Zika” outbreak that migrated from South American countries. Disease became even more attention worthy when cases initiating in the continental United States were identified. Town of Southbridge realized 2 cases of Zika that required a complete Communicable Disease investigation by the Southbridge Public Health Nurse
- Contamination of Private Wells
In November 2015, through a monitoring program required of the landfill, contamination of low level volatile organic compounds (VOCs) was discovered in private drinking water wells to the east of the landfill. An intensive investigation was launched to discover the source. General water flow, water pressure differential, and compilation of the contaminants have been investigated. Thus far no evidence has been discovered to indicate the source is from any location in Southbridge. We continue to investigate.
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event
Southbridge Board of Health partnered with SRD bringing 4 Household Hazardous Waste collection events to Southbridge and Charlton. These events have served in excess of 1000 attendees.

- Solid Waste Toter Program

In attempts to abate the endemic condition of unsightly piles of trash at curbside every trash day, Department introduced a “Toter” program in which we offer Toters to those who choose to participate in the program. In FY 2016 program reached 2,200 participants bringing voluntary participation to 33% of the 6,000+/- qualified households.

- Educational Opportunity

Board of Health participated in the Town’s “Cops ‘N Kids” event at the Airport where the Department took opportunity to dispense educational materials and speak to citizens regarding the Medical Reserve Corp, Emergency Preparedness and other topics pertinent to public health.

- Beautify Southbridge

April 30 was a great day, the weather was fine, Little League held their parade, and approximately 50 citizens turned out to Help Beautify Southbridge. Partnering with the Center of Hope, the Board of Health sponsored a town-wide clean-up resulting in removal of 117 bags of trash, miscellaneous furniture, and other debris from our roads and parks.

Other Ongoing Programs

Board of Health recognizes the value and continues our support and participation in the following ongoing programs:

- BT Region II Public Health Coalition
- Worcester Regional Tobacco Coalition
- Series of Flu clinics
- Health and Environmental Education
- Tri-Epic

- Nuisance, Housing and Environmental Complaints

To ensure that citizens are afforded the best chance at health, and quality of life.

Board of Health responds to complaints and conditions that may present detriment to health, the environment and the general well-being. In FY 2016 the Southbridge Board of Health received, investigated and acted upon 357 complaints. In addition to cooperative compliance, our departments’ enforcements included Orders to Correct, Civil Penalties, and filing cases with the appropriate Courts.

Permits and licensing

Department issues permits and licenses, conducts inspections to protect public health and prevent outbreaks of communicable diseases. In FY 2016 the office issued 695 permits and licenses. This resulted in total revenues of \$88,385.00 received through the department.

Southbridge Board of Health issues a variety of 34 types of permits and licenses including, multiple food related licenses, animal permits (stables, farms, kennels and other keepers of livestock), Haulers of Waste and Offensive Materials, Funeral Directors, establishments for Body Arts, Tobacco, on site sewerage disposal systems, public & semi-public Swimming Pools, Summer Recreational Camps for children, etc.

Communicable Disease Investigations

A total of 269 Communicable/ reportable diseases were reported and investigated in FY 2016.

Goals for FY 2017

The following are tentative goals set by the Department to advance department programs. These goals are in addition to goals that may be set by the Town Manager to advance the position of the town as a whole.

- Office reorganization
Offices of the Board of Health and the Building Department have been merged. FY 2017 will see adjustments in operation of combined departments to create a functional coordinated group.
- Blight
Department of Inspectional Services will continue to address blighted conditions in the Town of Southbridge. We will set goals to eliminate six vacant dwellings through removal or placing of buildings into a receivership program and returning them to a functional beneficial use.
- Inspections
By reorganizing the office and adjusting job descriptions, we have identified a 0.4 FTE to dedicate to inspection of food establishments in Southbridge. With this adjustment, we are setting a goal of 80% compliance with state mandated inspections approximately 220 unannounced inspections plus re-inspections.
- Solid Waste Toter Program
In FY 2017 we will seek to improve voluntary participation in the curbside Toter Program to 50% of eligible households.
- Update of Regulations
Board of Health will complete and adopt the Solid Waste Regulations to include expectations on curbside disposal, commercial disposal and hauling regulations.
- Emergency Planning
In the event of a significant communicable disease outbreak, the Town of Southbridge must devise a means to immunize the entire population within 72 Hours. Board of Health has identified Cole Avenue School Administration building as a viable location to accomplish this. FY 2017 will further develop the actual plans to accomplish that task.
- Public Records
Department will investigate the best way to organize and display public records on the Town of Southbridge Board of Health web page so the records are readily available to citizens.

DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONAL SERVICES

Department of Inspection Services, through education, surveillance, maintenance inspections, response investigations, and implementation of preventative health, safety and environmental programs strives to establish, maintain, promote and improve a safer and healthier quality of life in the Town of Southbridge. For 2017 the department set goals that included the following:

1. Voluntary Toter Program
Seek to improve voluntary participation in the curbside Toter program to 50% of eligible households. We are happy to proclaim success in this endeavor. Currently we have delivered 3,346 Toters to approximately 6,500 eligible households in Southbridge.
2. Update of Regulations
Adopt Solid Waste Regulations to include expectations on curbside disposal, commercial disposal and hauling regulations. We accomplished moderate success with adoption of a solid waste regulation. The draft is completed and shall be presented for consideration this year
3. Emergency Planning:
Develop a plan that, in the event of a significant communicable disease outbreak, the Town of Southbridge will be prepared to immunize the entire population within 72 Hours. Department has identified the Cole Avenue School Administration building as the site to be used to conduct immunizations to the entire population within 72 hours should an event occur. The base plan has been completed and the Department is prepared to activate the site.
4. Public Records
Department set a goal to identify a location where certain public records could be kept on a public site allowing direct access by the public. We have identified the location to be a link from our web page and anticipate appropriate documents will be downloaded going forward.
5. Blighted properties
Department set a goal to address 4 blighted structures to be renovated, turned over to a receiver or removed. We succeeded in initiating removal of 2 structures, 784 Main Street and 215 Morris Street. Additionally, working through the Worcester County Housing Court, we brought 135 Elm Street from a significantly blighted condition to acceptable. We are currently addressing 5 other structures and identified 2 additional structures potentially entering into a receivership program.

SIGNIFICANT PROGRAMS

1. Growth
Obviously a significant workload of the Department of inspection Services Division of the Building Inspector is the receipt of permit applications and review of construction projects to ensure compliance and safety in construction.
The following is a count of construction permits issued through the Division of Buildings"
Building permits.....361
Electrical Permits..... 313
Plumbing Permits 98
Gas Permits144
2. Blight Ordinance
Through the summer, the department was significantly involved in the development of the Town of Southbridge's regulation regarding blighted properties. Once developed and adopted, the Department took lead in implementing the new code. Several properties have been cited and thus far proven the law to be effective through enforcement and Worcester County Housing Court system.

3. Reorganize

In 2017, the Department of Public Health and the Department of Building/Zoning were combined into one Department of Inspectional Services. The Department experienced significant physical changes in accommodations to effectively coordinate the responsibilities of the two divisions into a cohesive and effective department including:

- Surviving and functioning a 2- month renovation without compromising service to the public
- Hiring process and integration period of the new assistant Building Commissioner
- Rewriting of job descriptions to include establishment of a part time administrator to the department. The current Administrator accepted additional responsibilities as inspector of permitted food establishments and the Director of Public Health assumed coordination of a second department.

4. With identification of contaminated well water in Charlton and on petition from citizens proximal to this site, Department's Health Division coordinated a cooperative testing of private well waters on Clemence Road and Pleasant Street. Fifteen (15) owners participated and wells were tested for basic water quality, volatile organic compounds and 1-4 Dioxane. Though elements were identified, none of the analysis results exceeded the drinking water standards as set by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

5. As with the Building Division, the Division of Health permits, licenses and conducts inspections to protect public health, safety and prevent outbreaks of communicable diseases. Establishments permitted through the department include Food Service (food preparation and service), Retail Foods (sales of prepackaged foods), Grocery Stores (retail stores of greater than 5000 square feet), Temporary Food Establishments, Catering, Convenience Stores (retail food with some food service) and Residential Public Kitchens (food service in private homes for public distribution).

6. Additionally, the Board licenses the following practitioners and activities:

Animal Permits (stables, farms, kennels and other keepers of livestock), Haulers of waste and offensive materials, Funeral Directors, tanning facilities, establishments for body arts, tobacco, on site sewerage disposal systems, public and semi-public swimming pools and summer recreational camps for children.

In calendar year 2016 the office issued 619 permits and licenses*

(*Reported per calendar year as this is how the records are maintained in the system)

7. Ongoing Programs

In addition to programs and events listed above, Department continues offering or supporting the following:

- Quarterly Household Hazardous Waste Collection events
- Worcester Tobacco Control Collaborative
- Arbovirus Disease Monitoring
- Education Opportunities
- Beautify Southbridge events/ Earth Day
- BT Region 2 regional Departments of Public Health
- Series of Flu Clinics through Harrington Hospital Community Health
- Nuisance, housing, and environmental complaint investigation

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Department of Inspection Services has established the following goals for FY 2018:

1. Curbside Collection: Two Toter Programs

The success and positive feedback of the two Toter programs has prompted us to consider extending the program town-wide. Town Council has recognized the value of the program and has supported funding to expand. Department of Inspectional Services will complete this program, including advertising, ordering, distributing Toters, arranging storage of overflow Toters and establishing a means to sustain the program into the future.

2. Emergency Dispensing Site

Expand the plan to administer prophylaxis to the population within 72 hours. Department will incorporate our plan into the Town's CEMP plan coordinating with other Emergency Response Departments (Fire, Police, DPW) and adjusting the plan as needed to address their concerns in such an event. Department will also conduct a limited set-up drill of the site in attempt to identify any weaknesses.

3. Regulations

- a) Solid Waste: In support of the expanding Toter Program, Department will complete adoption of the solid waste regulations. We will launch a program that includes education and enforcement related to these regulations.
- b) Other Regulations: Board of Health has requested the Department investigate the value of developing regulations to control the unkempt conditions that are frequently noted around donation boxes in the Town of Southbridge.

4. Fee Schedules

Department will review all of the fees charged for services of the Health and Building Divisions of the Department of Inspectional Services and propose fees that more accurately reflect the actual cost of the services provided

5. Multi-family inspections as Annual Inspections under Authority of the Building Code

FY 2018 CDBG approval included funding for a part time local inspector. Attempting to curtail blighted conditions by identifying structural conditions prior to complete failure of the structural element, Department will utilize this position to develop a program to conduct annual inspections on residential dwellings containing three or more dwelling units

Blight

6. In FY 2018 Department will attempt to address five blighted structures through receivership, enforcement and through the courts or removal.

JACOB EDWARDS LIBRARY

Board of Trustees	Staff
Richard (Dick) Whitney, Chairman	Margaret Morrissey, Director
Robin Weber (Vice Chairwoman)*	Ashley Kenney, Adult Services Librarian
Gary Bridgman (Treasurer)*	Elizabeth Gendreau, Children's Librarian
Mary Ellen (Mel) Blake*	Debrah Gendreau, Circulation Supervisor
Maureen Gullekson*	Lynn Wolstencroft, Technical Services
Beth Cournoyer	Michelle Garcia, Circulation Assistant
Jessica Jimenez	April Denault, Circulation Assistant
Tammie Darling (minutes secretary)	Kathryn Lapriore, Library Aide
	Anekah Ellis, Library Aide
*Trust appointee	Library Page x 2 vacant

Budget

- Operating budget \$495,492.00. State Aid Award FY 16: \$29,770
- Circulation figures have decreased but database usage is now allowed to be tracked as part of the report and is off-setting some of the decrease.

Capital and Improvements

- Foster Street staircase has been replaced and the wrought iron sandblasted and re-painted. The project cost \$5,500 and was paid from the operating budget.
- Copper gutters/windows to be re-caulked/façade cleaned and re-pointed approved \$125,000 at Town Council meeting 4/2016
- Roof was repaired by P and P Contractors
- Blanchet's installed a back flow preventer

Centenary Celebration

History of JEL "*First Century: Jacob Edwards Library*" was published in conjunction with Navigator Graphics.

Bicentenary of the Town of Southbridge

- Representatives of the Trustees, Staff and Friends participated and walked behind the new JEL banner.
- Organized some programs and exhibits in support of the bicentenary celebration.
- Maintaining an archive for future research
- Trustees paid for an advertisement in the history book

Circulation

Number of Databases	Wireless sessions	Registered borrowers	Interlibrary loans sent	Interlibrary loans borrowed	Total Circulation	# public access computers
9	15,556	9,418	16,542	7,123	69,102	15

Collections

- Inventory project continues.
- Started subscription to *Zinio*, providing online access to 50 magazines titles.

Collection Holdings

Print Periodicals	Books	Audio CDs	DVDs	E-Books	Downloadable Audio	Downloadable Video	Electronic Format	Microfilm
3,552	76,507	4,440	4,060	174,052	11,324	997	209	513

DPW/Custodian

- DPW custodian (full time) is based in the library. Summer hours – 6 am – 4 pm x 4 days
- DPW engineering staff assisted with technical information for Capital requests.

Friends of JEL

Friends of JEL provide generous support of activities including the annual book sale in March and the Artful Friends art show and raffle throughout the month of June.

Chairwoman	Vice Chairwoman	Secretary	Treasurer	Book sale and Movie screening
Barbara Day	Isabel Lopes	Laura Tomasko	Vivian Deslisle	Larry Day

Grants and Gifts

- Southbridge Cultural Council – 13 grants for a total of \$4,450
- *Olive I and Anthony A Borgatti Donor Fund* at Greater Worcester Community Foundation \$1,200
- Harvard Pilgrim in conjunction with Early Intervention/ KDC
- Savers Bank – 2 benches on Main Street in front of JEL

Historical

- Felix Gatineau base relief gift from L'Union St. Jean Baptiste and dedication lecture by Dr. Claire Quintal and Mr. Theodore Bartlett
- Dr. James Martel and the Gatineau Family presented a walking cane owned by Felix Gatineau
- Oil portrait of Jedidiah Marcy donated by the family of Dorothy and John Seabrooke.

Programs

- Started branch of *Krosslink* – network for entrepreneurs and those interested in starting businesses
- A wide variety of literary, music, dance programs was offered throughout the year, including Dr. Manisha Sinha, UMass and Thomas Daley, Norman Rockwell Museum, My Life My Health series among others.

Safety and Security

Increase in security issues recorded. Upgrade and increase in coverage in the camera system being considered.

Schools

Cooperative and positive relationship continues with the district. The library director serves on the Library Advisory Committee at West Street School.

Services

Proctoring of exams has been added to our list of service offerings.

Staffing

- Survey of staff salaries and job descriptions (town-wide)
- Staff turnover in Children's position and Library Aid positions
- Mentored student from ASPIRA of MA during the summer.
- 6 tax abatement personnel worked at the library

Summer Feeding/Project Bread

Kudos to the food service staff at SMHS for providing us with the lunches to serve and Southern Worcester Co-Educational Collaborative and Center of Hope clients for staffing the service. Food was available from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Summer Reading

166 children participated in the summer reading program offered at the library. There is an incentivized program offered to Teens and Adults too. Attendance increases significantly during the summer months.

Technology

Network has upgraded JEL speed to perform at 60M download and 4M upload.
Purchased a server and 4 new computers

Training

- Staff participated in webinars as well as in-person courses offered through MA Library System and MBLC
- Additionally staff took advantage of the MIIA courses offered by the town's insurance company.

Trustees

- Board purchased 28 Foster Street (adjacent blighted property to JEL) at the cost of \$50,000. The Town Attorney facilitated the conveyance of the property. The building was subsequently razed by the Town.
- Board contributed \$40,000 for books and materials acquisitions.

SOUTHBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mission Statement

Southbridge Police Department dedicates itself to work in partnership with the community to fight crime, reduce fear, and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. By embracing a mutual relationship of support, we remain committed to solving the community's problems and maintaining the public trust.

From the Chief

Over the last several years our community has regrettably experienced a consistent financial decline and we continue to be one of the most fiscally challenged in Massachusetts. Although statistics vary, we remain within ten or twelve from the bottom of income per capita in the state. Due to this it becomes very challenging to provide the proper police services to the community. Over the years the police department has had a reduction in workforce and reduction in budget with dramatic increase in need for our services. Members of my department have always had the utmost respect for the community that we serve and we all recognize that they need the services of our department more than in many other communities our size.

At a Glance

Our FY 2016 budget was \$3,405,207 which includes the salary for the following 34 full time police officers; 1 Chief, 1 Deputy Chief, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Detective Sergeant, 5 Patrol Sergeants, 4 Detectives, 1 court/records officer who is also responsible for our firearms licensing and sex offender registry for our community, 1 school resource officer, 1 canine officer and 18 patrol officers. This budget also includes the Town Animal Control Officer, our mechanic/custodian, an administrative assistant to the Chief of Police and 13 crossing guards all of who work under the supervision of the Police Department. We also have 30 auxiliary police officers who volunteer hundreds of hours of their time to our community. During FY 2016 my administration was responsible for more than 5,500 hours of supervision per pay period for sworn and civilian employees and we were responsible for reporting on approximately \$100,000 in grant monies.

During FY 2016 we responded to approximately 24,698 calls for service, made 1,240 arrests, completed 1,156 incident reports, investigated 627 accidents and received more than 5,000 E911 calls for service. Most police departments in the Commonwealth with this call volume have at least 40 full time police officers, but, due to the serious economic limitations of the Town, we continue to provide the highest level of public safety services with minimal staffing. It's important to note that many smaller communities consider ALL incoming telephone calls and citizen "walk ins" to their department lobby as calls for service. If our statistics were based on that metric, we would have had more than 100,000 calls for service. With that said I'm pleased to report that the Town Manager and members of the Town Council have been receptive to my ideas to return staffing to the levels we had from 1995 thru 2000. I look forward to working with them in the near future in order to make this a reality for the citizens in our community.

New leadership

During FY 2016 I was appointed Chief of Police after holding every rank within the department and serving the community for 20 years. With my promotion to Chief, I immediately promoted Lieutenant Jose Dingui to the rank of Deputy Chief. In the fall I will be requesting Town Council approval to fill our vacant Lieutenant position and promote a Patrol Officer to the rank of Sergeant. I will also be moving forward with discussions with the Town Manager and Town Council to minimize overtime costs by hiring two police officers. Under the new administration, I believe it's an exciting time to be a member of our department as there are many opportunities to contribute to our community for many years to come.

Staffing

During the year, we hired Officers Joel Lopez Miranda and Officer David Stanger to fill existing vacancies. We also had the following officers retire from our department after many years of distinguished service;

Chief Daniel Charette and Officer Jesus Rosa (both with 30+ years of service) and Officers Denis LeBoeuf and Dan Southall (both with 25+ years of service). Sergeant Robert Lamothe retired as a full time police officer in 1999 but continued to serve as an auxiliary officer until December 31, 2015 giving him a combined 47 years of service to our community. We also had two officers leave our department to enter the Massachusetts State Police Academy.

Awards

Detective Evan Genkos was the Officer of The Year for our department. This is an annual award given to the police officer from our department who demonstrates excellence in police work and service to the community. Auxiliary Officers Nestor Santos and Javier Rivera received life-saving awards for their work saving the life of a child.

Community Policing

There are numerous activities that take place every year in our community that require the assistance of our department. We have a longstanding history of community involvement at many levels and I'm proud of this partnership with our community which continues to expand every year. Our Cops 'N Kids program continues to grow since its inception in the early 90's and allows our department to continue to have a positive and productive relationship with many children (and their families) in our community. Since being promoted to Chief, I have initiated foot/bicycle patrols in our community and have received positive feedback from numerous citizens and local business owners by restoring this program.

With budget reductions over the last several years our department has become reactionary to the community's needs and has been unable to have proactive foot/bicycle patrol that are essential to a community with our demographics. Throughout my time in management for the department I have noticed that even a small reduction in sworn personnel takes away our ability to do this type of community policing. This in turn drastically diminishes or eliminates very important programs such as foot/bicycle patrols but I am now hopeful that we will be able to keep these programs for years to come.

Civilian dispatch

I believe that we can have a positive impact on personnel and budgeting through the use of civilian dispatchers. We currently have three full time civilian dispatchers but still require police officers to work the desk for coverage and staffing issues. Once our department is able to staff dispatch positions appropriately, police officers will no longer be trained to work the desk. Although this will not allow for a substantial cost savings per individual employee, it will drastically reduce the time required for the replacement and reduction in training for those answering our phones. As of July 1, 2012 there are mandates to work as a dispatcher that require more than three weeks of specialized training for every officer assigned to the desk. This is in addition to the 16 hours of annual in service training that all dispatchers must attend to stay current with these mandates. With our day to day operations it makes no sense to continue to have full time police officers attend and maintain these requirements on an annual basis as I believe they serve a better purpose protecting our citizens. Our department is also involved in ongoing regional dispatch discussions with Sturbridge, Charlton and Oxford Police Departments to explore future options for our communications center.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of Southbridge and town officials for their continued support, particularly Town Manager Ron San Angelo and the members of our Town Council and to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the men and women of the Southbridge Police Department.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Southbridge Recreation Department is to provide high quality, affordable recreation programs as well as maintain safe and accessible fields and facilities throughout the community. Our programs strive to enhance resident's physical, social and mental well-being. The recreation department is dedicated to serve the community with excellence and pride.

We also used the Southbridge Master Plan as a guide for programs and infrastructure decisions. During 2016 the Recreation Department organized the following programs:

- Summer Recreation Program at West St School that served 110 youth total, averaging approximately 50 youth per day. We improved the structure of the program, staff expectations with the creation of a staff manual and staff training before the program. We added field trips to the Andrew Petro Pool each week of the program.
- Summer Concert on the Common Series was a great program for the community. Concert schedule does not follow the fiscal year, however during the concert season we increased the amount of concerts offered from 4 the previous year, to 15 this year, including the addition of an Oktoberfest. Concerts were all financially supported by community organizations and business.
- We partnered with the WRTA to organize trips to Worcester for a brown bag concert series at Mechanics Hall during the winter and spring.
- We implemented opportunities to promote bicycle travel and safety, suggested in the Master Plan.
 - National Bicycle Month Events in May including Bicycle Maintenance classes, Bike to work day, a bicycle safety fair and bicycle stunt motivational program at the elementary schools. We signed onto a bicycle infrastructure program through CMRPC to improve bicycle parking throughout the town.
 - Elementary schools signed up for MassDOT Safe Routes to School Program to partner with recreation to promote healthy pedestrian and bicycling choices for families
- Established an Adopt a Park program to improve community support of our recreation facilities. Some highlights of this process include
 - Renovation of the skate park at Joe Capillo Park, now called the Southbridge Action Sports Park by the adoption group, Planet Airin. This project is ongoing and continued into the next year with the addition of more park features and continuing maintenance and clean-up
 - Bay Path Regional High School constructed retaining barriers for playground mulch at the McCann Fields on Henry Street. This has made playground surface safer for children
- Through the Community Block Development Program, we created CommUNITY Nights that offered free meals and refreshments, fitness and educational opportunities to all Southbridge residents each month. Program included Community CPR/AED and First certification, Healthy Eating on a Budget, Self Defense, Yoga, Handball, Basketball, Climbing Wall, Latin dance, swimming, arts and crafts, photography, and child care.
- Recreation partnered with the Cops N Kids program to lead a multi-day outdoor adventure experience to the White Mountains of New Hampshire. It was a wonderful trip and provided new opportunities and positive challenges to the youth that participated.

We continually want to listen and respond to the needs of the community. A lack of citizen volunteers for the Recreation Advisory Committee has limited the reach of the programs offered through Recreation. Goal of the next year is to fill the vacancies in this committee to enhance what recreation can offer and the reach of the programs.

SOUTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK

Mission Statement

Southbridge Town Clerk's Office is committed to cultivating a professional and caring environment for our customers, co-workers and our community so that by effectively working together we can achieve excellence.

Staff of the Town of Southbridge Town Clerk's Office is committed to accurately recording and preserving the Town's history, serving the public impartially and with great care; providing open and easy access to public records; compassionately participating in assisting the citizens with their issues, efficiently administering Town elections, and communicating all appropriate information and notices to the citizens of the Town of Southbridge.

Town Clerk's Summary of Licenses and Fees for FY 2016

Town Clerk Fees / Details:

Certified Copies of Vital Statistics (2749)	\$ 27,490.00
V.S. Corrections/Adoption Fees	\$ 300.00
Marriage Intentions (169)	\$ 4,225.00
Business Certificates (127)	\$ 3,175.00
Total	\$ 35,190.00

Dog Licenses / Details:

Male (65)	Female (34)	
Neutered (150)	Spayed (132)	
4 - Kennel (8)	10-Kennel (2)	
3 yrs. - Male (14)	3 yrs. - Female (2)	
3 yrs. - N. Male (74)	3 yrs. - Spayed (65)	
Misc. (Penalty charges, Duplicate Tags and Transfer of License)	Total	\$ 9,060.00

Other

Pole Recordings	\$ 60.00
Zoning Maps	\$ 20.00
Street Listing Books	\$ 576.00
Variances	\$ 550.00
Fuel Permits	\$ 1,550.00
21D Tickets	\$ 1,925.00
Junk Dealers	\$ 400.00
Raffle Permits	\$ 240.00
Fire Code Violations	\$ 300.00
State Revenue Polling Hours	\$ 1,407.00
Total	\$ 7,028.00

Vital Statistics Summary for 2015

Details:

Births Recorded	377
Deaths Recorded	310
Marriages Recorded	147

Census for the Town of Southbridge - 15,501

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

WARRANT FOR PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

SS.

To either of the Constables of the City/Town of SOUTHBRIDGE

GREETING:

In the name of the Commonwealth, you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of said city or town who are qualified to vote in Primaries to vote at

PRECINCT #1.....THE ARMORY
PRECINCT #2.....THE ARMORY
PRECINCT #3.....THE ARMORY
PRECINCT #4.....THE ARMORY
PRECINCT #5.....THE ARMORY

on **TUESDAY, THE FIRST DAY OF MARCH, 2016**, from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. for the following purpose:

To cast their votes in the Presidential Primary for the candidates of political parties for the following offices:

PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE. FOR THIS COMMONWEALTH
STATE COMMITTEE MAN. WORCESTER/NORFOLK SENATORIAL DISTRICT
STATE COMMITTEE WOMAN. WORCESTER/NORFOLK SENATORIAL DISTRICT
TOWN COMMITTEES..... SOUTHBRIDGE

Hereof fail not and make return of this warrant with your doings thereon at the time and place of said voting.

Given under our hands this _____ day of _____, 2016.

Kristin L. Auclair	Esteban Carrasco, Jr.
Denise Clemence	Miguel Estrada
Monique S. Manna	George P. Steeves
Conrad L. Vandal	Albert D. Vecchia, Jr.

Town Councilors, Town of Southbridge

ATTEST: _____
Thadius E. Dubsky, Constable

Pursuant to the within WARRANT, I have notified and warned the Inhabitants of the Town of Southbridge by posting up attested copies of the same in six (6) conspicuous places, namely: Jacob Edwards Library, Town Hall, Hospital Spa, Lippe's Package Store, A1 Mart, and Pizza Chef and now return this WARRANT with my doings thereon as above described this _____ day of February 2016.

Date: _____
Thadius E. Dubsky, Constable

WARRANT

**ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

WORCESTER, SS.

GREETINGS:

To either of the Constables of the Town of Southbridge:

IN THE NAME OF THE COMMONWEALTH, YOU ARE HEREBY REQUIRED TO NOTIFY AND WARN THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO VOTE IN THE TOWN ELECTION, TO MEET AT THE SEVERAL POLLING PLACES IN SAID SOUTHBRIDGE, NAMELY:

- PRECINCT #1.....THE ARMORY**
- PRECINCT #2.....THE ARMORY**
- PRECINCT #3.....THE ARMORY**
- PRECINCT #4.....THE ARMORY**
- PRECINCT #5.....THE ARMORY**

On Tuesday, June 28, 2016, and the polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM to vote for the election of candidates to the following offices.

TO BE ELECTED BY THE VOTERS OF THE ENTIRE TOWN:

- Councilor at Large.....3 for 3 years**
- Councilor at Large.....1 for 2 years**
- School Committee.....2 for 3 years**
- School Committee.....1 for 1 years**
- Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational School Committee.....1 for 3 years**
- Southbridge Housing Authority.....1 for 5 years**
- Southbridge Housing Authority.....1 for 3 years**
- Board of Assessors.....1 for 3 years**

Question #1

Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2016, entitled “An Act relative to quasi-judicial boards in the town of Southbridge” be accepted?

This question proposes to strike Section 3-1-5 of the Town Charter and insert in place thereof a new Section 3-1-5 which will further clarify that any elected or appointed member of a quasi-judicial board, including the zoning board of appeals, the conservation commission, the board of health, the liquor licensing board, the planning board and the special permit granting authority, shall be limited to membership on one such board and ineligible to serve on any other quasi-judicial board during that member’s term.

Question #2

Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2016, entitled “An Act relative to the Director of Public Works in the town of Southbridge” be accepted?

This question proposes to strike Section 6-1-3 of the Town Charter which currently reads: “The town manager shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the town council, a director for the department of public works. The director shall be a Massachusetts licensed professional engineer;” and insert in place thereof a new Section 6-1-3, to read: “There shall be a director of public works, appointed for a three year term by the town manager, subject to confirmation by the town council. The director shall report directly to the town manager.”

Question #3

Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2016, entitled “An Act relative to the removal of the Director of Public Works in the town of Southbridge” be accepted?

This question proposes to strike Section 6-1-4 and Section 6-1-5 of the Town Charter and insert a new Section 6-1-4 concerning the Director of Public Works, to read: "The director may be removed in the same manner as other department heads as provided by this charter."

Question #4

Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2016, entitled "An Act relative to the use of legal counsel by the town of Southbridge" be accepted?

This question proposes to insert a new paragraph, after the first paragraph in Section 7-1-1 of the Town Charter, to prohibit any town office or agency to employ, advise with or consult any attorney with regard to its duties or any town business, unless such legal services are determined to be required, necessary or desirable by the town manager, after consultation with the town attorney and the office or agency involved.

Question #5

Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2016, entitled "An Act relative to the date of town elections in the town of Southbridge" be accepted?

This question proposes to strike Section 11-1-1 of the Town Charter, which currently reads: "The regular election for all town offices shall be by official ballot held on the last Tuesday in June."; and insert in place thereof a new Section 11-1-1, to read: "The regular election for all town offices shall be by official ballot held on the second Tuesday in June."

You are directed to serve this WARRANT by posting attested copies in six (6) public places within the Town at least seven (7) days before holding said election.

Hereby fail not and make return of this WARRANT with your doings thereon at the time and place of said meeting.

Given under my hand this _____ day of June 2016.

Kristen L. Auclair

Denise Clemence

Monique S. Manna

Conrad L. Vandal

Esteban Carrasco, Jr.

Miguel Estrada

George P. Steeves

Albert D. Vecchia, Jr.

Town Councilors, Town of Southbridge

ATTEST: _____

Thadius E. Dubsky, Constable

Pursuant to the within WARRANT, I have notified and warned the Inhabitants of the Town of Southbridge by posting up attested copies of the same in six (6) conspicuous places, namely: Jacob Edwards Library, Town Hall, Hospital Spa, Lippe's Package Store, A1 Mart, and Pizza Chef and now return this WARRANT with my doings thereon as above described this _____ day of June 2016 .

Date: _____

Thadius E. Dubsky, Constable

TREASURER / COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

Staff Directory/Member List

Melinda R. Ernst-Fournier - Treasurer / Collector

Nghi Lam - Assistant Collector / Collector

Nancy Jones - Principal Clerk /Treasurer

April Plouffe - Principal Clerk/ Treasurer

Joanne Battista -Senior Clerk/ Collector

Max Gullekson -Senior Clerk / Collector

The major functions of the Treasurer / Collector's Office include:

- Receiving, recording, and managing all funds belonging to the Town. Receipts in excess of \$66 million were received through this office during Fiscal 2016. These came primarily from the State and Federal Governments in the form of grants and quarterly distributions, tax and utility payments to the Town Collector's Office and fees and other miscellaneous receipts received by other Town departments. We implemented online and counter credit card payments in the Clerk's Office this year. The annual report of Trust Fund activity is shown as Attachment A.
- Paying all vendor warrants. After approval of the Town Accountant and Town Manager, only the Treasurer can pay out public money. 7,358 vendor checks exceeding \$40.3 million were approved and entered into the computer system by the Accountant's Office. This office is responsible for verifying that each check is payable to the correct vendor for the correct amount and preparing them for mailing. We implemented "direct pay" this year, giving our vendors the opportunity to have their payments deposited to their chosen account electronically.
- Paying all payroll warrants. Upon Department Head approval, we process the bi-weekly payroll for all town departments. Although the school department enters payroll and distributes payroll checks for their employees on a bi-weekly basis, all payroll processing is handled in this department. This includes the printing of all payroll checks and direct deposit stubs, preparation of all quarterly and annual payroll reporting such as quarterly tax returns and W-2s. We are also responsible for the remittance of payroll deductions such as taxes, child support, retirement, annuities, union dues, health, life and dental insurance. Gross payroll processed for this year was \$30,128,721.22. Annual wage report is shown as Attachment B.
- Coordination of Employee Benefits. Treasurer's Office acts as benefits coordinator for all town and school employees, as well as all retirees. All new full time employees are sent to this department for information on various health, life and dental plans available. Annual open enrollment allows members to change plans or enroll if they haven't been members previously. We have many additional enrollments or changes throughout the year when new employees are hired or individuals have life events that statutorily allow them to enroll. We also handle all member questions on benefit matters as well as death benefits on the life insurance plans. We are responsible for accuracy of all employee insurance deductions and insurance invoices. Effective July 1, 2015, Town made significant changes to our co-payments and deductibles of our health insurance plans, mirroring those of Commonwealth's Group Insurance Commission. Premium savings were used to increase Town contribution from 50% to 60% for active employees; retiree contributions remain 50%.
- After taxes are assessed or utility bills are calculated by Assessor's Office, Collector's Office is responsible for printing, mailing and collecting all bills. We mailed 46,684 bills and collected over \$35.1 million in FY 16. We accept payments by mail, at counter and online. In May, we began accepting credit cards in office and collected over \$12,000 in the 45 days.

Following special projects also impacted the office during this fiscal year:

- Collector's Office received much needed renovation using higher counters and cabinets from Mary E. Wells Middle School building. New carpet was installed and the walls were painted.
- Our municipal purpose bond issued in 2008 was audited by IRS. Information provided was accepted without further questions and audit was closed.
- The implementation of the Federal Affordable Care required us to provide 1095 Forms to our employees. The form required information not contained in our software so the project took hundreds of hours to complete

VETERANS' SERVICES

Michael J. Trombley, Veterans Agent

Southbridge Veterans' Services Department is located at the Southbridge Community Center, 153 Chestnut Street, Southbridge, MA. Office hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Services are available to all Veterans and their dependents, seeking information regarding their rights and benefits, under the Veterans Administration, as well as the Department Of Veterans Services.

Veterans Benefits, under Chapter M.G.L. 115, and its amendments, provide benefits in the form of cash grants (checks) for food, clothing, shelter, and Medical care for veterans and their dependents. Should a veteran fall in the need of financial assistance through no fault of his/her own, he or she may apply for benefits. Ninety three individual cases for Chapter 115 Veterans Benefits were processed during FY 2016, requiring a constant flow of follow up information pertaining to assets, employment, budgets, etc. In addition, seven applications for Indigent Funerals were processed during the same period.

Other reports that must be maintained throughout the year with the Department Of Veterans Services are:

- VS21 Authorizations,
- State Jurad reports,
- Computer match reports,
- Wage reports, Bank reports,
- Medical reports,
- Department Of Employment & Training reports,
- Notices of Intent & Action reports, as well as many other monthly reports

Fiscal year FY 2016, the Town of Southbridge appropriated \$160,000.00 for Veterans Benefits. Of that figure, \$156,479.82 was expended by June 2016. A total of 75% or \$117,359.86 is to be reimbursed to the Town from the State Of Massachusetts, under Chapter 115, Mass. General Laws, Veterans' Benefits Program.

Veterans Services provide assistance to all veterans and their dependents concerning all claims under State and Federal regulations. Claims and/or inquiries were made for the following:

- Service Connected Disability Pensions
- Compensation Pensions
- Non Service Connected Compensation Pensions
- Widows Pensions
- Dependency And Indemnity Compensation Pensions, Death Pensions, lost and/or late monthly checks, direct deposit of pension checks,
- Veterans Life Insurance's, separation and discharges, tax exemptions and abatements, award letters from the Veterans Administration, clothing allowances, burial benefits, employment, education, refunds for educational and vocational contributions, medical and dental benefits,
- VA Home loans, small business loans, changes of addresses, eligibility verification forms, overpayments, war time bonuses, and many other misc. inquiries.

During this past year, Department of Veterans Services had spent a great deal of time filing claims for death benefits, due to the fact that more than 37 WWII, Korea, and Viet Nam Veterans have passed away during the same period, most of which were buried in Southbridge Cemeteries. This work requires the researching of discharges that have been lost, claims for burial benefits, obtaining burial foot markers, as well as logging the burial location in a data base for records purposes, which is handled by the Graves Registration Officer, Michael J. Trombley. Once loaded into a data base computer, it provides the Town Of Southbridge with the location and condition of each and every Veteran buried in all seven of the cemeteries in this Community. Mr. Trombley updates this information on a weekly basis. This information is very important as to the number of flags to be purchased, and placed on Veterans graves at Memorial Day each year. This information is also utilized by cemetery Officials, as well as family members, as to the location of loved ones that are buried within the cemetery system.

In addition, as in the past several years, this Office was responsible for coordinating the effort of assisting the Principal, as well as teachers at the Charlton Street School system, with the planning and implementation of Veterans Day, Flag Day, Memorial Day observances with the students, as well as many local veterans and Veterans Organizations.

Department of Veterans' Services, of Southbridge, MA, has been working hand in hand with the Department Of Employment and Training, Workforce Central, located here in Southbridge, MA, for the past several years. Many local Veterans have lost their jobs with companies downsizing and reducing staff positions. It is the intention of this Office to assist all Veterans and their dependents in every way possible, to work with the DET Office and other agencies as well to do our best to assist these veterans to regain suitable full time employment. FY 2016 has been a very successful year in obtaining better employment opportunities for many Veterans.

I wish to express my thanks to the various personnel in the Southbridge Town Hall, for their help in assisting this Department in carrying out the services that are offered. A very special thanks to Yvonne Tortis and Kimberley Ferron in the Town Manager's Office.

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Year 2016 marked the bicentennial of the town of Southbridge. A committee was formed in 2012 with the purpose of coordinating and facilitating the celebrations and events that take place in 2016.

Many I am sure know of the big three events held this past year; The Bicentennial Gala Ball held at La Salle Hall, The Bicentennial Parade held on Saturday, May 14, and the Fire Works organized by the Southbridge Rotary Club on Saturday August 13. There were also many smaller events held going back to November of 2012. The events were as follows:

- November 2012: Southbridge Bicentennial Committee's Kick-Off Meeting
- February 2014: Logo Contest with logo selected on February 15, 2014
- November 2014: Fundraising Dinner at the Polish American Club
- February 2015: "Dance Through Time" to commemorate the 199th anniversary of Southbridge
- September 2015: "Southbridge's Got Talent", a talent contest of the Southbridge Middle High School
- November 2015: February 2016: Free Ballroom Dance Lessons weekly for ten weeks
- February 2016: Bicentennial Gala Ball – Happy Birthday Southbridge
- March 2016: "The Southbridge of Our Ancestors. Its Homes and People". Program sponsored by the Southbridge Historical Society
- March 2016: Presentation of the Bicentennial Quilt to the Town of Southbridge
- March 2016: Bicentennial Banner Contest to design and select banners to be placed on lampposts in downtown Southbridge
- April 2016: "Southbridge: Birth of a Town" Program sponsored by the Southbridge Historical Society
- April 2016: "Ellis Island" Sponsored by Gateway Players in conjunction with the Southbridge Bicentennial Committee
- May 2016; "Literary Southbridge: Selected Readings from Southbridge Authors". Program sponsored by the Southbridge Historical Society
- May 2016; Southbridge Bicentennial Grand Parade & Festival with Little Miss and Little Mister Pageant
- August 2016: "Explosion of Town Pride Grand Fireworks Display and Family Celebrations" Organized by the Southbridge Rotary Club
- September: October – "Southbridge Highlights – A Walk Through Time" – A Display of Southbridge Historical Artifacts and Artworks sponsored by the Quinebaug Valley Center for the Arts and Humanities
- September 2016: Cemetery Walk sponsored by Gateway Players, the Arts Center, and Southbridge Historical Society
- October 2016: "Centre Village Walking Tour" Guided historical walk through the downtown of Southbridge. Sponsored by the Southbridge Historical Society and The Last Green Valley
- October 2016: "1816 – A Year without a "Summer" Program sponsored by the Southbridge Historical Society.
- October 2016: Presentation of the Bicentennial Time Capsule
- November 2016: Bicentennial Donor Dinner – An event for our generous donors, held at "Fins and Tales" restaurant
- November 2016: "Southbridge: Schools of Yesteryear" A program presented and sponsored by the Southbridge Historical Society
- November 2016: "My Southbridge, an Interpretation" Presented by the Jacob Edwards Library
- June 2017: The Time Capsule Burial – was held on June 17, 2017; the capsule was buried in Dresser Park, a stone marker has been placed over the burial site.

Of course these events and programs could not have occurred without the hard work and dedication of the volunteers on the Southbridge Bicentennial Committee, and many civic groups, businesses, clubs, municipal groups and organizations that worked to ensure the Bicentennial year and celebrations were a success which we can all be proud of.

Thank you,
Steven Brady – Co-Chairman
Southbridge Bicentennial Committee