

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT



Ryan M. McLane

March 14, 2023

Town Events and Town Hall News

The Building Department now occupies the Nickles Room, and the Tax Collector/Treasurer's office is nearly moved to the second floor. To help facilitate traffic flow, we added temporary signage and a Town Hall greeter (senior work-off program). We are evaluating the greeter program to see if we can improve the resident experience as they navigate Town Hall. If this program is useful, we will continue to use it even after completing the Town Hall shuffle.

Our records archiving began in earnest this week as Peggy, Jenn, and I shepherded our consultants around to address old or orphaned records. This resulted in a 30 percent reduction of our archive files and a new records section (Town Clerk's Office) and accompanying database. The three-day effort enabled future projects looking to continue consolidating our land-use files and prepare for eventual digitization. The benefit of the archive, besides records storage compliance, is easier access to records and less employee time hunting through multiple areas. The records project will begin again in April.

Human Resources Update from the ATA

We are receiving applications for the vacant DPW Driver/Laborer position. This position became vacant when James Hall was promoted to Foreman. We are also receiving applications for the COAHS Director and will be scheduling interviews by early April. We wished Joan Ingersoll the best of luck as her last day was March 10th. We are excited to bring forward Carol Grueneich to be appointed as Acting COAHS Director tonight. Please see the attached document highlighting Carol's qualifications and fit for the interim position.

The Police Chief Screening Committee worked extensively to bring candidates forward to the Public Safety Consultants' Assessment Center this past Saturday. Yesterday, they met one final time to provide a ranking of candidates for the Select Board to review. Many thanks to this hard-working committee for putting a lot of thoughtful time and effort in this important Town position.

Assessor's Assistant Frank Schembari and Assistant Treasurer/Collector Sandy Nason have been great additions to Town Hall and immediately dove into their roles. We are thrilled to have them join the team!

Shawn Brewer has also now started as our newest dispatcher. His extensive experience from Chelmsford makes him a great addition to our public safety team!

We have officially launched the implementation process for BambooHR. The module will streamline time off requests, and timesheets, and create a shared time-off calendar for Town Hall.

Finance Information

Carlisle's Chapter 90 allocation based on Governor Healey's recommended \$200 million funding totals \$252,918. I encourage the Select Board to join me in contacting our local delegation to increase this number. The Massachusetts Municipal Association and Small-Town Administrator's Association is advocating for an increase to at least \$330 million or a 65% increase in local allocations. Without such an increase, we will continue to fall behind on necessary road repairs.

The Finance Committee met Thursday night to refine their recommendations regarding the FY24 budget. The Select Board receives their recommendation on Tuesday, March 14th, and should work towards a final recommendation on remaining budget items including Free Cash/Reserve levels, employee compensation, and the use of alternative funds like ARPA.

Procurement Updates

Here are updates on current procurement efforts:

- 1.) The library's PFAS treatment system bid was awarded to Small Water Systems Services. We signed this contract and Martha is working hard to schedule this needed install.
- 2.) The House Doctor On-Call Design services procurement closed last week, and my DSC met to assist me with providing recommendations about designer appointments. Your meeting packet includes a summary of my recommendations.
- 3.) The recreation commission voted to approve their annual field maintenance and organic program contracts to Michael Hightower of Golf Course Management, Inc.
- 4.) Steve Bastek and I finalizing the deliverables and work for the library's in-duct smoke detector and the police department's ADA ramp.

I completed all phases of my MCPPO recertification except for a final live seminar in June. My certification will be valid for three years after I complete this final step.

Middlesex County Retirement System COLA Discussion

The Middlesex County Retirement System (MCRS) is looking for the Board to accept Chapter 269 of the acts of 2022 (see attached). Accepting this local option grants retirees, a one-time COLA increase from 3% to 5% of the system's \$16k COLA base. The MCRS needs 2/3 of participating Select Boards to approve this measure. There is nuance to this decision, including comparison to other retiree COLAs (like social security) and its impact on the system's unfunded liability. The arguments for accepting this provision include increasing pay for low-income retirees. Arguments against include rising costs for towns. Please review the attached material to better understand your position. The MCRS is asking the Select Board to vote on this by the end of the Fiscal Year.

A MCRS representative will be at your March 28th meeting to facilitate board questions. They will provide a presentation and answer questions. They asked you to send questions in advance.

All Chairs Meeting

We continue to refine our all-chairs meeting to maximize impact. This month we used the Clark Room technology to offer a hybrid meeting. Aubrey, Julie, and I presented relevant information and then our dedicated volunteers offered updates on their various efforts and projects. We aim to hold this meeting quarterly with efficient themes. These themes might include budget updates, volunteer onboarding, master-plan implementation, HR, and goals.

Here is a list of action items the Board might consider for future agendas:

- ZBA vacancy, or more generally, how to receive information about vacancies and assist in filling the positions timely
- The library trustees brought maternity leave policies as an important future employee retention discussion
- The Board of Health discussed the important of protecting the town's water supplies with a thoughtful approach to bylaw discussions
- The trails committee discussed addressing and maintaining the boardwalk at Banta-Davis
- Several committees discussed a need for shared digital storage for maintaining records and other items that assist with board continuity
- Several committees discussed the need for succession planning

- The Cultural Council and COAHS discussed the continued need for town gathering space and requested that all boards and committees consider seniors and other populations when discussing the need to improve/expand public space
- The COAHS discussed senior housing as a key need for Carlisle moving forward and requested that this important focus permeate discussions about the town's future.
- Committees like finance and sustainability offered their support to other boards for future planning and coordination efforts

Action Items

1.) Town Common Request – Carlisle Poppy Project

The Carlisle Poppy Project requests permission from the Select Board to use part of the town common for the 2023 Memorial Day Display from the weekend of 20/21 May to the weekend of 3/4 June.

According to the Project, this year's display will be 30% bigger than last years and the inspiration for the design is a maze. This maze represents wartime trenches and will have informational signs at dead ends describing Carlisle residents' experiences relating to war. Sally Ducha of Brook Street submitted the design idea, and the display received a cultural council grant to cover additional costs.

The display will be installed in a manner that will not interfere with the Memorial Day Ceremony.

For more information see the webpage <https://carlislepoppyproject.weebly.com>

Staff Recognition

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

Although mentioned many times this week and last, the town gave a heartfelt goodbye to Joan Ingersoll this week with a nice tribute in the Clark Room she helped improve. You all know Joan, and I do not mean to belabor the point, but I hope that I have half the impact on this town that Joan did when my work for this town is complete. Good luck in Weston Joan, they are very lucky to gain someone of your caliber.

Thank you to Kelly for helping me to assemble the budget details guiding your decision-making. Kelly, in short order, calculated all of the COLA and wage increases to give you an exact accounting of potential budget decisions. My ability to continually lean on her expertise and hard

work is the reason why we believe the budget process to have transparent and robust data for your deliberation and decision-making.

Julie continues to add value to our Select Board discussions. She volunteered to serve on my DSC for the House Doctor Designers, calling all references and gathering details to help me and the DSC make strong recommendations for your consideration. Similarly, her attention to detail on the ongoing Master Plan implementation is enabling high-level discussion rather than data collection and presentation. Finally, she is helping me gather documents for all ongoing projects and store them digitally in easy-to-find files for project continuity and reference. This will reduce errors, improve discussions, and build continuity.

Upcoming Select Board Dates of Interest

Friday, March 17, 2023: Legislative Breakfast (ATA, TA, SB)

Thursday, March 24, 2023: Professional Development (TA, ATA)

Tuesday, March 28, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

Monday, April 3, 2023: Tentative Public Budget Hearing

Tuesday, April 11, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

Tuesday-Wednesday, April 11-12, 2023: TA Military Training

Tuesday, April 25, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

Future Agenda

See attached