



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, Chairman

Joseph Z. Shank, Vice Chairman

Theresa A. Morse, Clerk

R. Eric Slagle, Town Administrator

Sabrina Moore, Administrative Assistant

Annual Performance Evaluation Summary of Town Administrator, R. Eric Slagle

Performance Evaluation Window: April 2023 – March 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the above stated performance evaluation window, the Town Administrator currently has a performance record that can now be appropriately appraised by the Selectboard based on longevity, ability to lead change, ability to lead the municipal staff, his business acumen, ability to build efforts collaboratively, and remaining results driven. Negotiating between the Executive board and the municipal staff can be challenging, and Eric does provide both with transparency, confidence, and respect. Eric demonstrates a very high level of performance above and beyond that which is required for successful performance in the Town Administrator role and scope of responsibilities. He is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in our Executive Board, his peers, and with the Town's employees. He consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, and targets, as applicable.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

All three Board of Selectmen Members were tasked with independently evaluating the Town Administrator's performance on an individual basis. Together, they presented their individual evaluations to the Selectboard Chair after which their three evaluations were combined to calculate the average score of each category within his evaluation.

Five pinnacle criteria were outlined in which to evaluate the Town Administrator's performance:

1. Financial Health of the Town
2. Contract Negotiations
3. Staff Development, Growth, and Recruitment
4. Personal and Professional Growth
5. Town Building Infrastructure

The rating scale used to evaluate the Town Administrator is as follows:

Note: The Selectman may also exercise the right to score the Town Administrator's performance in ½ point increments as they deem applicable (for example, "3.5").

1. Unsatisfactory
2. Below Expectations
3. Meets Expectations
4. Exceeds Expectations
5. Outstanding



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Chairman*

Joseph Z. Shank, *Vice Chairman*

Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, *Town Administrator*

Sabrina Moore, *Administrative Assistant*

Annual Performance Evaluation Summary of Town Administrator, R. Eric Slagle

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RESULTS

Category	Town Administrator Score
Financial Health of the Town	4
Contract Negotiations	4
Staff Development, Growth, and Recruitment	4
Personal and Professional Growth	4
Town Building Infrastructure	3.5

SUPPORTING COMMENTS BY THE SELECTBOARD

1. Financial Health of the Town

Chairman of the Selectboard: Chaz Sexton-Diranian

“Eric’s management of the Town’s budget in a post-COVID environment has brought on many new obstacles to an already challenging budget process. Eric has also been tasked to work with new budgeting software to allow for mediation between the legacy process and the development of a more robust digital process. His understanding of the conceptual view of this process and then the ability to zero down to a granular level within this process is extraordinary, evidencing his knowledge and experience in this category. We sometimes cannot get what we want regarding some budget items, and he negotiates, collaborates, and compromises between the Executive Board, the Finance Committee, and the Department Heads quite well. He is always prepared to take on the tough questions and has the ability to transition the conversation to more positive outcomes as well.”

Vice Chairman of the Selectboard: Joseph Z. Shank

“I think that there is some improvement here, but it could be better. Eric is doing a good job keeping the budget inline. Keep working with the other departments with getting them up to speed with the new software and communicating with everyone so they are all on the same page.”



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, Chairman

Joseph Z. Shank, Vice Chairman

Theresa A. Morse, Clerk

R. Eric Slagle, Town Administrator

Sabrina Moore, Administrative Assistant

Annual Performance Evaluation Summary of Town Administrator, R. Eric Slagle

Clerk of the Selectboard: Theresa A. Morse

"There are several challenges with the budget in Townsend which Eric does extremely well in managing. With a residential and commercial tax rate that remains relatively low and no new business tax income such as dispensaries, he has limited options available to find new sources of tax income. I do believe we need to look at license fees (I believe a dog license has been \$6.00 for over 10 years) as another opportunity to increase revenue. That all said Eric has done a great job exceeding the above expectations."

2. Contract Negotiations

Chairman of the Selectboard: Chaz Sexton-Diranian

"Eric was tasked with several difficult "asks" from the Selectboard regarding collective bargaining and he has shown great resolve in mediating the Town's positioning and compromising with the bargaining unit. He also has taken on the current boards philosophy of following the "Townsend First" policy and making all new and current contracts analogous. Eric is a skilled negotiator and understands how to mediate between personalities and organizations. He also understands that he must enter into difficult conversations with respect to the Executive Boards direction and he does so with respect and diplomacy. The town is on solid ground now with our bargaining units being comparable and our individual contracts being mirrored. His outstanding understanding of the law and mediation skills have been a great asset for the Town of Townsend."

Vice Chairman of the Selectboard: Joseph Z. Shank

"I believe Eric is doing a good job negotiating with the unions, but I feel he is not getting for the town what we should be getting back. There have been several instances in negotiations that may have fell by the wayside despite the Selectman bringing up these issues."

Clerk of the Selectboard: Theresa A. Morse

"We had several goals with our contracts and Eric ensured those goals were met. Especially important to me was that all contracts had the same structure, especially when it came to vacation time. Eric exceeded this goal which is why I rated him excellent."

3. Staff Development, Growth, and Recruitment



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Chairman*

Joseph Z. Shank, *Vice Chairman*

Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, *Town Administrator*

Sabrina Moore, *Administrative Assistant*

Annual Performance Evaluation Summary of Town Administrator, R. Eric Slagle

Chairman of the Selectboard: Chaz Sexton-Diranian

“Outside of the budget, staff development has been one of the most challenging areas within Townsend, but also all municipalities within Massachusetts. Eric has pinpointed major stumbling blocks within this area and is always ready to come up with solid recommendations in order to solve our staffing needs. He has designed and implemented a growth ladder with several positions along with adjusting and combining several smaller roles into a more full-time position while keeping within the budgetary standards that have been approved by the town vote. Again, he has shown exemplary prowess with his understanding of the municipal framework regarding employment in order to meet the needs of our community.”

Vice Chairman of the Selectboard: Joseph Z. Shank

“I think growth and recruitment is a concern as we have many positions that need to be filled. I think Eric will need to be more active in recruiting and doing what he needs to do to fill these positions.”

Clerk of the Selectboard: Theresa A. Morse

“This has been a challenge to all towns since COVID and I know Eric is doing all he can to find ways to fill positions. Therefore, he is meeting expectations.”

4. Personal and Professional Growth

Chairman of the Selectboard: Chaz Sexton-Diranian

“Handling the day-to-day business of the town and finding time to attend and participate in professional development is always a challenge. Eric has been meeting the Selectboards wishes of attaining the necessary certifications to perform his duties, he also finds the time to achieve the ever so important balance of work and self-care. He was expected to take the necessary classes and courses to be the Chief Procurement Officer of the town along with several other necessary courses to add to his vast knowledge base. Also notable is his support of the MIIA wellness programs which continue to enhance and improve the wellness of our staff, and this promotes a positive work environment which is refreshing to witness. Staff are constantly challenged to grow within their positions and constant assistance from both the HR Manager and the Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard is also a great influence. We have needed this positive influence in Town hall for a very long time and this is a result of a capable leader.”

Vice Chairman of the Selectboard: Joseph Z. Shank

“Eric has done a tremendous job adapting to the Townsend environment. He is more active with the departments and the citizens and concerned about the town’s wellbeing more so than the previous Town Administrator.”



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Chairman*

Joseph Z. Shank, *Vice Chairman*

Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, *Town Administrator*

Sabrina Moore, *Administrative Assistant*

Annual Performance Evaluation Summary of Town Administrator, R. Eric Slagle

Clerk of the Selectboard: Theresa A. Morse

"Eric attended many professional meetings and is respected by his peers."

5. Town Building Infrastructure

Chairman of the Selectboard: Chaz Sexton-Diranian

"Of all the areas of this assessment, there is one area that does not meet expectations, and it is this area. As a strong proponent of preserving our rich town history while looking into more ways of adaptive reuse of our many town buildings, I do not see a strong path going forward with infrastructure maintenance, improvements, and enhancements. There has also been a push to improve our digital footprint, which is exceedingly costly and time-consuming but to date there has been little to no forward movement. Understanding that there are many other important areas that need attention, I feel this issue always gets put on the back burner. What's needed here is a complete overhaul of our thinking and we have to make some tough decisions to get things in order, especially when these decisions are sensitive to both staff and our community. I would like to see more focus on this moving forward and a more robust understanding of the need to move to implementation. I unfortunately feel this is below my expectations."

Vice Chairman of the Selectboard: Joseph Z. Shank

"Townsend's infrastructure is falling by the wayside. Not enough direction and leadership to maintain the buildings we currently have. I find certain buildings are always being taken care of but others are not. Many issues need to be prioritized and then implemented that are a lack of leadership. There are also many tasks that have been brought to the forefront but never acted upon."

Clerk of the Selectboard: Theresa A. Morse

"Unfortunately, I have not seen a clear plan for the town properties including those used every day and those not in use, including maintenance and an appropriate plan for building use for the next 5 years. As such, I must score as below expectations."

AREAS FOR CONTINUED GROWTH

- Encourage more use of the new budgetary software and continue to encourage transparency within each department regarding the budget.
- Continue to encourage the professional development of Department Heads and their Staff, especially with new ideas to better perform within their positions.
- Routine Department Head meetings and Department Head Summary Reports should be on the TA



OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD
272 Main Street Townsend Massachusetts 01469



Chaz Sexton-Diranian, Chairman

Joseph Z. Shank, Vice Chairman

Theresa A. Morse, Clerk

R. Eric Slagle, Town Administrator

Sabrina Moore, Administrative Assistant

Annual Performance Evaluation Summary of Town Administrator, R. Eric Slagle

reports section of the Selectboard Agenda moving forward for transparency.

- Continue to attend training and/or conferences related to the Town Administrator's role.
- Last performance evaluation stated: *In addition to recently hiring a consultant, further develop an internal support team toward the completion of an overall 5-year plan to determine the building use of town owned properties.*
- Develop or restructure maintenance issues pursuant to recommendations of the hired consultant.


R. Eric Slagle, Town Administrator


Date


Chaz Sexton-Diranian, Selectboard


Date


Joseph Z. Shank, Selectboard


Date


Theresa A. Morse, Selectboard


Date