

TOWN OF FALMOUTH
SELECT BOARD
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION
SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 2022 – 9:00 A.M.
SELECT BOARD MEETING ROOM TOWN HALL
59 TOWN HALL SQUARE, FALMOUTH, MA 02540

The Select Board may discuss and vote appropriate action on any item listed on this Agenda unless a different disposition is noted. At the discretion of the Chair, agenda items may be taken out of order.

Present: Nancy Robbins Taylor, Chair; Sam Patterson; Edwin (Scott) Zylinski II; Onjalé Scott Price; Douglas C. Brown

Absent: Megan English Braga

Others present: Peter Johnson-Staub, Acting Town Manager

THIS IS A WORKSHOP MEETING – THERE WILL BE NO PUBLIC COMMENT.

OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order - By Chair Taylor at 9:00 a.m.

2. Strategic Planning Priorities

Ms. Taylor explained that the proposal for this work session was for each Board member to create a list of five strategic priorities for the whole Board to consider.

Ms. Scott Price reviewed her five goals.

- 1) Managing the affordable housing crisis
 - a. The Town is in dire need of affordable housing and is at a breaking point.
 - b. The Town needs to increase its housing stock for both ownership and rentals to match the need.
 - c. The Board should spend some time researching and learning from what other communities are doing, while keeping in mind coastal resilience, wastewater management, and the lack of new land that can be acquired.
 - d. The Town could consider an Airbnb moratorium, tax benefits to property owners who rent long term, revisiting the ADU bylaw, changing minimum lot size requirements, and exploring different housing options such as tiny homes.
 - e. This should be a top priority.
- 2) Managing the opioid addiction crisis
 - a. Working with the Police and Fire Departments to reduce the number of overdose deaths to 0.
 - b. Considering clinicians or other staff for the Police and Fire Departments.
 - c. Determining if a root cause of addictions in the community could be a lack of stable housing.
 - d. Increase funding to life saving services through the Health and Human Services Department.

- 3) Prepare the Town's coasts and waterways for climate change - Coastal Resilience
 - a. In retrofitting buildings for affordable housing or other uses, coastal resilience should be considered.
- 4) Consider policies toward decreased pollution to waterways and wastewater management; prioritize areas of Falmouth most in need of sewer connections.
 - a. Identify other options for minimizing pollution to waterways.
 - b. Encourage and incentivize composting.
 - c. To be completed prior to the next Strategic Plan in 2027.
- 5) Increased diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout Town departments
 - a. Hire a DEI officer.
 - b. Implement recommendations into policy updates and new policies.
 - c. Determine Town goals to increase DEI.
 - d. Hire the DEI officer in the next 6-8 months.

Mr. Zylinski reviewed his five goals.

- 1) To support public safety officials and departments
 - a. Building staff and capacity to meet added workloads and demands.
 - b. Provide social workers to the Falmouth Police Department.
 - c. Monitor the ongoing impact of COVID on mental health.
 - d. Address the ongoing drug addiction issue and find the root causes.
- 2) Financial and economic stability and planning
 - a. Maintain the AAA bond status.
 - b. Support department's programming needs.
 - c. Contract with a professional grant writer.
- 3) Prioritize affordable housing
- 4) Improve organizational effectiveness
 - a. Fill the Town's open management positions.
 - b. Engage in a departmental review process.
 - c. Consider how to retain employees.
- 5) Water/wastewater management
 - a. Implement a water main and replacement plan.
 - b. Address sewer resiliency issues.
 - c. Support the DPW-mandated stormwater management plan.
 - d. Implement a coastal resiliency plan.
 - e. Devise a beach management plan.

Ms. Taylor reviewed her five goals.

- 1) Health and safety
 - a. Clinicians for the Falmouth Police Department.
 - b. Support homeless citizens.
 - c. Follow through on the removal of the Town from the requirements of civil service.
 - d. Increasing the support to the management of substance use disorder.
- 2) Financial and economic stability
 - a. Contract with a grant writer.
 - b. Maintain the AAA bond rating.

- c. Consider a procurement officer.
 - d. Prioritize support for Falmouth Public Schools.
 - e. Grow affordable housing.
- 3) Improve organizational effectiveness
 - a. Review the Falmouth Charter.
 - b. Obtain support at the top of the organization chart.
 - c. Focus on equity and inclusion in hiring practices.
- 4) Coastal/natural resources
 - a. Build sewer resiliency.
 - b. Portable bath stalls ensuring handicapped access for beaches.
- 5) Enhanced community engagement
 - a. Make a more user friendly website
 - b. Promote work within the Town.
 - c. Potluck supper for community members.
 - d. Make the ads in the newspaper more readable.

Ms. Taylor exited the meeting and Ms. Scott Price sat as Chair.

Mr. Patterson reviewed his five goals.

- 1) Financial and economic stability
 - a. Do not focus solely on the AAA bond rating, as this does not represent the interests of the citizens.
 - b. Use more objective measures of how well the Town is managing its financial resources and supporting its benefits to the citizens.
 - c. Consider the rise in the interest of capital improvements expansion
 - d. Do not be as cautious in terms of making financial investments and capital improvements to address major issues.
 - e. Determine what level of reserves to keep versus investing for the benefit of the citizens
- 2) Affordable housing
 - a. Consider a graduated/weighted tax rate
- 3) Public safety and mental health
- 4) Review the existing Strategic Plan
 - a. Drop COVID-19 the language for this current strategy because it has become an endemic issue much like flu.
 - b. Remove weasel wording from the Strategic Plan. The current plan is designed to basically obfuscate all of the goals and is not an action oriented plan.

Mr. Brown reviewed his five goals.

- 1) Financial and economic stability, and community development
 - a. Affordable housing.
 - i. Continue to support the zoning reform and allow greater density in central locations of Town.
 - ii. Find a way to maintain level funding to the Affordable Housing Fund.
 - iii. Consider the moratorium on short term rentals.

- b. Integrate the role of Community Development Director into the Assistant Town Manager job description.
 - c. Budget for a Sustainability Director with grant writing expertise.
 - d. Maintain the current comprehensive financial practice.
 - e. Identify new revenue sources.
 - f. Improve public transportation into Town.
- 2) Water/Wastewater management
 - a. Explore and develop discharge capacity.
 - b. Expedite replacement of ancient water mains
 - c. 0% interest loans for irrigation wells
 - d. Drip irrigation toilet replacement program
- 3) Health and public safety
 - a. Fire Rescue Department staffing levels to maintain static station model.
 - b. Budget for future payroll and apply for grants.
 - c. Identify best practice for number of police patrols in Town using a comparative study.
 - d. Consider new locations for the Falmouth Police Department headquarters building.
 - e. Remove the FPD from civil service letters to elected officials.
 - f. Health Department to work closely with the County Health Department to collaborate on issues regarding public
- 4) Coastal, natural resources, infrastructure, and beaches
 - a. Implement the coastal resiliency action plan as directed.
 - b. Develop a staff coastal resiliency team for implementation of identified objectives.
 - c. Request assistance from the coastal zone management and elected officials to maximize sea floor mapping program to identify potential mining sites for offshore dredging opportunities.
 - d. Develop budgets for dredging nourishment projects and potential expedited or standing permits.
 - e. Proposed legislation to streamline the coastal resilience projects.
 - f. Develop and implement beach management plan, beach profile studies, beach nourishment objectives and strategies.
 - g. Consider trucked in washed sand for maintenance.
 - h. Consider Beach Department enterprise fund.
 - i. Optimize grant opportunities and improve accessibility.
- 5) Organizational effectiveness
 - a. Hire sustainability director in 2024 and coastal resiliency coordinator in 2025.
 - b. Implement energy, conservation measures and improve building efficiency.
 - c. Construct solar canopies on all viable municipal and school parking areas.
 - d. Car charging stations to be credit card operated.
 - e. Continue to integrate electric vehicles into the fleet.
 - f. Develop solar array over the entire wastewater plant site to replace the wind turbine production.
 - g. Explore and implement municipal sites for alternative energy opportunities.
 - h. Maintain rail access to the transfer station for continued operation.

- i. Develop a food waste recycling composting program with residential pickup.
- j. Overhaul the Town website.
- k. Share social media policy with department heads and advise how best to proceed with public information sharing.

The Board took a brief recess.

3. Fire Staffing – FY24

Mr. Johnson-Staub reviewed the timeline of Fire Station construction and staffing decisions that have led to this point. In the spring of 2020, the Select Board and Town Administration brought forward an override to hire eight firefighters. It was explained at the time, that these positions would enable the Fire Department to increase its start up shift staffing from 14 to 16 per shift and facilitate adherence to firefighter per engine ladder minimums, while continuing to operate all five existing fire stations until completion of a new fire station. With the addition of those ten positions, eight on the override and two within the budget, this brought the total Fire Department shift strength staffing to 74. In 2021, at April Town Meeting, design funds for the Hatchville Station were approved. In August 2021, the Strategic Plan included a goal to continue to staff the West Falmouth Station as resources permit until construction of a new replacement fire station is completed. Most recently, at the March 28th meeting, the Board voted a policy to confirm a plan to staff six stations. Once the Hatchville station comes online, the Town will then pursue a combined northwest fire station and move to a five station model. In April and May 2022, a debt exclusion was approved by Town Meeting to construct the Hatchville Station. As part of the FY23 budget, three additional firefighters were added to the budget to improve the Town's ability to get to 16 firefighters at the start of each shift. In addition to those three, the Chief also initiated a restructuring within the budget to create another firefighter position.

The Board reviewed Chief Smith's staffing plans by station.

ADJOURN

Motion by Mr. Brown: To adjourn at 11:50am.

Second: Mr. Patterson.

Vote: Yes – 4 No – 0

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude, Recording Secretary