

Important dates and announcements for the town

SOUTH HADLEY – Keep note of some important dates coming up for the town and budgets, budget votes, and town meetings and elections.

- February 17, 6 p.m.- Selectboard vote on Special Town Meeting
- February 25, 6 p.m.- Tentative Special Town Meeting
- March 3, Selectboard Meeting- Budget Public Hearing
- March 11, School Committee Meeting- Budget Public Hearing
- March 17, Selectboard Meeting- Budget Vote

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Hadley, as many communities across Massachusetts are experiencing similar pressures.”

The upcoming effects on the town and schools will result in drastic cuts to the schools, DPW, Police and Fire Departments, Senior Center, both the South Hadley Public and Gaylord Memorial Libraries, the Town Hall, and many other areas of the town.

“For the schools, the most important message is that we have already made reductions over the past decade, and there aren’t any other places to cut without significantly impacting students. An operational override would allow the district to maintain core programming and service levels rather than continuing a cycle of reductions,” said Voyik.

The override being discussed at the Special Town Meeting is an operational override that will help to address the structural deficit that has been affecting the town and the school district.

Multiple options are being put forth at STM for town meeting members to vote on, and they include \$6 million over three years, \$9 million over four years, and \$11 million over five years.

“If an override question appears on the ballot, the election date would be Apr. 14. The key point is that the schools will not be ‘fine’ under a deficit budget. A deficit budget would require reductions that directly affect students and families,” said Voyik. “It’s important to have accurate information, ask questions, and en-

gage in the public process as the community considers the best path forward.”

The town is encouraging the community to vote so that they can have a say in what is to come. While residents cannot control gas prices or bills, they can have a say in the next steps and what direction the override will go in, how much it will be, and how long it will last.

“The reason we have done so much in bringing volunteer residents together is that we can’t do it alone without their help. We know that the library, Senior Center, and the schools provide support and are a huge part of people’s quality of life, but we want to be transparent about what they cost,” said Wong.

“It’s important that we are straightforward about the district’s financial reality and the educational impacts of further reductions. I encourage community members to attend upcoming meetings to hear details, ask questions, and review the information being presented,” said Voyik.

The school district is facing significant personnel cuts, including 20 student-facing positions, as well as two administrative positions, which will result in larger class sizes and even fewer activities for students to take part in.

Other reductions in the schools include elimination of all sports and extracurricular activities, reductions to AP, Honors, and elective course offerings, and so much more.

“We are doing our best to support the schools, and whether we have kids in the school system or not, the

- March 25, School Committee Meeting- Budget Vote
- March 28, Annual Town Election and tentative Override Vote

You can find a tax impact calculator online now at <https://southhadley.org/1504/Budget-Task-Force>.

quality of education affects... [everything]. It’s incredibly important to the next set of leaders, and I want to emphasize that the schools are very much a top priority for town and school officials because we see their importance in the community,” said Wong.

Important dates and information

The community is strongly encouraged to educate themselves on the work that the Budget Task Force has done to analyze and come up with possible solutions ahead of the February 25 Special Town Meeting. You can find more on the town’s website at www.southhadley.org/1504/Budget-Task-Force.

The School Committee will be hosting a community meeting on Monday, Feb. 23, about the school’s budget at Michael E. Smith Middle School at 6 p.m., and all are encouraged to attend with questions.

The Special Town Meeting will be held at the high school on Feb. 25 at 6 p.m. in the High School Auditorium. The STM is to vote whether or not an override will occur, with two action items on the Warrant. The Warrant is currently available to view on the town website. March 4 is the next School Committee meeting, and Mar. 11 will be the School’s Public Budget Hearing.

“The best way to prevent misinformation is for residents to engage directly in the process and rely on the official presentations and posted materials,” said Voyik.

Legal Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampshire Probate and Family Court
15 Atwood Drive
Northampton, MA 01060
(413)586-8500
Docket No. HS26P0028EA
Estate of:
Phillip A. Chesky
Date of Death: 11/16/2025
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Phillip B. Chesky of Wilbraham, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that

Phillip B. Chesky of Wilbraham, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/20/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.**

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Diana S. Velez Harris**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 04, 2026
Mark S Ames, Register of Probate
02/13/2026

Czarniecka joins Greenfield/ Northampton Cooperative Bank

SOUTH HADLEY – The Greenfield / Northampton Cooperative Bank is pleased to announce the hiring of Joanna Czarniecka as Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager of its South Hadley branch office located at 487 Newton Street, South Hadley, MA.

Czarniecka joins GCB with 9+ years of local banking experience. She holds a bachelor’s degree in architecture from UMass Amherst.

“We’re thrilled to welcome Joanna to the bank,” said Lisa Kmetz, Executive Vice President, Retail & Security Officer. “With her background and track record in banking, Joanna has a wealth of expertise and she will be a great resource to our team.”

In her new role, Czarniecka will oversee daily branch operations, develop and service relationships with existing customers, and assist new customers with loan and deposit products.



Submitted photo
New South Hadley Branch Manager for the Greenfield/ Northampton Cooperative Bank, Joanna Czarniecka.

Making South Hadley greener with trees

SOUTH HADLEY – Make South Hadley even greener, and watch your child grow alongside a tree! Get a free tree for #EarthDay2026, thanks to the South Hadley Public Library’s partnership with Neighborhood Forest. Sign up before March 15 at www.neighborhoodforest.org.

Trees will arrive ahead of Earth Day, April 22, and you will be contacted regarding pickup details.



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home. “We immediately got to work,” she said.

That meeting also proved pivotal in another way. There, Miles met then–Selectboard member Sarah Etelman, who encouraged her to learn more about town governance and eventually consider running for office. With Frank DeToma’s seat opening up and encouragement from Etelman to attend meetings and observe, Miles decided to take the leap. She ran a contested race and won, beginning what would become three terms on the board.

Her longevity, she said, came from both temperament and purpose. “Many projects take a long time, and I like to see things through,” Miles explained. From developing financial and Selectboard policies to setting long-range goals, she found satisfaction in shepherding initiatives from start to finish. She also grew into the role over time. New to elected office in 2017,

she said it took a while to find her footing and determine where she could make the greatest impact. Ultimately, the work aligned well with her strengths. “I simply enjoy leadership and community development. I’m skilled at it and enjoy it, making the Selectboard a good fit for the last many years.”

Asked to reflect on the most meaningful moments of her tenure, Miles does not hesitate. “The most meaningful decision by far has been hiring Lisa Wong as our Town Administrator,” she said, calling the appointment transformative for South Hadley. While acknowledging the legacy of former Town Administrator Mike Sullivan, Miles credits Wong’s experience, energy, and innovation with benefiting the town in lasting ways. “I could write an entire article on her contributions alone,” she said.

The most challenging chapter, however, is still unfolding. South Hadley, like many Massachusetts communities, is grappling with a se-

rious budget crisis. As both a Selectboard member and the board’s representative to the Budget Task Force, Miles has been deeply involved in navigating those challenges. “

The road ahead will continue to be challenging due to rising and uncertain health-care costs, a volatile federal government that has affected federal funds and grants, and a state government that desperately needs a comprehensive audit, a change to the Chapter 70 school funding formula, and leadership that needs to focus attention further to the West than they typically do,” said Miles.

In looking at how South Hadley has changed since she joined the board, Miles points to major improvements in municipal planning and transparency. She is particularly proud of the development of a facilities management plan to better steward town buildings, the construction and opening of the senior center, and a comprehensive overhaul of the budget process. “It’s now a far more open and

accessible process,” she said, “far easier to understand for anyone who wants to follow along.”

That emphasis on openness carries through to her approach to decision-making, especially when residents disagree strongly. “Respect and curiosity are required,” Miles said. She views everyone who approaches her—whether at a meeting, online, or in the grocery store—as a neighbor first. Curiosity, she added, allows her to listen fully, ask thoughtful questions, and consider collaborative solutions rather than defaulting to entrenched positions.

Serving in public office has shaped Miles personally as well. She describes herself as more pragmatic and deliberate, slower to form opinions and more careful in expressing them. The role has also come with sacrifices, particularly exposure to public criticism. While she tries to brush off negativity, she acknowledges that certain votes or statements have led to social isolation at times. Still, she

views those moments as instructive. The biggest reward is a job well done, and that’s a collaborative achievement from the board, no matter who the members are at the time. That isn’t to say there aren’t votes I wish I could have handled differently over the last nine years, but by and large I think the Selectboard, as a whole, has improved dramatically over time in its transparency,” said Miles.

As for what comes next, Miles is clear-eyed and at peace with her decision not to seek another term. Nearly a decade, she believes, is a solid contribution—and it makes room for new voices. With her children now teenagers and major family milestones ahead, she is ready to shift her focus. “I want to thank the citizens of South Hadley for the opportunity to serve them,” she said. “It’s been an honor and a privilege to bring your voices to the table and be part of taking steps to help keep South Hadley a great place to live.”

Town Reminder OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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