

# TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT



**Ryan M. McLane**

September 26, 2023

## **Town Events and Town Hall News**

Town Hall improvements continue as we move towards creating functional employee workspaces and a welcoming and professional environment for volunteers and visitors. Here are the latest improvements:

- **Conference Room Upgrades** – The Heald and Parlin conference rooms will receive upgraded technology in the next two months. The goals for this project include wireless plug and play technology for staff in addition to easy-to-use virtual meeting software for our boards and committees. As we upgrade the technology, we will also empty the rooms of any excess clutter. The result will be five conference rooms compatible with employee equipment for use as private open or quiet communication space for all town business.
- **Microphones** – The sound issues for live meetings in the Clark Room is also a current focus. We are finalizing plans to install eight wireless microphone units that will alleviate the need for meeting participants to have the microphones in their faces. This should help address the varied sound quality for remote meeting participants. We expect to finalize this decision next week and receive the new technology in October.
- **Upcoming Projects -**
  - Land-use file project – October 2023
  - Cubicle installation Phase Two – October/November
  - Heald and Parlin Room IT upgrades - October
  - Continued employee IT upgrades - October

## **New Executive Assistant**

The internal advertising period for this important position closes Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. If we have viable internal candidates, we will interview immediately and begin the transition process for any selections. We expect to have a Select Board member participating in this interview process to ensure a quality recommendation to the full board for the final appointment. If this search moves externally, we will advertise at the end of next week and interview immediately

when qualified applicants apply. Although it will be hard to replace Jenn, we do not expect this position to be open for very long given the potential applicant pool.

### **Human Resources Update from the ATA**

We are currently interviewing final candidates for the Board of Health Assistant, Assistant Treasurer/Collector, and the DPW Heavy Equipment Operator. We expect to have appointment recommendations for our town Boards before your next meeting.

The implementation of BambooHR has been very successful this year. Employees have noted that it has become easier to request time off, submit timesheets, and see who is out of the office that day. We are thrilled with how seamless this transition has been!

### **Deckhouse Assessment Working Group Summary of Findings**

Attached is a summary document assembled by the Deckhouse Assessment Working Group. These findings, given to the Select Board and the Board of Assessors, help shape a future conversation about how Town officials would like to address assessment processes moving forward. It is important to note that many of these recommendations are already in process with our Assessing Department. As a reminder, the FY24 tax rate will be set in early November. I am advising the Board, based on this summary of findings, to hold a joint meeting with the Board of Assessors to discuss these results and any paths forward.

### **Police Dog Name - Athena**

Our newest police officer finally has a name! With an overwhelming number of options to choose from, the Police Department decided to leave the final name up to change. The largest voter getters in the competition were Carly, Athena, and Raven. Officer Koukos allowed his new charge to “pick” her name, placing treats under pieces of paper with each name written. Athena immediately picked her name without hesitation. The department will now focus on training Athena and acclimating her to the community.

### **ICMA Management Intern**

Our Management Intern Jake Gokey starts this week, and our Department Heads compiled a lengthy list of potential focus areas. These jobs include continuity of operations planning, comparable community data building and various sustainability data collection efforts. We will keep Jake busy and provide him with several professional development opportunities in exchange for this hard work. Thanks to the Department Heads for their work crafting a quality work plan for Jake to execute.

## **Greenough Barn Update**

Julie continues to help refine the procurement process for this important deconstruction. We are working with residents, local officials, and third-party advisors to develop the specifications necessary to sustainably remove the Barn. We expect to bring a draft RFP to your next meeting. The essential decision point for the project will be to establish and set a sustainability metric for companies to submit bids. The Town will then select the most responsive and responsible bidder with the lowest cost plan. The goals of this project remain:

- 1.) Deconstruct and preserve aspects of the barn where possible
- 2.) Demolish unwanted materials
- 3.) Land restoration and invasive species prevention.

## **Dog Tag Election**

The results are in! Carlisle third graders selected the dog bone as this year's dog registration tag. A special thanks to Peggy, Gretchen, and Dennet for their work engaging our students for this important and fun civics lesson.

## **DPW Brush Collection**

DPW Director Jim Hall announced last week that residents will be allowed to bring brush from the September 8th storm to the DPW yard located behind the transfer station. Residents are asked to please not block the wood chip area and limit your loads to brush only. No large stumps or yard waste allowed! The DPW will collect storm-related brush for one month, from September 15th through October 15th and resume regular collection beginning December 1<sup>st</sup> and running through the month of April.

## **Executive Professional Development**

Attached are professional development plans for myself and Aubrey. The Select Board is contractually obligated to review and approve my plan annually. Everything in this plan is budgeted and tied to annual performance and goals.

## **Department of Public Utilities Working Group and Comment Letter (Vote Required)**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities is proposing new regulations regarding community aggregation programs. I assembled a working group at the Select Board's suggestion to help the town navigate these issues. Super volunteers Bob Zogg and Glenn Reed assembled the response document found in your packet and attended several meetings to help understand how DPW regulation changes might impact Carlisle. We are requesting that the Board support and send this letter to DPU with the chair's signature.

## Upcoming Discussion Points

This section of my report will outline some items coming before the Board in future meetings. The intent of this is not just to inform the Board, but to solicit guidance on what information you will need to make decisions.

- *Town Hall Hours.* Solidifying a set schedule is important for town residents and for staff. While we are recommending the course of action given to you at your last meeting, we are looking for the Board's input on what they would like to see in terms of employee engagement and resident services. We have requested that this be a formal topic on an upcoming Select Board agenda.
- *Town Planner Hours.* Given the changes in the Town Hall staff structure and the focus on completing town sustainability goals, I am recommending that we add five hours to the Town Planner's current job description, increasing her hours from 30 to 35. If the Select Board would like to put this on a future agenda, I can prepare any information necessary for your review.
- *Financial Forecast Model.* I will be presenting the first draft of the town's comprehensive financial forecast at your meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>. I will send the first draft of this report to the Board prior to the meeting to field any individual questions or answer any concerns prior to the public presentation. The Finance Committee will also be invited to the meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> to provide input.
- *Financial Policies and Select Board Policies* – As we move past the Fall Town Meeting, the Select Board will be asked to review and approve a slew of town policies as part of our administrative goals for the year. I will be sending these policies to you ahead of your meetings for comment and review. We will consider more than three dozen policies in the next year so I am asking that the Select Board review these policies prior to meetings, otherwise, the burden on the agenda will be significant.
- *Finalizing Goals and Evaluations* – I have met one-on-one with more than one dozen employees and will continue to meet with each as we discuss their goals for the year and review potential evaluation options. I will present some of these goals to the Select Board and public (all are available on request). Aubrey will be bringing final recommendations on evaluation forms and processes for the Select Board to consider and approve.

## Staff Recognition

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

I presented some statistics to the Board at your last meeting, but I would like to again thank our public safety officials for their work during the storm event on the 8<sup>th</sup> and the subsequent rain

and flooding in the week to follow. Although the potential hurricane did not amount to much in this area, all our departments were on alert and went through planning drills to be ready. We owe these teams a great debt for their willingness to serve when most of us are clamoring to get indoors and away from the conditions.

**Upcoming Select Board Dates of Interest**

Tuesday, October 10, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

Monday, October 16, 2023: Fall Town Meeting

Tuesday, October 24, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

November 3-7, 2023: TA Vacation

November 16-17, 2023: TA Professional Development (Out of Office)

Tuesday, October 24, 2023: Regular Select Board Meeting

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**Future Agenda**

See attached