

Town Manager - FAQ Information Sheet

Why do we need a Town Manager, we pay Selectmen already? Won't this person will be just another lackey and or relative to warm a chair at the town hall?

- ü A Town Manager is a hired *professional* with a degree typically in finance and or administration, and a well rounded knowledge, backed with proven municipal history.
- ü Our Selectmen are part-time regular folk like you and I who are challenged by not having enough time to review and investigate issues thoroughly, lack of expertise in enough areas, and cannot provide the detailed oversight that is necessary to be truly effective.
- ü A Town Manager focuses on one thing, running the business of the Town.

Won't the Town Manager position be expensive and cost us a lot of money?

- ü A Town Manager will be an expert in grant application and will seek out opportunities for State and Federal aid, which will actually bring much more monies into the Town.
- ü Cost savings will be realized through more effective management of staff, town resources, process improvements and record keeping.
- ü A Town Manager will ensure money we do spend is spent wisely and work is bid out properly.
- ü A good Town Manager will more than earn their keep, and they will be accessible to you as well.

The Town is a multi-million dollar business and must be operated like one.

- ü You wouldn't operate a multi-million dollar enterprise with three part-time volunteers, you would use professional management.
- ü Selectmen are great individuals and do their level best, but at the end of the day the scope of job requirements is just beyond what their time, expertise, and experience can cope with effectively. Things routinely slip through the cracks, overall costing us more money.
- ü The Town handles millions of dollars over the course of each year. We could do better for ourselves with a Town Manager and have far more to show for our taxes with the oversight and benefit professional management affords.
- ü The issues facing our town today are much more complex than they were 5, 10, 20 years ago. The old ways simply are not enough. We need to manage today as well as set the course for the future; a Town Manager can provide leadership and guidance on addressing these needs.
- ü There are "Best Practices" for doing anything, even managing a town. We need to adopt and follow these. There is no need to re-invent the wheel; some 46% of Maine towns have a Town Manager / Administrator.

I like the Selectmen and the way things are, will I lose control with a Town Manager?

- ü The Selectmen still play the key role in the oversight of the Town Manager and the Town in general, but the multitude of problems and challenges faced each day can be met head-on, in the detail required by a full-time Town Manager.
- ü The Selectmen are voted into office and the Town Manager is an interviewed and hired position, if you don't get the service and results you can hire a new person.
- ü You actually will have better access to voice your concerns directly as they come up. The Town Manager is a full-time position and available during normal business hours.

I am worried, I know we need to do something; I have seen and been disappointed in the way elected officials have performed and represented my interests in the past. Will this really improve things?

- ü NOT adopting a Town Manager plan almost certainly ensures there is NO chance for improvement.
- ü If we don't see results and we know we have hired the right people, we can always change back.
- ü Town Manager is only one piece of a needed more formal framework for managing the Town. Other pieces would include a Town Charter which sets the rules the town operates by and a Comprehensive Plan which is a plan to manage town growth and town needs like a road map.
- ü Once a Town Manager is adopted there is no reason why Selectmen couldn't have their wages reduced to a small stipend since the heavy lifting of management will be done by the Town Manager.
- ü You can stay more informed and involved. There are many who want to see Lebanon improve for the better, you're not alone. Visit ourvoice.stadig.org for information on news and events about town.