

Board of Selectmen's FY2020 Goal-Setting Discussion on July 21, 2020

Highlights by MySouthborough.com*

The discussion began with member Lisa Braccio's going through her list of goals. Below are highlights from that discussion:

1. Braccio recommended training for all boards and committees on running a proper meeting and review of Open Meeting Laws. Not every volunteer may understand how to post agendas, vote, or have the tools to run a successful meeting.
2. Marty Healey said he'd like to encourage televising all board/committee meetings. The zoom meetings have made it easier for the public to participate. Sam Stivers noted it would also allow them to bring in experts from afar to participate remotely.
3. Town Administrator Mark Purple asked the board to help the IT Director enforce the town's email policy requiring all board/committee members to use Town emails when communicating about Town business.
4. Braccio recommended updating and consolidating policies to ensure volunteers understand and adhere to them. She suggested creating a handbook for employees and volunteers. Braccio and Chelsea Malinowski will catalogue existing policies and identify what should be updated, what should be removed, and what might be missing.
5. Braccio recommended adding a level of approval or oversight to the appropriation of line items at the end of the fiscal year. She added that this addition would be to ensure the tax payer expectation to return money at the end of the year is monitored or met. There was discussion about getting a quarterly budget report and update.
6. Members discussed appointing selectmen to be liaisons to other boards and committees.
7. Healey suggested sending a quarterly newsletter to the public from the Board on upcoming deadlines, events, or general info from departments, boards and committees. Purple suggested sending it with the quarterly tax bill.
8. Braccio suggested hosting a volunteer fair or forum where interested residents could gather information and talk to a representative. Purple stated other towns have volunteer committees focused on filling vacancies.
9. Braccio suggested that the list of goals agreed upon by the Board be included on the agenda for the public to discuss, keep accountability and for the Board to update their progress. Purple recommended including the list of goals and subtasks in each packet that gets updated with items checked off. Malinowski suggested a quarterly formal review of selectmen's goals to ensure the Board is focused and on track.
10. Braccio recommended creating an employee handbook to provide guidance and resources to employees to make their jobs easier. Purple asked Braccio and Stivers to work on a draft handbook to present to the Board. He suggested that the Personnel Board and Labor Counsel be included in the process.
11. Braccio asked for updated job descriptions for Board of Selectmen staff.

The next member to go through her list was Malinowski. Here are those discussion highlights:

1. Malinowski recommended looking into hosting regional dispatch for police and fire. She noted it could decrease expenses by sharing them with other towns. Healey wanted to look into it as

well and opined the new public safety building is more than appropriate to host. Malinowski will follow up with the chiefs to discuss the possibility.

2. Ms. Malinowski recommended the Board to look at the annual reviews of those who report to them. She would like the Board to review their performance and their job description in terms of goal attainment.
3. Malinowski recommended liaisons to other boards and committees and departments to keep a pulse, but to micromanage. Healey suggested this discussion be revisited at the next goal setting meeting. Having a liaison to the schools was also raised.
4. The board discussed work of the Capital Committee. Healey noted that at some point there will be a discussion about possibly consolidating the K-8 schools to 3 of their 4 buildings. And interest in a future community center could tie into that or to the private schools. (He didn't elaborate on that last piece.) Purple mentioned that the committee is also looking at issues around the South Union Building.
5. Malinowski recommended the Board to evaluate current operational processes, postage and mailings and data exchanges between departments to see where improvements could be made and costs cut. With a few exceptions, the Town's mailing is mostly one off items.
6. Malinowski recommended an individual articles at Town Meeting for any added Town staffing positions, changes in status, or change from part-time to full-time. She said it would increase transparency for voters.
7. Ms. Malinowski asked Purple meet with departments to reiterate there will be no new additional positions for fiscal year 2022 and confirm there are no plans add any. Brian Shea and Purple clarified it was no positions without an additional, sustainable revenue source to support it. Purple said he doesn't think staff believes selectmen will stick with it – since they added positions this year. He suggested the Board vote to reaffirm their position after the end of fiscal year presentation in September. Healey noted that there is a lot of concern that IT may be understaffed and that it's a security concern.
8. Malinowski asked that the Board work with Mr. Ballantine to see how the Board should be involved with the implementation of the new budget software.
9. Malinowski suggested the Board discuss the community program for diversity and inclusion at the August 4th meeting.
10. Malinowski recommended adopting a long-term plan for capital in conjunction with recommendations from the Capital Committee. Mr. Purple stated his goal is to have the Capital Committee create a recommendation for capital to input into the budget early in the process.
11. Healey addressed the possibility that a Special Town Meeting in the fall may not be possible. He asked Mr. Purple to check in with proponents of postponed Articles to understand the necessity for being voted on in the fall.

Healey previewed that at the next meeting, the board would begin with Stiver's goal list.

**In addition to my own words, I heavily borrowed from wording in the Town's posted draft minutes.*