

Yarmouth, Massachusetts

Town Administrator

Profile



EDWARD J. COLLINS JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
JOHN W. McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
GLOBAL AND POLICY STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

Introduction

The Town of Yarmouth has retained the services of the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management at the University of Massachusetts Boston to assist in the Town's recruitment of a new Town Administrator. This Profile draws upon our discussions with selectmen and department heads. For more information about the Town of Yarmouth please consult Yarmouth's web site (www.yarmouth.ma.us).

The Town of Yarmouth

Yarmouth is located on Cape Cod, approximately 75 road miles from Boston. The nearest interstate highway access is on route 195 in Wareham, and the nearest commercial airport is in Hyannis, 6 miles away. A small portion of Yarmouth faces north onto Cape Cod Bay. Most of the Town's ocean frontage faces south onto Nantucket Sound and bounds much of Hyannis harbor. The Town contains an extensive system of marine estuaries and fresh water ponds

Yarmouth is a town of homes, many built in the post World War II era as the Town blossomed as a middle class community. Commercial development in Yarmouth is largely limited to arterial roads, principally route 28. Population almost doubled in the 1970 to 2000 period to approximately 24,000, but the 2010 census showed a 4% decline in population. In general, the Town is considered largely built-out. Future development will be largely redevelopment. Approximately 21% of the population is over 65 compared to the state average of 15%

Yarmouth is more complex than a scenic drive-through suggests. It is among the smallest HUD CDBG entitlement municipalities in the nation, its median income for a family is estimated at \$52,888, significantly lower than the statewide average of \$66,768. (Data on the Town's demographic trends can be obtained from Cape Cod Commission web site (www.capecodcommission.org).

Away from seasonal attractions e.g. beaches, amusements, golf and related facilities Yarmouth is perceived as a quiet residential community. The Town's year round population is approximately twenty-four thousand and its land area is 24 square miles. During the peak summer period the population more than doubles stressing roads, public facilities and public safety operations. Citizen participation in governance is embraced and adds to the flavor and the culture of the community.

Organizational Design and Governance

The Town governance structure consists of a five member Board of Selectmen elected for three year staggered terms and an open town meeting. Only the Selectmen, the Town Moderator, and members of the Old Kings Highway Historic District are elected. The Town Meeting is the legislative body and exercises the functions of appropriating funds and enacting by-laws. Town Meeting is advised by a Finance Committee on the budget and on the full range

of financial matters presented to the Town Meeting. The Town's Charter is available on the Town's web site. The formal powers and duties of the Town Administrator are established through the Charter and by policy decisions of the Board of Selectmen.

The position of Town Administrator is well established and respected. Only two people have held the position during the previous thirty-five years. Decades of commitment to the Town by the previous incumbents, their deep institutional knowledge and well deserved reputation for innovation, professionalism and fairness set a high bar for the new appointee.

The position of Town Administrator will be vacant as a result of a decision by the current Town Administrator to retire early in 2016.

Town Services are delivered through seven cabinet level departments: Inspections, Public Works, Finance, Community Services, Community Development, Fire and Police. The 2014 Town Report is available on the Town's web site. The cabinet system works well and is broadly accepted. The 2014 Town Report, available on the Town's web site provides an excellent explanation of the Yarmouth's operations and organization.

School functions are provided by the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District, an independent entity. Yarmouth voters elect four members of the seven-member Regional School Committee.

Public Finance

The Town has earned an AA+ rating from Standard and Poor's credit rating agency. Yarmouth had total General Fund revenues are approximately \$65 million. Almost \$55 million of this amount is from property taxes, with 90% of this amount from residential property. A recent bond offering statement is posted on the Collins Center web site. In addition, detailed financial information may be obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue web site.

Challenges for the Town Administrator

- **Leadership.** As Chief Administrative Officer for the Town, the Town Administrator must sustain and enhance the respect for the position that has emerged over recent decades. The Town Administrator directs and manages the delivery of all municipal services. The status of the Town Administrator position derives not only from the laws that created the position and formal and informal delegation of responsibility by the Board of Selectmen, but from his/her professionalism, demeanor, and superior substantive knowledge demonstrated over decades by the previous incumbents.
- **Management.** The public expectation is that, while the Town Administrator will have high familiarity with municipal operations he/she cannot be not micro-manager. The Town Administrator must be comfortable engaging with front line workers where that is appropriate while being fully supportive of cabinet level and subordinate managers.

- **Professionalism, Staff Development and Morale.** The Town has well-regarded, highly skilled and professional department heads and key staff. The general atmosphere in Town Hall is highly collaborative. The Town has benefited from having a blend of professionals who have served the community for many years. Fully utilizing the considerable talents of staff, establishing high performance standards and maintaining staff morale will be critical to the success of the new Town Administrator. The Town Administrator will need to work with cabinet level and subordinate managers to establish performance measures for staff and operations as well as providing top-level support for key programs, initiatives and projects.
- **Communication.** Well-developed communication skills in Yarmouth are essential. Open, accurate and timely communication by the Town Administrator with all Town government entities, with the public, the many volunteers and employees needs to be integrated into the normal operational practices of the Town. In addition, the Town Administrator must be able to engage the members of the Board of Selectmen in an on-going dialogue about the critical issues that face the Town.
- **Financial Management, Budget Planning and Preparation.** Like all Massachusetts municipalities, Yarmouth is facing revenue constraints and growing cost pressures. The Town Administrator must build and direct a strategic planning process that strikes an appropriate balance between long term goals and short-term budget requirements. A significant amount of the Town Administrator's time will be required to help forge town-wide strategies to bring these into balance. This task must be addressed in the context of multi-year plans that consider the conservative fiscal values of the community, the demographic trends affecting the Town and unmet capital requirements.
- **Sustaining a High Level of Public Services.** The twenty-four thousand residents expect a high level of public service, which must be sustained largely through the local property tax base, which is approximately 90% residential.
- **Economic Development and Environmental Protection.** Significant economic development will require the redevelopment of land along the major arterial corridors, principally Route 28, but a constraint is the absence of municipal wastewater treatment. Intensive efforts have been conducted in recent years to identify freshwater and estuarine areas at risk from pollution and nutrient loadings and much of this effort has been catalyzed by state regulatory policy, local actors and environmental advocacy entities. A new Town Administrator will need to manage the processes that address both economic development and environmental protection and foster consideration of strategies in which they can be mutually reinforcing.
- **Education.** Education is a strongly held value among the citizens of Yarmouth. In the current environment, which produces only modest incremental revenue from year to year, stresses occur in the Regional School

District (RSD) - Town fiscal relationship. The budget of the Regional School District is levied on each of the two member towns by the RSD with Yarmouth carrying about 65% of the levy. While not responsible for the school budget or financial operations, the Town Administrator will need to contribute to an on-going dialog on balancing the relative needs of the RSD and town. This role needs to be played with high technical knowledge of finance and genuine collaborative engagement with both the RSD and the Town of Dennis.

The Ideal Candidate

The Yarmouth Board of Selectmen seeks a Town Administrator who is a seasoned manager in an environment of similar complexity who possesses strong leadership, communication and organizational skills.

Yarmouth seeks a Town Administrator with the energy, skill, creativity and experience to serve the community as the Chief Administrative Officer; direct and manage the delivery of municipal services; provide leadership and support to the Board of Selectmen in strategic and policy planning; and provide leadership to departments.

Yarmouth seeks a Town Administrator willing to commit to a tenure long enough to build a multi-year approach to strategic planning and ensuring the sustainability of the Town's service levels. The new Town Administrator must support regional solutions when that is in the Town's interest. Yarmouth needs a Town Administrator who can help set the stage for community-wide approaches to addressing the Town's needs, approaches that produce sound outcomes and avoid polarization within the Town.

The following attributes have been determined important in Yarmouth's next Town Administrator.

Personal Attributes

The next Town Administrator needs to be:

- Able to demonstrate leadership internally and externally.
- Able to demonstrate unquestioned integrity in interactions with officials and citizens.
- Able to communicate effectively in all aspects of the position and with all constituencies in the community. The successful candidate must be direct, facilitative, and clear.
- Able to direct a budget process that develops a sound comprehensive budget for consideration.
- Able to use the status inherent in the Town Administrator's position to advance the Town's agenda.
- Able to delegate many of the routine administrative and communication tasks to subordinates, so that time is available for longer range project and strategic planning.
- Able to create and sustain a goal-oriented and performance based environment by establishing, maintaining and promoting effective policies and initiatives. The Town Administrator will be a genuinely inclusive leader who is capable of exerting influence and

direction in a manner that shares successes with elected officials, professionals and volunteers.

- Able and willing to work openly with community groups and employees. A direct, collegial, facilitative style that fosters joint problem solving is needed. The Town Administrator cannot be a micromanager and can have no agenda beyond being a professional.

Professional Attributes

The Town Administrator must be:

- A seasoned leader of a comparable organization with extensive personal experience in finance, budgeting, capital and operational planning, expenditure management, labor relations, public facilitation, and staff development. Excellent public and interpersonal communication skills are essential.
- A professionally stable person with a record of tenure and consistent career growth. The Town seeks a committed management professional willing to stay for a significant period but who is also willing to take risks to improve the organization.
- Able to demonstrate a background in guiding the development of a shared strategic vision for the community. The ideal candidate must be a coalition builder, equally at home with private sector and community leaders. The ideal candidate must be able to exercise leadership within the organization and the community.
- Both strategic and tactical. He/she must be experienced in working effectively in a political environment providing impartial guidance to elected officials to identify and address the long-term strategic needs of the community and the short-term tactical steps necessary to deliver services.
- Capable of keeping elected officials comprehensively informed, while staying detached from the political process and ensuring that staff maintains a similar detachment.
- Comfortable managing in an environment where most employees are members of collective bargaining units. Being able to navigate in such a complex environment will require a sophisticated understanding of the diffuse nature of political power in a New England town.
- Familiar with partnering arrangement with non-profit land preservation and cultural institutions which have been key to carrying out Yarmouth's natural resource and cultural preservation agenda.
- Comfortable working with and managing an organization in a political environment often characterized by vigorous debate among well-informed citizens who are active in local decision-making processes.
- Familiar with highly participative local government environments with dynamics similar to Yarmouth's.
- Comfortable working with and managing an organization in a political context often characterized by vigorous debate among well-informed citizens who

are active in local decision-making. Key decisions made by the Board and Town Meeting can be closely decided.

- In possession of a Bachelor's Degree and significant experience as a Town or City Manager/Administrator. A person who has served as an Assistant Town Administrator/Manager or similar position in a complex environment may be considered. The knowledge typically gained by obtaining a graduate degree in Public Administration, Public Policy, Business Administration, or law is preferred. Five years executive experience, managing a complex transparent organization similar in scale and complexity to the Town, preferably in a municipal setting is preferred. Experience working for an elected Board and having worked in a Town Meeting environment is preferred.
- Possess a track record of professional behavior consistent with the ethical tenets of the International City Management Association.

Salary and Schedule

Applications should be received by September 8, 2015. The cash compensation of the retiring incumbent is \$178,000. The Town is willing to negotiate a competitive compensation and employment contract with the selected candidate.

How to Apply

Applications are preferred electronically. Please send your resume with a cover letter addressing the job requirements to this email address: recruitment.umb@gmail.com. Please combine all of your documents in a single pdf file, if possible. Yarmouth_TA and the applicant's Last Name must be included in the subject line.

Should you have any questions regarding this opportunity, or a recommendation of a colleague, please contact: Dick Kobayashi, Senior Associate 617-489-8812, or Mary Flanders Aicardi, Associate 508-215-8992.



To learn more about the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management at UMASS Boston, please visit: www.umb.edu/cpm