

## **ANNUAL EVALUATION OF TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, TIM BRAGAN APRIL 2018**

### **Overview**

Lucy Wallace and Alice Von Loesecke conducted the annual review of Town Administrator, Tim Bragan, in April. As part of the review process we asked department heads and chairs of town boards/committees who interact with Tim for their confidential input. A summary of the comments we received is attached at the end of this document.

Tim continues to do a good job of advancing the Board's goals as set out at the Board's annual strategic planning session in May 2107. He also continues to do a very good job managing the day to day operations of the Town and is delegating more to the Assistant Town Administrator, Marie Sobalvarro, and Executive Assistant, Julie Doucet.

Tim is generally friendly and welcoming to both those who work in the Town Hall and those that come to the Selectmen's Office for business reasons. He continues to be available to the general public, department heads, and members of other town board and committee members on a "drop-in" basis, which is beneficial for them but can cause repeated disruptions in his work. He should not be hesitant to close his door during high work times (such as budget preparation) or to set specific appointment times for those needing more than 5 minutes of his time.

Tim continually looks for ways to improve delivery of services to the Town, examples of which were the creation of the Regional Dispatch at Devens several years ago and the series of department audits by the Collins Center for Public Management. He also has used staff changes as an opportunity to revisit job descriptions and create a more cost and service-delivery effective position. An example of this is the creation of the Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Accountant position.

Tim also is very adept at adjusting to significant shifts in the usual annual work flow. For example, Tim did a remarkable and outstanding job of shepherding a new budget process and guiding the Board in its potential new role. Approaching the budget process for FY19 will depend on the outcome of the Charter vote in May.

In summary, Tim's competence, professionalism and people skills continue to serve the Board and town well.

## Goals for FY19

The following are the goals agreed upon at Tim's review on April 9, 2018 conducted by Lucy Wallace and Alice Von Loesecke.

- First and foremost, assure that the Board of Selectmen's goals are met.
- Keep the BOS informed of on-going matters between meetings via email updates (especially those items that are not regularly raised at BOS meetings).
- Continue to delegate more tasks to staff in order to lessen his work load and enable him to focus on more critical matters. Also delegate more of preparation and logistics associated with major public events, such as town meetings.
- Balance "open door" availability to officials and public with having time to get work done. Use Julie as a "gate keeper" to lessen interruptions during periods of intensive work.
- Make a written copy of the TA report given at BOS meetings available to the BOS prior to or at the meeting.
- Continue to support the DPW Director in establishing a regular maintenance and emergency repair system for public buildings. The next step will be a professional evaluation of major system replacements so as to avoid surprises when work is scheduled to be done.
- Adopt a "sun down policy," to wit, answer emails and voice messages by the end of the day even if only to acknowledge their receipt and to provide an estimated time to respond to the matter.
- While Marie will take the lead in this matter, work to see that the new Personnel System is implemented.
- Assist the Board in assuring that recommendations from the several Collins' department evaluation are implemented..
- In conjunction with the Town Clerk, provide training for newly elected and appointed board and committee members on the Open Meeting Law and related public records requirements.
- Extend ability to post meetings and agendas to 11 A.M. on Friday.
- Pursue feasibility and cost of setting up town emails for town board/committee members (such as @bos.harvard.ma.us or Wallace.bos@harvard.ma.us)
- Seek a better balance between work and personal life (time off).

## Additional Input

These comments are based on input from department heads, committee or board chairs, and Board of Selectmen:

### Good Qualities

- Tim is very supportive of others and seeks to help them be successful in meeting their goals.
- Tim is extremely knowledgeable about everything having to do with running the town and public administration.
- Tim is very personable and does a good job of keeping in touch on an informal basis with Town Hall staff and department heads.
- Tim does not micro-manage staff.
- Tim does a good job of managing with limited financial resources (knows how to stretch a dollar or find a dollar).
- Tim has done a good job of staffing the Town Hall and assuring back-up of key positions and/or succession planning.

### Challenges

- It can be difficult to meet with Tim given his very busy schedule.
- He sometimes does not respond to emails in a timely way.
- Tim should delegate more; although he is doing a better job delegating to Marie.
- Tim has a tendency to be overly controlling.
- Tim does not always ensure that decisions by committees for which he provides staff support are communicated to appropriate committees/boards.
- Communication of information or decisions to be shared with other committees/boards and/or staff should be in writing; especially important to avoid misunderstandings or assumptions that a message has been properly shared.
- Tim's first reaction to others is often "no" rather than "yes."