

Objectives and Priorities for November 1, 2021 to October 31, 2022

At a meeting on October 26, 2021, the Select Board approved the mission statement and set of policy goals and objectives for Town government through the fall of 2022 as outlined below. The Town Administrator is charged with planning, developing and organizing strategies with department directors and town employees and with facilitating and coordinating efforts of citizen committee members to achieve these objectives and priorities.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Town of Sharon is to deliver the highest quality municipal services in a fiscally responsible and an operationally responsive manner to the citizens that it serves. The Town Administrator will maximize the potential for Sharon's volunteer boards and commissions and its professional staff to respond effectively to community and individual citizen needs through the use of long-term strategic planning and enhanced communications with residents.

Fiscal Priorities and Strategies:

Develop responsible and responsive operating and capital budgets that seek to balance the demand for services against the variety of financial circumstances experienced by Sharon citizens and businesses. Manage Sharon's finances to mitigate dependence on property taxes by enhancing revenue from other sources. Seize opportunities to reduce long-term costs of town government operations and in the delivery of services.

- Conduct thorough review of operating and capital budgets, reviewing opportunities to reduce costs through restructuring and reorganizing operations. Make recommendations for savings without compromising quality of services and identify areas that should be considered for service enhancements.
- Continue to explore opportunities to share services and create efficiencies with the School Department with goal of reducing operating costs and improving efficiency and quality of service delivery in the following areas: human resources, payroll, accounts payable and revolving funds; facilities management; and school nursing and public health services.
- Initiate discussions with comparable communities on opportunities for potential collaboration on service delivery, operations, contracted services and equipment purchases in functional areas.
- Continue to explore alternative revenue sources and report to Select Board with recommendations.
- Continue to explore property tax relief measures to assist Sharon's most vulnerable citizens and to help maintain socioeconomic diversity.
- Complete negotiations for successor collective bargaining agreements within policy and financial goals established by the Select Board.

Review, and modify as appropriate, financial policies relative to undesignated fund balance, enterprise fund reserves, stabilization and capital funds, debt, overlay reserves, self-funded activities (health insurance), cash investments, and certified free cash.

- Consider increasing reserves through specific appropriations and/or active management.
- Utilize actuarial valuation to develop an effective funding strategy to address future OPEB liabilities that may include changing the balance of employer/employee contributions, reducing liabilities through changes in existing plan design, enhancing investment return utilizing OPEB trust option, and committing to allocating retirement plan contributions to OPEB liabilities when retirement plan reaches full funding in 2029.
- Monitor claims experience and follow market trends in order to make prudent recommendations to reduce costs for employee and retiree health insurance plans through permissible changes in plan design such as high-deductible plans combined with health savings accounts and changes in employee and retiree contribution levels.
- Evaluate option to establish self-insurance program for workers' compensation coverage.
- Appropriate ARPA funds for infrastructure projects (PFAS well or water filtration treatment, accelerated schedule of road/sidewalk construction).

Organizational Objectives:

Review service delivery models and develop strategies to improve operations.

- Continue to assure training and development opportunities for mid-level supervisors in public works, police and fire departments as part of succession and operations planning.
- Provide continued support for police department certification and accreditation program. Plan for potential addition of middle school resource officer or social work professional as part of future public safety service delivery model.
- Continue to explore feasibility of implementing joint police and fire/EMS dispatching services for FY2023.
- Better coordinate delivery of public and mental services between Board of Health, Council on Aging, Schools, SSPARC and public safety departments.
- Implement comprehensive facilities management and operation plan for Town buildings, including appropriate organizational/staffing model and adequate budget resources to assure proper maintenance.

Facilitate efforts to enhance Town infrastructure to meet community expectations and aspirations for services.

- Work with the Standing Building Committee, architect, and owner's project representative to address impacts of construction during high school and library building projects.
- Update, advocate and implement strategic plan for athletic field development and maintenance to address identified recreational demands.
- Work with Transportation Advisory Committee to explore expansion of access for town residents to MBTA commuter rail service and advocate for bicycle and pedestrian alternative travel modes. Review parking needs in light of changing work patterns.
- Work with Library Reuse Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for 11 North Main Street site when vacated by 2023, including capital maintenance requirements, alternative uses, and form of relationship if non-Town use.
- Complete transition of Select Board administrative support position to executive assistant.

Strengthen accountability of organization through professional development, evaluation and recognition of senior management team.

- Establish goals for departments under the jurisdiction of the Select Board consistent with the overall goals established for the Town Administrator.
- Reinforce policy priorities and improve coordination of service delivery through regular staff meetings and written communication; provide continuous feedback on performance to senior staff; and document accomplishments through performance evaluation process.
- Develop program to recognize and reward senior management team; address supplemental compensation for performance beyond limit of salary range. Provide effective support of professional development opportunities.

Community Priorities and Objectives:

Support citizen efforts to improve sustainability.

- Support work of Energy Advisory Committee to lease additional parcels of Town land for solar energy generation projects and to implement municipal aggregation program.
- Implement strategies to address MS4 stormwater permit mandate.
- Develop improvements to solid waste and recycling program to increase recycling percentage and consider composting initiative for organic waste stream. Explore cardboard recycling station that would allow for return to biweekly recycling. Explore full PAYT funding for tipping fee portion of quarterly fee.
- Seize grant opportunities through Green Communities program to advance capital maintenance and energy conservation projects and work to implement municipal aggregation program. Pursue grants to fund electric vehicle charging stations at parking areas.

Modify governance model to strengthen service delivery and enhance accountability.

- Continue to facilitate collaborative strategic financial planning process with leaders of key boards and committees – Select Board, School Committee, Finance Committee, Capital Outlay Committee - to develop long-term budget strategy to reflect anticipated revenue stream, capital projects commitments and additional operating costs associated with building projects, program enhancements, and employee legacy costs.
- Work with boards and committees to assure Imagine Sharon Master Plan's timely and comprehensive implementation. Complete rewrite of zoning regulations.
- Review and update, as appropriate, specific policies and procedures codified in the Select Board's Policies and Procedures manual.
- Review findings and recommendations of Governance Study Committee and submit to 2022 and 2023 Annual Town Meeting(s) as appropriate.

Continue to improve and enhance communication with residents through public meetings, print media, and electronic mediums.

- Improve content of Town website and coordinate information sharing with Recreation, Commission on Disabilities and other, individual platforms.
- Improve information flow to citizens via social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Town website).
- Explore offering public safety and citizen academies (as permitted under COVID-19 restrictions).

Address development proposals by seeking to assure net community benefit; mitigate potential negative consequences.

- Implement host community agreement with recreational marijuana facility. Address potential negative impacts leveraging dedicated revenue stream. Study rules in anticipation of applications for marijuana delivery service.
- Conduct negotiations for agreements, as needed, to secure businesses at Sharon Gallery; facilitate resolution of issues related to infrastructure improvements aligning Sharon Gallery and Sharon Marketplace on South Main Street.
- Conduct appropriate dialogue with applicants of proposed developments (commercial, 40B, 40R, and similar large projects). Coordinate review by various Town boards and commissions and professional staff.
- Study impact of 2020 US Census data on affordable housing (Chapter 40B or LIP projects) and governance (drawing of legislative districts, number of polling places, formula grants).

Promote engagement, inclusion and equity among traditionally underrepresented segments of Sharon residents through community conversations, policy review, and employee and committee training.

- Work with Select Board to broaden diversity of membership on town boards and committees.
- Conduct evaluation of programs and policies and address any concerns of implicit bias or structural impediments to inclusion and equity.
- Participate in strategic planning with and review recommendations regarding policies and practices from Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Committee and implement as appropriate.

Provide support for implementation of economic development initiatives and promote local businesses.

- Study wastewater treatment options for Route 1 and Post Office Square; conduct highest/best use evaluation of properties within commercial zones.
- Update Select Board policies with regard to liquor licenses (regulate marketing events and live entertainment) and evaluate whether to require permits and develop regulations to operate food trucks.
- Evaluate potential for licensing a beer garden at one or more summer concert series events and consider restaurant/outdoor dining options to be located at the Community Center or other Town property.
- Collaborate and support community events such as road races/triathlons, street art, Porchfest, and Sharon Day. Better coordinate Town and community events to maximize attendance and drive sustained success.