

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT



Ryan M. McLane

January 31, 2023

Town Events and Town Hall News

Town Hall work moves forward as we look to maximize space and upgrade employee workstations. The Clark Room IT install begins next week. This project transforms the space into a multi-function room with complete IT connectivity. The upgrades streamline hybrid meeting options and deploy easy-to-use display technology for presentations. Our cable provider hopes this investment encourage boards and committees to broadcast meetings for public consumption. A related project saw a contractor flip the Clark Room and Town Clerk office doors. Flipping the doors makes the Parlin Room and COAHS offices inviting and corrects a design flaw.

King Information Systems, our hired records and storage consultant, will extend our archived material, organizing older and orphaned documents. This work removes more than a dozen large file cabinets and weeds out unnecessary document storage. We expect King to complete this initial work in early March. All retained archive material will consolidate in an archive area and every document will be included in our current records database. The database and access will reduce staff-time spent searching for records or recreating information. Based on consultant recommendations, I am working with Peggy to remove two large and unnecessary safes from the vault area to increase our storage capacity. The records project will halt for a couple weeks in March as we look to reorganize workstations into the gained space. Once staff moves complete, we will reengage with records management, finalizing the project's organizational phase. We are aiming to have this phase complete by the end of the fiscal year.

Human Resources Update from the ATA

Chief Sorrows, Chief Fong, and Kirk Bishop are meeting with a new round of dispatch candidates this week, hoping to fill this position by the end of February.

The Board of Assessors has received resumes for the Assessing Assistant position. Interviews will begin after this review with an appointment made in early February. This is a Board of Assessor appointment, but we will keep the Select Board informed about the hiring progress.

The Chief of Police resume submission deadline is February 3. The Police Chief Screening Committee will meet with Public Safety Consultants on February 14th to review all resumes and select candidates for the next round. The next round includes 10-20 candidates complete a questionnaire and writing exercise.

The Assistant Treasurer/Collector search is underway with two candidates scheduled for interview this coming week. We anticipate an appointment request no later than the end of February.

The DPW's Foreman position is now open to external candidates through February 3rd. We will be interviewing internal candidates this week and may have an appointment request at your next Select Board meeting.

I have researched five separate HR platforms with Kelly Beyer and Ryan. We have narrowed down the companies to a top candidate. This platform will assist with time tracking, attendance, accruals management, timesheet approvals and reporting for payroll, as well as streamlined onboarding, document/compliance management, and employee services. We will begin to implement parts of this solution this spring and have the HR software fully operational by the start of Fiscal Year 2024.

Please see the attached Military Leave Policy. I am requesting that the Board consider reviewing and approving this policy.

Finance

Kim and I met with the Finance Committee on January 23rd and will attend their meetings on the January 30th and February 6th. Current discussions weigh requests for additional services and staff in comparison to FY24's increased fix costs and potential tax impact. I presented the Committee with an updated Capital Plan and commend the CPS staff and school committee for their work shaping a true five-year capital plan. The meeting on January 30th will include updated information about DPW capital and a discussion with the Municipal Facilities Committee. For update budget documents, [click here](#).

Procurement

Moving projects along was a key focus this week. Procurement efforts include assisting the Police Department with their firearm purchase and completing the purchase process for the new DPW truck. I am working with the library to procure a system to treat PFAS and finalizing the procurement documents for the MFC's design assistance team. The House Doctor Services project seeks architectural, building envelope, mechanical engineering, and civil engineering. Securing experts in each discipline will allow the MFC to design future projects and assist other departments, like the school, with on-call design services to better estimate costs and complete projects. I will assemble a designer selection committee to select these firms after the proposal

deadline ends on March 1. Finally, I am working with the recreation commission to secure their annual field maintenance bids.

While our annual audits and reviews demonstrate compliance with procurement laws, I do believe we need to update our procurement policies, documents, and training. The Board can expect to see these efforts coming for approval in the coming months.

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Annual Meeting

Aubrey, Kate, and I attended MMA's annual meeting last weekend. As always, the event served as an inspirational opportunity to gain information about peer town efforts, attend classes from leading state experts, and meet with potential vendors about procurement opportunities. Here are key takeaways from the conference:

Town Administrator Notes

- The new Governor restated her commitment to education, providing hope for increased school aid and regional transportation reimbursement. She also stated that she will not file her budget until March 1, meaning we will receive preliminary revenue numbers in time for the Board's public budget hearing in early March.
- Municipal recruitment and retention remain a hot topic statewide. While our retention numbers are high, our hiring difficulties are not an anomaly. Several classes and discussions included strategies for investing in employees, providing flexibility when possible, and planning ahead for vacancies. I do feel we are well positioned to discuss and implement some of these solutions, but there must continue to be an executive focus on employee succession planning if we are to stay ahead of the coming hiring crunch.
- Our insurance projections are accurate based on information coming from MIIA. We will have Carlisle-specific numbers in mid-March.
- Federal infrastructure dollars will flow to Massachusetts towns with plans. Carlisle is positioned to address horizontal infrastructure needs (roads, bridges, culverts), but in my opinion, we need to include this type of maintenance into long-term capital planning. By creating a specific plan, we can target grant dollars. A simple process includes publishing a five-year road maintenance plan and updating it annually for public consumption.
- The MMA adopted a fiscal policy communication highlighting needs at the municipal level. Key Carlisle talking points include increased Chapter 90 funding, creating and funding a municipal building assistance program, increasing school aid and approving it early, and investing state funds in local sustainability and housing initiatives.

Assistant Town Administrator Notes

- Cybersecurity continues to be a growing threat to municipalities. Cities and towns need a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan with all stakeholders involved.
- Our recent communications initiative is on the right track, and ahead of the curve compared to most municipalities.
- With the ongoing labor shortage, cities and towns need to “think outside the box” in the hiring process to attract and retain quality candidates.

Action Items

From the Assistant Town Administrator

1.) I have included a Military Leave Policy for your review and approval. The policy results from a Town Meeting vote last spring adopting MGL Ch.33, s.59 regarding Military pay for Town Employees called to Active Duty. This policy review is necessary based on guidance needed from the Town Accountant on how to pay employees requesting military leave.

Staff Recognition

This week I would like to recognize the following town employees:

Kim Kane, our talented Finance Director, was selected to serve on the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association legislative committee. Kim was selected for her significant experience and ability to help guide discussions about how to improve Massachusetts public finance. I applaud Kim for her involvement and believe Carlisle is better when our staff engages locally, regionally, and statewide.

As reported in the Mosquito, our Municipal Facilities Director Steve Bastek identified a significant error while monitoring this installation of the library’s new rooftop unit. This is one of many examples of how Steve’s dedicated service saves the town money and helps us avoid costly mistakes. In addition to his work on the library project, Steve completed continuing education for his master electrician’s license, assisted the schools with electrical work, and recently came in on several off duty days to help solve heating issues. Steve is a true professional and we are lucky to have him.

Upcoming Select Board Dates of Interest

Tuesday, Jan 31, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

Thursday, Feb 2 to Friday, Feb 3, 2023: Military Training (TA)

Monday, Feb 6, 2023: FinCom Budget Meeting (Voluntary SB attendance)

Monday, Feb 13, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting
Monday, Feb 20, 2023: Town Hall Closed, President's Day
Tuesday, Feb 28, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting
Friday, March 3, 2023: Military Training (TA)

Future Agenda

See attached