

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Town Administrator Screening Committee**  
**Monday, January 22, 2018, 5:30 PM**  
**Morse Institute Library Study Room 1A**

*This meeting was posted in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30A, § 23A-23C*

Members present: Cathi Collins, Vice Chair; Josh Ostroff, Clerk; Tim Dooling; Mike Rourke; Dan Sullivan; Paula Panchuck, Terri Evans; Kristine Van Amsterdam. By phone: Steve Levinsky, Chair

Also present: Richard Tranfaglia, HR Director. Bernie Lynch; Bob Halpin, former Framingham Town Manager.

Cathi called the meeting to order at 5:32.

Josh moved to approve Steve's remote participation, seconded by Terri, voted unanimously in favor with Steve abstaining.

Bob Halpin spoke to the key skills for a TA. He offered that big ideas are critical, and ability to focus on strategic vision. He also shared his experience in Framingham and what was helpful to his success in onboarding; integration into the community culture and approach to solving problems, citing Economic Development, particularly in their downtown.

It was helpful for him to take a few months to listen and learn. He reflected on the relationship with the schools, primarily from a budget perspective. He shared the impact of split rate taxes and depressed commercial values on single-family home taxes, changes to insurance, and redirection of some savings to help support the schools, while backing off the maximum shift under tax classification. The lesson was in educating people about the interrelated nature of municipal finances and governance.

Tim asked about the level of import for different factors – considering, for example, familiarity with the Town, and familiarity with collective bargaining. Bob gives more weight to a candidate who can step back and understanding the motivations for people's behavior. With collective bargaining, it's important to link that to the goals you want to achieve.

Dan asked about the attractiveness of Natick; Bob thinks it is a highly desirable opportunity. He reflected on his recruitment to Framingham.

Terri asked about longstanding practices in municipal management that are undergoing change. Bob noted that data-driven decision-making is the new frontier. Getting people to do things online is key, but also a cultural and attitudinal challenge. He referenced Arlington's use of their GIS system; we discussed

Somerville's matrix, and the City of Boston's use of online self-assessment, tracking of students' after-school activities.

Cathi asked what were the most critical skills for success. Bob does not think you can easily separate one skill from the others. He described a learning process informed by subject matter experts, using TOD as an example. Cathi pushed on the one thing that matters the most. In reply, Bob said that it is having a grasp on the important work he was expected to complete, and translating that into a process to bring other people with him. It's not one thing; he is a great idea activator, and respects having a process and a spectrum of skills.

In further discussion, being a quick study and ability to form a team, identify and prioritize micro-processes that lead to results. Knowing your strengths and building a team with complementary skills. Mike commented on the importance of engaging and reaching out to staff and citizens to bring perspectives and information that would not otherwise be available, and which signaled to staff that a strong foundation was needed with community engagement. The senior team needed authority, and understanding that they would have his support when and how needed. Building consensus and unity with a direction for the team was important.

A question was asked about how to maximize the value of the interaction that the committee has with candidates? Bob deferred to Bernie's expertise on this. How the administrator can move to establish trust in the community, and with the board. He heard a lot when he arrived in Framingham that was helpful to ensure trust to get results; enforcing high expectations was helpful to building relationships.

Josh asked about how he engaged with independently elected or appointed boards to advance ideas, using the TOD process as an example; the Planning Board and staff were part of the process from the outset which helped get early buy-in.

Members thanked Bob for his participation and advice, and he left the meeting

On meeting minutes for January 8, approval was moved by Terri, seconded Kristine, and unanimously voted with Cathi and Steve abstaining.

Terri moved to enter into exec session for reason 8 in the Open Meeting Law, with Cathi making the appropriate declaration; we will adjourn the public meeting from executive session. Kristine seconded, and the motion was unanimously voted by roll call at 6:25.

Joshua Ostroff, Clerk