

(8) TOWN ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION

Town Administrator Evaluation, October 2016, DRAFT

Vision Of The Role Of Town Administrator In Wayland:

a. Provides administrative leadership

Nan accomplishes many aspects of administrative leadership in the day-to-day operation of the town and governance by the BoS. She communicates with staff, and with them prepares BoS agendas including planning meetings weeks in advance, prepares Town Meeting warrants, manages human resources including making volunteer appointments, manages legal services, acts as head procurement officer for the town, responds to the public, and solves problems that come up every day.

The office competently handles many tasks that do not come to the Board of Selectmen.

Most of the reviews mentioned that in her second year in Wayland, Nan has stepped up her administrative leadership. She is clearly in charge and willing to take on difficult issues.

b. Provides available facts and information to the Board; makes policy recommendations to the Board.

Board members comments indicated their satisfaction with performance on this goal. Specifically,

- Weekly electronic meeting packets contain all materials necessary for background and decisions on agenda items. Nan provides a summary overview of agenda items as needed and is becoming more comfortable making recommendations to the Board.
- "Agenda Memos" clearly outline the topic in front of the board and provide a staff recommendation on actions to take.
- Making policy recommendations after thorough study and planning - an example is the OBEP investment strategy to change to PRIT.

c. Supports the work of town boards and committees

Board members' comments were positive while recognizing the limited authority of the Town Administrator's role in the Town Code. Comments included:

- Wayland's very flat organizational structure and over 40 committees means that almost every project passes through the TA's office, sometimes needing significant time commitment to keep the project moving forward. Therefore, Nan becomes involved in almost every aspect of Wayland's volunteer boards and committees. She does not shy away from this involvement.
- Balancing the requests of volunteer boards and departmental staff workload is a challenge. Generally Nan handles this well.
- Nan delves into the town code to confirm the Board of Selectmen's and Town Administrator's responsibilities and then follows through with recommendations. An example is the FY2018 budget planning process.

d. Responsive to inquiries from the public and promotes a culture of respect for the public

It was agreed that Nan makes a concerted effort on citizen relations; she strives to be responsive to residents' requests and communications and has exhibited a steady, patient, calm manner.

Nan shows respect to the public and regularly meets with and listens to the concerns of Town residents. She explains her reasoning for doing things in a certain way, but has also shown flexibility in trying to find ways to solve problems.

e. With other staff, manages the operations of the town

The Selectmen acknowledge the expectation of responsibility, but also the limited authority the TA role has (by code). Within this structure, Nan relies on department heads and office staff to manage the operations of the town. It is clearly a large team effort. Again this year, there are new department heads on staff, so there have been many transitions and learning curves.

Although at times Nan expresses frustration with the unusual organizational structure that places responsibility with the Town Administrator, but no clear authority, it does not impact her willingness to tackle issues. It takes a great deal of finesse to work with departments that are reporting to other boards and commissions. This structure may be something the Board wants to address in the near future.

Nan has demonstrated a determination to improve the operations of the town. Examples are her work on the Recreation Funding Model, the FY2018 budget planning process, review of organization of affordable housing initiatives, and wastewater managerial structure and staffing issues.

Goal 1: Sustain and improve the quality of life in Wayland

Objective A: Provide well designed market rate and affordable rental housing at Rivers Edge at reasonable cost to the town

Achieving her action goal, Nan conducted and oversaw the procurement process to select a developer for River's Edge. The timing of completing this project prior to ATM was not met because the first RFP received no responses. The reissued RFP received three responses in July and deliberation and decision by BoS will continue into the next review year (ongoing as of October 2016).

Board members comments include:

- Demonstrated ample administrative skill in shepherding this process
- Did a good job keeping the board informed of the issues arising from this project as it relates to other affected Town functions, boards, and the need for planning in this area. Appropriately to this point, the board has been informed as interested observers.
- The board will take a more active role, with Nan's advice and recommendations, as the bid is awarded and multi-board discussions/negotiations of solving the town administrative issues round the site planning. Specifically, Nan has worked with the DPW and School Dept. to find an alternative site for DPW materials and school buses.
- The Board of Selectmen reached agreement with the Sudbury Selectmen on the potential disposition of the Septage Facility.

Objective B: Maximize the effectiveness of town boards and committees that are planning for future development of the town

Nan had two action item topics under this objective – WRAP and Town Center. Progress was made on each but for various reasons, neither was achieved.

WRAP: Nan's goal included providing staff resources and monthly monitoring of the WRAP committee and involvement of the Land Use Team. (While WRAP was formed under the Planning Board, its work impacts the future development of the Town.) It was noted that

- Nan defined staff support roles (Town Planner, Town Surveyor, Facilities Director) for the WRAP Committee
- Some felt that status reports were performed, some that reports could have been more regular
- The WRAP committee is operating with 3 of 5 allowed members and no efforts have been made to fill openings
- The end product and its role in Wayland are unclear; more information about the function, role and process would be helpful
- The WRAP Committee is expected to provide a final recommendation and report on a strategic long-range plan by June 30, 2017
- Relatedly, Nan has reported on the continued development and work of the Land Use Team (staff) under the Assistant TA and has reported improved staff communication on such land based issues before the Town (Carroll School, implementing the solar project).
- The Land Use Team (10 members) meets monthly to coordinate planning and permitting on projects like the Carroll School, Rail Trail, Solar Facilities, Library drainage project, development of recreational fields, revision of fee payment processes, and some public events. Nan has updated the board on these projects regularly.

Town Center: Nan's action item was to identify and complete tasks regarding use and maintenance of the Town green at Town Center with a goal date of August 2016. This item was not achieved due to overall delays in the discussions with KGI, the owner of the town greens and municipal parcel at Town Center.

Completing work on Town Center has been a clear priority of the Board; however, it has not been a consistent focus of the TA's office. Board members' perspectives differ on this goal. Some feel that work has only been completed or followed at board members' urging. Others that progress has been made and updates have been comprehensive and timely.

- Nan directed staff time to be devoted to finishing the escrow accounting for 20Wayland accounts (10 years of entries), and the board communicated this information/result to 20W.
- Efforts toward planning for and using the Town Green were not evident.
- Town Counsel assisted with drafting communications to KGI.
- Efforts to complete the Conservation Restriction and Trail Easement were unsuccessful and are key to completing work on the municipal parcel and town green areas.
- The housing component at town center was completed and the bond released.

An overall comment on this goal of effectiveness in governance was that it seems most often town boards and committees, and departments, function more as silos than as a unified cohesive organization. The MOU with Rec, Schools and BoPW was a refreshing change. The board looks for opportunities in other areas to work together to facilitate better cooperative functioning.

Goal 2: Assure that local government resources are used responsibly and efficiently

Objective A: Create a cohesive financial management group that is in compliance with MA General Law and serves the needs of the town.

Nan had two action items under this objective – to apply for a DLS grant for a financial management study and to select an investment management model for OPEB funds.

Financial management study: In June, Nan has engaged The Collins Center for a study of financial workflow and processes and has overseen their work. A report is due in December 2016; the board has not received any updates. Originally, Nan's goal was to apply for a DLS grant to conduct this work rather than using a consultant.

Nan has set up a Finance Team (Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director, Finance Director, Director of Assessing, Treasurer/Collector, School Business Manager, Financial Analyst) to mirror the construct of the Land Use Team. The team meets monthly to review and address current issues and adopt changes to financial processes.

OPEB: Nan worked with the Treasurer/Collector and Finance Director to present a successful proposal to move the \$12 million OPEB fund to the Massachusetts Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT). PRIT provides oversight and investment management through a statewide trust. This was a major accomplishment stemming from years of work.

Financial Advisor: For the first time in a number of years, the Town issued an RFP for financial services and as a result selected a new financial advisor. The result was hiring a Financial Advisor (UNIBANK) to counsel the BoS, Treasurer, and Finance Director on the best approaches to borrowing and other financial issues.

The selection committee had two finalists, but because of a split vote, Nan made the final selection. Her final decision criteria were not well communicated and resulted in some questioning her selection.

Other comments on financial topics included:

- Acknowledgment that healthcare structure and costs are an ongoing priority. The Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director is working on a major (nearly completed) project to restructure employees' and retirees' health insurance plans to reduce insurance costs.
- The Treasurer's office resolved cash reconciliation issues, assisted other departments with cash receipt procedures and started tax title collections.
- Nan worked with the Finance Director to present a "state of the town" financial report to the Finance Committee in August. This informed the committee's work in setting the FY18 budget guideline.
- Nan has done a good job managing those aspects of the budget process under her control and has worked to coordinate and organize all town budgets and financial planning. Members expressed confidence in her ability to continue to organize this process.

Objective B: Provide excellent information technology for the town and schools.

Nan identified two action items here – complete and implement the IT planning study and develop/manage a town wide document management system.

IT: This project continued to be a major time commitment for most of this review year. The board was complimentary of her work in this area. Nan deliberately to identify weaknesses in the towns operation and hired consultants to address short and longer term fixes including review IT policies, procedures, controls and staffing. Specific comments included:

- Though not an expert in IT, Nan rolled up her sleeves, worked with consultants, town staff, and FinCom to address security, training, staffing, and funding.
- Nan successfully managed the work to bring a comprehensive IT budget to ATM, answer residents' questions, handle staff issues and continue implementation of the consultant's

suggestions.

- Hiring an IT Director to oversee the Town and School IT infrastructure has provided relief to her workload on this topic and put us on the right track. Good efforts continue to implement and maintain the consultants' recommendations of a comprehensive, multi-year IT master plan.

Document management: The goal of developing a document management system was not worked on this review year, primarily due to other priorities. One member noted that we have talked for years about having a document that explains to residents how to navigate the land use boards: which board to go for what approval. Nan has put that on her long list of things to do, which I commend.

Objective C: Continuously improve the effectiveness of town services to the public.

Nan identified two action items for this objective – performance evaluations for department heads and providing a structure for the Schools, BoPW and Rec to manage joint assets.

The board is aware that Nan met with all Department Heads to identify goals. Generally, the board is not involved in the detail of performance reviews and it is difficult to comment on her work on measurable objectives for all departments or instituting a performance evaluation program for regular personnel. The board notes that not all town staff seem to share Nan's work ethic or positive attitude. The board recognizes that Town Building staff and all Town employees are in a service industry, and some believe we need to do better to make Town Building and its employees more user friendly.

MOU: Nan worked to have departments work cooperatively and in a forward thinking mode as it pertains to recreation facilities through this cross-departmental MOU her office helped develop and broker. The Assistant TA worked with Rec, Schools and BoPW to develop and sign an agreement on managing maintenance and projects related to town and school recreational assets. It is recognized that this is a first 'draft' and will be revised and improved as it is used.

Other comments related to the effectiveness of Town services included:

- The Public Buildings Director budgeted utility savings (FY18) from work spearheaded by the Energy committee. Fuel conversion, ESCO energy saving work and solar installations are all budgeted to bring savings to the town's utility budget.
- Specific areas that will improve effectiveness are IT, budget planning, Land Use Team's effort to streamline the permitting process, communications effort, and the Recreation funding model.
- This is an ongoing and never-ending goal to try to maximize our town's government functioning and there is much we can improve upon. Making town functions more efficient and organized should remain a major goal for FY17 as Nan works with the department heads and the boards and committees. There is much we can improve upon.

Goal 3: Improve the responsiveness of Wayland town government.

Objective A: Create public awareness about the actions of the Board of Selectmen and the activities of town departments.

There were two action items here – communication through quarterly newsletters and WayCam and website improvements.

Communication: It was agreed that we've made a good start here with the joint efforts of staff and volunteers. Nan's goal was to implement a quarterly newsletter and periodic programming on WayCam.

The quarterly newsletter has not been implemented but other efforts have been made.

- Staff and volunteers have appeared on WayCam's Weekly Buzz.
- Nan established a team (Human Resources Assistant, Executive Secretary, BoS member) to improve public information dissemination.
- TA staff started and manages a Facebook page for town events and one selectman is coordinating informational articles in the local press.

It was agreed that more consistent effort is needed to regularly communicate the good work of the town – perhaps in formats for those not as tech savvy, but also considering list serve options. Also, a social media policy should be created and adopted.

Website: Work on redesigning and updating the town website has not begun. However, the Executive Secretary is working on organizational improvements to the Website, and staff was assigned responsibility for assisting committees with posting documents. Board members agreed that this is a bigger project requiring the assistance of the IT Director, but also recognized that information can be hard to find (Town meeting information appears in many places and some links do not work) and needs to be updated (out-of-date contact information for those of us on town boards and committees).

ClearGov is software allowing the town more financial transparency and hopefully responsiveness to residents. This has been painfully slow to review, purchase and implement. It was assigned to the Finance Director in August/September to share the workload. (Note – the contract was signed at the end of September 2016.)

Objective B: Provide efficient permitting processes that are user friendly for the public.

This objective and action item were not met primarily due to other priority issues. The board recognizes that Nan has articulated a good vision and that efforts are underway now. However, this is best addressed in the next review cycle. Improvement in this process remains a priority of the board, as the permitting process is a consistent complaint of residents.

It was noted that the Health and Building Departments have adopted a process to work with WMDC (Wastewater) to make sure permits tie to wastewater allocation.

Objective C: Create a culture of open government within all town departments.

The Board of Selectmen and its staff are committed to this goal. Nan has developed a Board and Committee Handbook to help guide elected and appointed volunteers in the rules around Open Meeting Law and Public Records compliance. The board was very supportive of this idea. Nan's action item deadline was not met because the board did not complete its review of the document or take action on this item.

Nan fosters an environment of open government. Entire BoS packets are available to the public prior to BoS meetings. This is far more than other communities provide. One member commented that through the board and Nan's efforts Wayland's town government is as open as any in the State. However, one member noted that Town staff is discouraged from speaking with volunteers. Given Wayland's volunteer heavy structure, we are all dependent on staff and volunteers working well together. Volunteers do need to be aware of and sensitive to time demands on staff.

Regarding town-wide compliance with OML, it was noted that there is no central review or repository for all minutes and minutes are not created or posted for all committees on a timely basis. No OML training sessions were held this year.

The Board had an OML violation and \$1000 fine due to untimely production of minutes. While the Board is legally responsible for minutes, the drafting of minutes is a TA office staff responsibility and the office had fallen behind. The board implemented a new procedure (standard agenda item) and job descriptions were revised to prevent this from happening in the future. The new procedure seems to work well with a more rapid and efficient turnover for review and approval of minutes.

Job descriptions have been altered to account for new public information requirements.

During the past year, other town-wide initiatives took significant portions of the Town Administrator's time. Please comment on her efforts on each the following projects:

The board noted that each of these projects was a major initiative, some involving working with boards over which Nan has no direct authority. She did her usual thorough job of identifying the various issues, bringing the stakeholders together, looking for options, and encouraging the parties to reach consensus in the best interest of the Town.

Information Technology: IT is an example of an issue that took much more time than the board expected when considering goals for Nan. The details of the IT effort are noted above under Goal 2, Objective B.

One additional point is that Nan demonstrated her ability to organize a group around finding a solution to a very serious problem. She presented a coherent argument to FinCom for additional funding. When many questions came back, Nan kept refining her information. Nan managed a challenging situation with many opinionated constituents. The result is a functional IT department.

Recreation Funds: Nan worked very hard with a relatively new employee and an entrenched board to help the recreation department better understand its multiple financial funds and hopefully to manage and report its resources correctly and efficiently.

The board recognizes that sorting through Recreation funding proved another huge time sink for Nan. She coordinated a Recreation Funding Model to manage within the spending cap (Revolving Fund, Stabilization Fund, Beach Fund, and Indirect Costs). This is another example of Nan's ability to take on big projects with many stakeholders and make progress.

Nan has made progress in this area where the board had not been successful. It is agreed that there is more to be done here, but it must be at the will of the independently elected Recreation Board, the FinCom, and Town Meeting

Wastewater: Again Nan worked tirelessly with an independent board to help its members better understand and manage their financial operations. She had made prudent recommendations for the board to consider, including seeking outside professional help. The board recognizes the time commitment she made to assist the WWMDC and she deserves credit for her accomplishments here.

Nan dove into the complicated issues around wastewater capacity, PILOBs, and the Abrahams Report. This is an example of an area that she thinks the BoS and other boards (Health, Building) have some responsibility, but not control or accountability. Nan's skill working out puzzling issues will be needed on this one.

Budget Process: Nan has an excellent understanding of the laws, bylaws, regulations, etc. governing Wayland's budget process and follows them carefully. She has also improved the communication, cooperation, transparency, and day-to-day operations of the various fiscal departments.

Nan reviewed the Town Code to understand the BoS's and her responsibility around budgeting. She and the Finance Director, working with the Finance Team, developed an in-depth presentation to the Finance Committee in late August to set the stage for developing the FY2018 budget. The presentation

was well received by FinCom and the public.

To prepare the FY2018 budget, Nan organized budget review meetings for each department to include the FinCom liaison as well as staff. This was (and is) a major time commitment towards improving the quality and preparedness of the budget data the board and the FinCom will receive.

What would you identify as the Town Administrator's strength(s) expressed in terms of results achieved during the rating period?

Overall, the comments reflected admirably management of each area of her vision statement, often going beyond her official jurisdiction for the benefit of the Town (provides administrative leadership, provides available facts and information to the Board; supports the work of town boards and committees, responds to inquiries from the public and promotes a culture of respect for the public, and manages the operations of the town). She takes her responsibilities, and the town's welfare, seriously while working in a deliberate and thoughtful manner.

Nan continues to care deeply about her work and responsibilities for the Town of Wayland gaining confidence in her role and actions when compared to her first year, and has shown growth after the initial steep learning curve of the understanding Wayland way. Nan is more willing to offer advice to the Board and organizes responses to many items without the board. A town administrator's job is wide-ranging and requires knowledge and skills in many areas: financial, legal, human resources, good judgment, team builder, follow through, motivator, analyzer, responder, initiator, advisor, communicator, balance-er of needs and wants, and so on. Nan handles many things very well and as one member commented, it would be great if Nan had time to lighten up a bit and enjoy her job, at which she is very good.

Nan has an ability to delve into the details of a project, looks to law/code for direction on actions and breaks it down to a workable plan. Examples include OPEB, the River's Edge process, determining a structure for Recreation revolving funds and WWMDC staffing and procedures.

In last year's evaluation, the BoS encouraged Nan to provide more direction on policy, to not be afraid to offer suggestions. Nan was encouraged to develop comfort with improving policies and programs that involve multiple areas of town government. In the past year Nan has accepted this challenge and excelled. Examples as described at length above are Budget Planning, Recreation Funding Model, Information Technology, OPEB investing in PRIT, Land Use Team effort to streamline permitting, Finance Team, Legal RFP for Town Counsel, and Wastewater.

Some thought that Nan's greatest impact/strength has been in the financial arena. The Town has faced many issues here: hacking, financial issues, wastewater, recreation, and revolving funds. To resolve differences and keep projects moving forward, Nan spent countless hours working with staff, reviewing systems, understanding the applicable laws, crafting options, and charting new courses. She has worked closely and effectively with staff to ensure their understanding and seek high quality performance. Nan should continue her efforts to address any systemic problems impacting multiple areas of Town.

Other comments included:

- Strong work ethic, attention to detail and follow-through
- New hires under Nan's watch have been very good and there are several more to come. There are clearer lines of responsibility among staff, especially in the financial department.
- Managing the additional space needs for the Health Department by shifting office locations
- Willingness to study our organizational system as it relates to responsibility and accountability
- Supportive of the Board's efforts to streamline ATM processes and to bring forth fully vetted articles. Preparation for town meeting and production of the Warrant can be all encompassing and takes many weeks/year.

What performance area(s) would you identify as most critical for improvement?

Bring long-term projects/efforts to closure more efficiently to reduce workload/open items. If the Board makes project completion a priority, it will give Nan more authority to have staff make it a priority. The board acknowledges that Nan often does not have the authority to direct outcomes of policy and programs, but everything still manages to come back to the TA's office if there is a problem.

Make more suggestions for improvement. With increased experience with Wayland's Town and government organization and based on her experience and judgment, Nan can add value here. Board members viewed Nan as a change agent. One example: Nan has often mentioned that Wayland has a unique way of budgeting. She should bring her experience from other communities to bear on Wayland's budgeting practices. If changes are needed to Town code, let's propose them.

Make recommendations to the board on agenda items. Our packets have improved greatly and most agenda items have a suggested course of action. The board would like this to continue and improve.

Manage staff and volunteer relations. This will continue to be a challenging part of Nan's job. Nan is a change agent and sometimes shakes up long ingrained processes that might be unpopular with some staff and committees. Maintaining good relations while moving the Town forward will be a balancing act. Some sense that staff relations are strained at times and found emails abrupt. Overall, the board is cognizant of Nan's workload, her patience and the close scrutiny by some residents and appreciates her efforts to have a handle on everything.

Some board members stated:

- Some would appreciate additional/continued effort to assist the board with town meeting article prep – reviewing Finance Committee article drafts with the board and working with staff to postpone articles that are not quite ready.
- Nan has demonstrated willingness to change approach on advice of others, but sometimes has sensitivity to constructive criticism (e.g. selecting the financial advisor).
- At times Nan is cautious or wary and this may result in being defensive, quick to use consultants, increasing concerns about volunteers talking to staff without going through her and/or taking on a responsibility without some 'official' supervision.

What other comments do you have for the Town Administrator, e.g. priorities, expectations, goals or objectives for the next year?

When one asks five board members for comments/ideas on the coming year, the list is long!

Four common themes emerged:

- **Town Center.** The board places a high priority on completing the relationship with KGI on the Town Center. Provide advice to the BoS on finishing the few Town Center issues remaining with the developer. The CoA/CC Committee is waiting for resolution on the town parcel. This state of limbo needs to be resolved. The board's goals include resolving the issues with KGI, opening up the town green, and moving ahead with new space for our seniors.
- **River's Edge.** Provide guidance and materials for BoS to make an informed decision in awarding the bid and meeting procurement deadlines. Analysis should include tangibles (financial comparison) and intangibles (progress toward affordable housing goals, increased taxes,

support for businesses).

- **Communication.** Efforts to improve communications have begun, but there is still a long way to go to increase the flow of positive information about the Town. The BoS needs help in keeping the public informed with factual information through press releases, newsletters, Facebook posts and perhaps an annual “state of the town” event. This was a goal for last year that will continue to take attention and effort, including that of the board.
- **Setting priorities.** Trying to set priorities in a Town where everything is a high priority, Nan can feel overwhelmed with the number of “critical issues” on her plate. For self-preservation, she needs to work with the BoS to prioritize. Together, the board and Nan need to balance the interests of a vocal group of stakeholders focused on fiscal and compliance issues against those in town who may be less vocal but value most the services that this town provides with regard to public safety, infrastructure, and schools.

Other items that were mentioned for the next year:

- **Understand and implement the opportunities available through the Municipal Modernization Act**
 - **Implementation of the Public Records Information Officer requirements**
 - **Continued attention to OML issues**
 - **Provide guidance in bringing a recommendation on legal services to the board**
 - **Create an effective organizational structure. Perhaps the Collins Center report will generate some ideas around a more effective organizational structure starting with the financial operations.**
 - **Develop a long-term plan for use of the current town building and manage space needs**
 - **Continue progress on affordable/work force housing**
 - **Apply for Community Compact funds – perhaps for financial review or website redesign among other topics**
 - **Incorporate feedback from boards/committees in Department Head reviews**
 - **Streamline packet correspondence – highlighting items in our packet that need board attention to give structure to our current review process**
 - **Report information in the weekly expense warrants in a better and more consistent manner**
-