

Blandford, MA Town Administrator

POSITION PROFILE



Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Position Profile / Job Description

Town Administrator

Town of Blandford, Massachusetts

The Town of Blandford has retained services of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to assist in the recruitment of a permanent full-time Town Administrator.

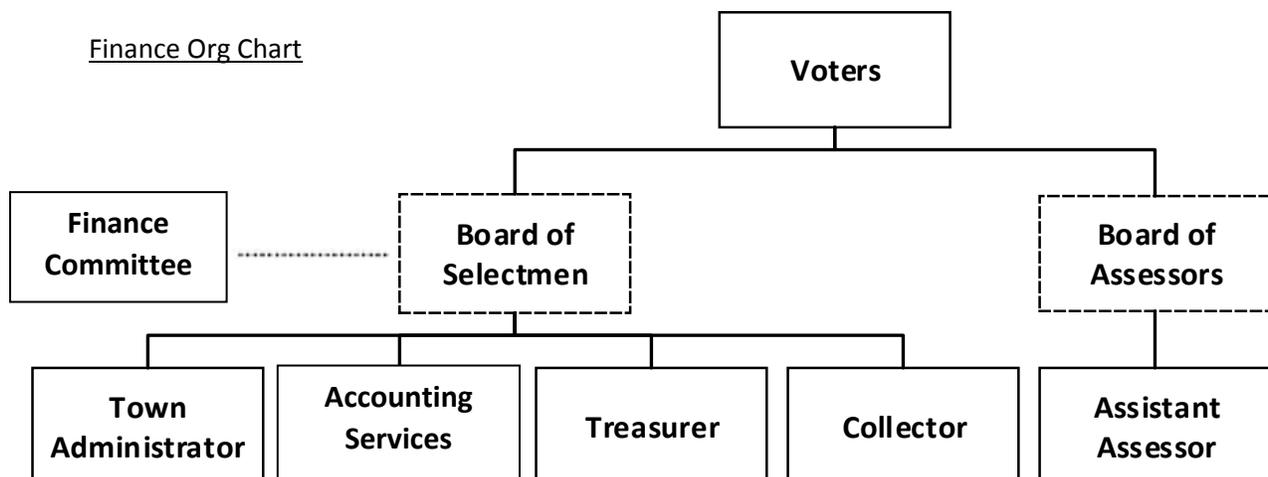
About The Town

The Town of Blandford of approximately 1,259 residents is a rural community in Western Massachusetts within the Pioneer Valley region. Incorporated in 1741, the town's 53.4 sq. miles is bordered by Berkshire County on the west, the Towns of Chester and Huntington to the north, Town of Russell to the east, and the Towns of Tolland and Granville on the south. Blandford is one of six participating town's in a regional school district and is an active participant of the Hilltown Collaborative, an initiative of six towns (Blandford, Russell, Huntington, Chester, Montgomery, and Middlefield) focused on achieving economic development and growth for the defined region. The town operates under the open town meeting form of government, which is the legislative body of the town, with a three-member Selectboard that serve as the Chief Executive Officers responsible for the administrative functions of the town.

Financial Management Government Structure

Selectboard members are elected for a three-year term and are directly responsible for all matters affecting the interest and welfare of the community. The Selectboard appoints the position of Town Administrator who works under the direction of the Selectboard as the Chief Administrative Officer. It is recognized that the Town Administrator position derives its authority from the Selectboard who remain ultimately responsible for all operations of the town. The Town Administrator works for the Selectboard to administer the day-to-day business of the town and shall assure that the Selectboard are kept well informed as to all ongoing operations. This includes but is not limited to implementing and enforcing town policies, coordinating cross-departmental collaboration for fiscal planning and execution of services, and contribute to the development of the town's budget to achieve finance goals.

The Selectboard appoints and oversees the accounting, treasurer, and collector functions of the Town with the exception of the Board of Assessors who are elected. The accounting function is currently outsourced to a professional firm. The Treasurer and Collector functions are being managed by temporary appointees and will be outsourced in the near future as well. Presently, the Town enjoys its current collaborative arrangement with its Finance Committee. Financial officers, Selectboard, and the Town Administrator collaborate to set the budget, oversee spending, make recommendations to achieve operational efficiency, and identify any opportunities for economies-of-scale.



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Community and Finance Snapshot:

The town experienced its share of fiscal operational challenges over the last five years and is working diligently to re-build capacity and gain control. Today’s operational achievements that have positioned the Town on a much stronger path forward have been largely because of:

- an engaged and supportive Selectboard;
- outsourcing accounting function to a professional firm;
- a strong finance committee; and
- a decision to make the Town Administrator position full-time and a desire to hire an individual who will build upon what has been accomplished so far.

It will be expected for the newly hired Town Administrator to actively work with the financial team of the Town to establish consistency and clear practices for the management of their municipal finances and day-to-day operations. This also includes actively seeking new creative sources of revenue and/or the sharing of resources to deliver expected services.

Town Profile

Population	1,259	Total Outstanding Property Taxes	\$587,930
Total Budget	\$4.3m	Enterprise Fund/s	Water
Total Parcels	1,027	Regional School District	PK-12
Commercial/Industrial Property Ratio	14.9%	Payroll Service	Harpers
Income Per Capita	\$28,952	Vendor & Payroll Warrants	Biweekly
EQV Per Capita	\$138,770	Annual Town Meeting	5/7/2018
Avg. Single-Family Tax Bill	\$3,752	Last/Current Audit Firm	MelansonHeath
Excess Levy Capacity	\$34,970	Last Audit	FY2011
Stabilization Fund/s	\$786,785	Tax Recap	12/13/2017
Free Cash	\$1,158,127	Free Cash	3/15/2018
Total Outstanding Debt	\$4,403,412	Schedule A	3/28/2018
Cloud-Based Financial Software	Yes		
Accounting	SoftRight		
Treasury Turnovers	SoftRight		
Collections	SoftRight		

Job Description in Search of Ideal Candidate

General:

The Selectboard is seeking a professional Town Administrator to serve full-time and prefers applicants with municipal management and administrative experience with a strong understanding of state and local government. The ideal candidate will assure effective management of town affairs and operation in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws, rules and regulations and within mandated DOR and Mass General Laws. As the Chief Administrative Officer, the successful candidate will assist the Selectboard with overseeing Town departments, activities, and projects. The Town Administrator will monitor operating and capital budgets, coordinate human resource functions, and serve as a liaison and coordinator between elected and appointed town officials, employees, volunteers, and citizens. The Town Administrator will largely be responsible for facilitating the financial process; provide budget oversight; coordinating community development initiatives; indentifying and fostering new growth opportunities; promoting the town; and securing resources that support the different functions of the town. The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate prior success in managing or as an assistant managing a complex organization. The candidate should be competent in all areas of municipal management and operations, including personnel administration, capital planning/forecasting, grant writing, economic development and community planning, procurements, and municipal finance in general.

- Attend meetings of the Selectboard, preparing and providing supporting documents and information pertinent to agenda items;
- Attend local, regional, or statewide meetings which may provide useful information or benefit to the town;
- Advise Selectboard on complex, often confidential, matters and policy issues;
- Coordinate procurements in line with M.G.L 30B;
- Administer town personnel policies and practices, rules and regulations, and programs of the Selectboard;
- Oversee risk management for the town, including health, life, worker's compensation, fleet, property and liability;
- Recommend personnel staffing requirements to the Selectboard in which they have authority of;
- Collaborate with personnel and municipal committees and volunteers as-needed to support town objectives;
- Acts as primary liaison with all legal counsels on matters relevant to the town;
- As necessary, apply for and receive grants for the purpose of meeting town priorities;
- Provide necessary information and resources support for newly elected Selectboard members, including but not limited to policies and current issues and background information;
- Manage contracts with vendors;
- Perform other related duties as required.

Responsibilities:

- Supervise, direct, and assume responsibility for the efficient administration of all functions and activities for which the office of Town Administrator is given authority, responsibility, or control by by-law, Town Meeting vote, and by vote of the Selectboard;
- Keep the Selectboard informed of all important matters involving the town and make reports and recommendations to the Selectboard as it so directs or as deemed advisable;

Ideal Candidate:

The Selectboard is seeking someone who is willing to commit three to five years to ensure and maintain the town's sustainable pathway for its municipal finance operations, personnel/departmental administration, and Town growth. The Selectboard requires a Town Administrator who can help set the stage for town-wide cooperation to effectively address the town's needs and can strongly facilitate regional discussions with bordering communities for cross-jurisdictional sharing of municipal services.

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The selected Town Administrator must be comfortable working in a small town atmosphere where positions are part-time, personnel and volunteers wear multiple hats, and relationships may date back generations. He or she will work cooperatively and establish credible and respectful relationships with all constituencies within the town, including residents, elected and appointed officials, volunteers, and business owners. The Town Administrator must be able to create a culture of collaboration at Town Hall, delegate effectively, and provide support and motivation to ensure high performance and professional growth by all municipal employees and volunteers. The Town Administrator must be a creative problem-solver who is accessible, transparent, trustworthy, collaborative, respectful, and a consensus-builder. He or she should have the ability to accurately and effectively explain complex issues to individuals, committees, and the citizenry. Strong communication skills, both oral and written, are vital for this position. The quintessential successful candidate will understand and know the importance of seeking information from primary sources, i.e. MGL.

Personal and Professional Attributes:

- Creative problem-solver who is accessible, transparent, trustworthy, respectful and collaborative;
- Able to demonstrate unquestioned integrity in interactions with officials and residents;
- Able to communicate effectively and build consensus;
- Excellent managerial, organizational as well as verbal and written communication skills;
- Able to work cooperatively with the Selectboard - updating them on progress, and actively participating in discussions related to the business of the town;
- Knowledge of small rural communities;
- Able and willing to play a visible role within the different functions of the town. The ideal candidate must participate broadly across the leadership structure and town departmental borders;
- Self motivated, goal oriented person;
- Ability to network with communities, other Town Administrators, and a wide variety of other organizations that do work in the community and region;
- Comfortable and effective at public speaking and making presentations;
- Able to devise and deliver persuasive arguments and mobilize supportive parties;
- Able to research, analyze, and interpret data;
- Availability and willingness to work flexible schedule including evenings and weekends.

Minimum Qualifications:

The Town Administrator must fulfill the following qualifications or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience, which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job:

- Bachelor's degree and/or a Master's degree, preferably in a field related to public administration or business management;
- Three or more years experience as a Town Administrator or City Manager, or Assistant Town or City Manager or Administrator, or as a business manager, or a combination of education and experience in or transferable to municipal government or business management that is equivalent;
- Working knowledge of the principles and practices of municipal finance, budgeting, and personnel administration. Knowledge of Massachusetts General Laws as they apply to municipal operations;
- Demonstrated skills and knowledge of business administration, personnel management, office procedures and development of such policies and procedures.

Salary Range, Schedule, and other related information:

Salary range for this benefited fulltime position is \$50,000 to \$64,000 annually depending on qualifications and experience with a probation period of 90 days. The typical work week is Monday through Friday. Evening meeting attendance is an essential part of this position. The applicant must have scheduling flexibility. The desired start time for this position is August 2018. Residency is not required.

Challenges and Opportunities

The following are the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for the successful candidate:

Challenges:

- An audit of the town finance hasn't been done since 2011;
- There is a need for a permanent solution to meet Treasurer and Tax Collector functions;
- There is a need for town-wide finance and personnel policies;
- There is a need for capital improvement planning to manage spending for capital assets;
- The demographics of age distribution has changed significantly in the past 50 years – gaining more senior citizens and losing school age children;
- There is a need for the six towns and the regional school district to work more closely together on long term plans and budgets (the school system is over half of the town's budget) – the successful candidate will actively engage with partnering communities and the school district to achieve greater planning and coordination of services and budget process;
- High speed internet has not been implemented in all areas of the town;
- Low population.

Opportunities:

- The town is ready to have an audit done after the closeout of FY18;
- Realizing there is strength in numbers, the six towns that share a school district (including Blandford) have agreed to work together to plan for economic growth through what's called the Hilltown Collaborative;
- The town has recently sustained their shared cost to support an established six town Economic Development Director position - the successful candidate will work with the Hilltown Collaborative and the Economic Development Director to create and implement strategies that will assist the town with achieving growth that are in line any of the towns strategic plans;
- High-speed internet access is being planned throughout town;
- There is a desire to support regionalization/sharing of municipal services with bordering municipalities, specifically in the areas of finance, public safety, and building inspector services. The successful candidate will coordinate discussions on possibilities;
- The Gateway Regional School District and the towns have put together a five-year stabilization plan to sustain the regional school district which the Selectboard have agreed to support;
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognizes the need to support small rural towns to help revitalize their operational and economic health – the Governor's Office instituted the Community Compact Program thereby making resources available to the town to implement best practice ideas/solutions;
- There have been ongoing discussions with the Commonwealth in its planning effort to potentially include an on and off ramp from the MassPike in Blandford or in a nearby town.

How to Apply

Applications are preferred electronically. Please send resume with a cover letter and 5 professional references - addressing the job requirements to this email address: jgarcia@pvpc.org. Submitted applications are to be to the attention of Joshua A. Garcia, Municipal Services Manager, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Please combine all your documents in a single pdf file, if possible. **Blandford TA** and the applicant's **Last Name** must be included in the subject line. Closing date for all applications is June 22, 2018, by 5:00pm. The position will remain open until filled.

A pre-selected committee of town department personnel and municipal committee members will review applications immediately after submission deadline date and coordinate initial interviews. The Selectboard will do the final interview and will be the hiring authority. Should you have any questions regarding this opportunity, please contact: Joshua A. Garcia, PVPC Municipal Services Manager at 413.781.6045 or jgarcia@pvpc.org.