

**Carver Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Town Hall  
May 19, 2022 – 8:20am**

In Attendance: Chair Mark Townsend, Vice-Chair Sarah Hewins, Jen Bogart, John Cotter & Jim Hoffman and Shelby Roy

Also in Attendance: Bob Mercier – representing Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI)

The Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance and Cotter read the community prayer.

**Discussion of the Town Administrator Interview Process:**

Mercier explained that these three candidates have been screened by MRI along with the Screening Committee that was put together.

Cotter explained that he is unsure if he would be able to make a final decision today.

**Candidate – David Marciello:**

1. (Mark)

Please share with us what you know about our community. From your perspective, what are its strengths, weaknesses, and unique characteristics? How do your skills and experiences apply?

**Marciello explained that he has been in Rehoboth since 1998 and has also worked there for 10 years. He was a finalist back in 2013 when the Town of Carver did this process. He explained that Rehoboth and Carver are “sister cities” and he thrives on the Government type setup. He let the Board know that he read the minutes of the recent Town Meeting and reviewed the Capital Budget.**

2. (Sarah)

Why do you want to come to Carver in particular?

**Marciello explained that he feels most happy when he is in Carver. He was not comfortable when he worked for the Town of Millbury because it was not what he ultimately wanted to do. He felt as though the budget was all on his plate. The Town of Carver is where he wants to finish his career.**

3. (Jim)

What are the two most important features you feel a Town Administrator needs to have to be successful?

**Marciello explained the importance of Leadership & Empathy. You need to understand on how to collaborate with others and to know when it is the right time to lead.**

4. (John)

Can you provide a brief summary of why you are leaving your current position and what attracted you to the current Town Administrator position for the town of Carver?

**Marciello explained that it was not a good fit on both sides when he was in Millbury. He was hired to help the current issues that were happening by the current Board. Once new members were on the Board, they hired new people and wanted the old way back.**

5. (Jen)

What would you bring to the position that sets you apart from other candidates? (Note: I'm curious if the answer would involve specific experience, knowledge, values, or something else.)

**Marciello explained that before this interview in the parking lot he thought about this. With his MPA & Graduate assistance experience, he feels that he would be a better manager. Also, his experience and background sets him apart from the other candidates. He showed a sketch he wrote in the parking lot and said it would mean nothing to anyone else, but that it was the Samuelson condition. Also, he is credentialed through ICMA, something difficult to do.**

6. (Mark)

From your experience and observation, what is the single most important characteristic of an effective Town Administrator?

**Marciello explained that “knowing what others do not know is important and to rely on the people that do know.” You have to be honest when you don’t know something and collaborate with others to figure it out. Whether it is Counsel, health agent, etc.**

7. (Sarah)

What is your management style and how will that foster professionalism, employee satisfaction, initiative, and self-esteem among department heads and staff?

**Marciello explained that people do better when they are appreciated. They want to feel involved. Also, supporting them with the resources they need is important. He has funded fun events out of his own pocket, which brings everyone together. This will bring Humanity into the work place.**

8. (Jim)

What do you feel the Town Administrator's role is in getting the budget prepared for the annual town meeting?

**Marciello explained that it depends on the Town, but the Town Administrator should work with a team then bring this to the Select Board. Finalizing the process by presenting it to the Finance Committee. The Select Board can negotiate if needed. He will adapt to whatever mechanism this Town incorporates.**

9. (John)

Please describe your typical budget process as it relates to revenue forecast, departmental expenses, and funding reserve funds.

**Marciello explained that the "needs" come first and then "wants" are for whatever you have left over. Overlay is considered by the Reserve Fund. He had under shot many items on the budget and has always started this process in September. He said put the overlay into the reserve fun and DOR was none the wiser.**

John asked how he previously reduced Health Care contracts.

**Marciello explained that the bid had already went out for this and was able to figure out a moderate 1 yr. increase. Going from 16% to 4% and then the next year being able to get down to 3%. You do not need to have a fair process for professional services.**

10. (Jen)

Early on you referenced the solar development and project in North Carver going on. Do you see the influx in new commercial tax revenue as a good opportunity to lower residential taxes or having a larger town budget to spend?

**Marciello stated that yes, but it also depends on the situation that is present. There is no right way to do this, you have to have long term planning included.**

11. (Mark)

Are you familiar with the Select Board Financial Management Policies? What are your thoughts regarding them?

**Yes – Every policy is good, but they can be better. Marciello explained that you always needs a safety net.**

12. (Sarah)

An overwhelming majority of respondents to our 2022 Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey feel that Carver's rural character is worth preserving. Do you agree and, if so, how do you plan to help preserve Carver's unique rural character?

**Marciello explained that he is very much involved in Open Space where he lives. He believes that it's irrelevant on agreeing on this or not, but relevant if the Town wants something.**

13. (Jim)

The Town Administrator appoints people to various boards and committees in Carver. Would you have a problem rescinding an appointment you made? If no, what would be the reason(s) you would rescind your appointment and if yes, what would be the reason(s) you wouldn't rescind your appointment?

**Marciello explained that he has done this. Sometimes you have to address when something needs to be addressed, but this is something you do not do lightly.**

14. (John)

What is your methodology for predicting state aid and how do you manage that resource when you are trying to finalize a town budget?

**Marciello explained that he would speak to the local representative and that House 1 is the most accurate.**

15. (Jen)

If a resident calls or emails you with a concern, how long does it take for you to respond?

**Marciello stated someone below him who takes the call may be able to immediately address the issue. If not, he will, but depending what's going on, like budget time, it could take a couple weeks. He also uses 2 email addresses – one public, one private for Board members, Department Heads, etc. Said his assistant goes through the public email address, which is "almost like a spam folder". He also used SeeClickFix and other modern technology systems to address town issues and resident concerns.**

16. (Mark)

Does the working environment have an impact on employee productivity? Why? What is your role in establishing that environment?

**Marciello explained that everyone wants to feel appreciated and will achieve what they need. He will get what they need in order to accomplish what they want.**

17. (Sarah) asking John's question

Provide an example of when you set goals for your subordinates and how you monitored their performance to reach the desired results. What guidance and direction did you find most effective?

**Marciello explained that when he hired the Town Planner, he built certain items into her contract. This helped with setting goals and motivated them to move forward.**

18. (Jen)

Do you have any financial/professional relationships with someone who either lives in Carver or owns a business here?

**Marciello explained that no, not that he is aware of. He does not have knowledge of anybody for this.**

19. (Sarah)

What is the professional accomplishment that you are most proud and the one that you most regret?

**1 - Marciello explained that he turned an \$18,000 DEP fine into a \$143,000 grant.**

**2 - He also helped with a Solar Panel Project that was worth millions of dollars.**

**3 - There were open fields behind Town Hall that he turned into football and baseball fields.**

Hewins asked again, and what is your biggest professional regret? He said he didn't have any.

20. (Jim)

Share an experience when you applied new technology to improve town services or increased efficiencies within a particular department.

**Marciello explained that he has used "C Click Fix", Red One, a Reverse 3-1-1 system and "push note announcement"**

21. (John)

With any municipality, one of the biggest challenges involves negotiating employment contracts. What is your methodology for a win/win negotiation and please give an example of a difficult contract you were able to negotiate successfully.

**Marciello explained that having growth is reasonable for operations and there is a use for needs. At the end of the day, everything does cost money.**

**Marciello expressed his appreciation for the Select Board for giving him the chance to interview. He believes that all three candidates can do this job, but to keep his experience, MPA and 26 years of attorney background in mind.**

Chair Townsend began recess at 9:50am  
Chair Townsend returned from recess at 9:57am

**Candidate – Robert Fennessy:**

1. (Mark)

Please share with us what you have learned about our community in the time you have been here. From your perspective, what are its strengths, weaknesses, and unique characteristics? How do your skills and experiences apply?

**Fennessy explained that he grew to love this Town as his own. He learned how fantastic the department heads/departments were and noticed how much they help each other. He also loves the agricultural aspect of the Town. He loved the communication that everyone has with one another as well.**

2. (Sarah)

Why do you want to come to Carver in particular?

**Fennessy explained that he missed working in municipal government and decided to apply for the Interim position to get his foot in the door again. Also, when he applied for the interim position, he was not planning on applying for the permanent Town Administrator position. Carver grew on him along with the departments head and employees, which encouraged him to want to apply for the permanent position. Fennessy added, I fell in love with Carver.**

3. (Jim)

The Town Administrator appoints people to various boards and committees in Carver. Would you have a problem rescinding an appointment you made? If no, what would be the reason(s) you would rescind your appointment and if yes, what would be the reason(s) you wouldn't rescind your appointment?

**Fennessy explained that he would not have a problem removing them if there was an issue. He trusts that the people that are sitting on these type of positions are proper and professional.**

4. (Mark)

What do you see as the three biggest challenges facing the town in the next few years? How has your time as Interim Town Administrator helped you to prepare to deal with them?

**Fennessy explained that budget can be a challenge and to make sure that the revenue is there. Also, he has dealt with increasing the hours of Veteran's services being available and along with the Council on Aging services. The next challenge he is working on is the Conservation Agent position. With this agricultural community, this is very important to focus on.**

Mark also asked do you see the North Carver Project as a challenge?

**Fennessy stated it is a big challenge and will be going forward. Working with those who can get that done.**

5. (Jen)

What would you bring to the position that sets you apart from other candidates? (Note: I'm curious if the answer would involve specific experience, knowledge, values, or something else.)

**Fennessy explained that he has the benefit of having more knowledge of this Town more than the other candidates.**

6. (Sarah)

What is your management style and how will that foster professionalism, employee satisfaction, initiative, and self-esteem among department heads and staff?

**Fennessy explained himself as humble, loves to build others up, he likes to collaborate with others, always looks for input and makes sure others feel appreciated. He is also open and honest with everyone**

7. What is one thing you are most proud of & one thing do you think need to work on?

**Fennessy explained that coming into a budget that was already created by a former Town Administrator and working with the Finance Director and Finance Committee was a challenge, but felt very accomplished one finished. Having this all set and finalized and prepared for Town Meeting was a challenge.**



**He stated that he needs to work on having more Department Head meetings and staff meetings.**

8. (John)

Some Town Administrator's in the past would wait as long as possible for firm state aid numbers, others use early prediction. What is your protocol to predict revenues, get expense, allocate funds and what is the methodology?

**Fennessy explained that he would start this process early in September. He would review the needs and wants from different departments. Also, making sure that the Finance Director is on board with the different ideas and decisions. He explained that he would make sure that the certification of Free Cash is all set. The Reserve Funds would also be discussed in the beginning of the project and he would make sure that items do not get pushed off.**

9. (Jen)

Extensive solar farm development in town, coupled with the impending Route 44 development, could result in a sizable increase in commercial tax revenue. What do you think is a better use for the money - lowering residential taxes or having a larger town budget to spend?

**Fennessy explained that he would look at what is coming in the future and to see what the Towns and Department needs are. He would want to reduce the tax burden for residents. Taking a look at what has the most effect on the majority of people. He would look for guidance from the Board.**

10. (Mark)

Does the working environment have an impact on employee productivity? Why? What is your role in establishing that environment?

**Yes, he explained that you can tell if the employee does not like where they are working. It is all about the way you project to others. Being honest with them is key and he feels that he has gained the respect from the employees since he has been here.**

11. (Sarah)

An overwhelming majority of respondents to our 2022 Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey feel that Carver's rural character is worth preserving. Do you agree and, if so, how do you plan to help preserve Carver's unique rural character?

**Fennessy explained that he does agree and thanked Hewins for her time and effort on the Survey. He didn't have much knowledge on this, but he is aware of it and sees it everyday. He would get in touch with the State Representatives and get a regional outlook.**

12. (Jim)

What are the two most important features you feel a Town Administrator needs to have to be successful?

**Fennessy explained that communication is very important. Also, being able to listen and talk about ideas from others. He has confidence in employees and department heads to get things done.**

13. (John)

What is your methodology for predicting state aid and how do you manage that resource when you are trying to finalize a town budget?

**Fennessy explained that he would reach out to the DOR representatives. He would also collaborate with the Finance Director and Finance Committee. He is aware that the State Budget is always delayed.**

14. (Jen)

If a resident emails or calls you with a concern, how long does it take for you to respond?

**Fennessy stated usually within a day. Putting off a concern may get it buried and forgotten, so he likes to do things right away. Sometimes he'll have to ask a Department Head for more information but he'll send an email to the person to say he's looking into the issue.**

15. (John)

Have you had to negotiate any contracts with employees or in prior experience? What is your methodology for negotiating contracts?

**Fennessy explained that he has negotiated three contracts since he has been here. He had looked at previous contracts to help and looked at what was reasonable to similar Towns. He has also sat with the Assistant Town Administrator because of the historical knowledge and along with the union members.**

16. (Jen)

Do you have any financial/professional relationships with someone who either lives in Carver or owns a business here?

**Fennessy stated that he does not.**

17. (Jim)

Now that you've been through a town meeting and on the job for 4+ months, what do you see the biggest challenge(s) Carver will be facing in the next year or two? What do you feel needs to be done to deal with these issues?

**Fennessy explained that the Budget & Capital Plan can be a challenge and having it all set for Town Meeting. When he dealt with this a couple months ago it was a challenge to getting everything together in a short amount of time.**

**Fennessy thanked the Board and explained that he feels as though he is the right person for this position and the best for him and the Town. He also explained that the screening committee was great to work with.**

**Chair Townsend began recess at 10:35am**

**Chair Townsend returned from recess at 10:45am**

**Candidate – Mike McGovern:**

1. (Mark)

Please share with us what you know about our community. From your perspective, what are its strengths, weaknesses, and unique characteristics? How do your skills and experiences apply?

**McGovern explained how similar Shirley and Carver are. He explained that how rural this community feels and believes that it is important to protect that “rural feel”. He sees the economic development happening. He explained that from what he notices, the finances are in good shape. He also highlighted the Public Safety Departments and how well they are run. Shirley also has a similar Public Safety system.**

2. (Sarah)

Why do you want to come to Carver in particular?

**McGovern had talked to a number of residents and former employees and had heard a lot of positive things about Carver. He liked the economic development that was happening and realized that he wanted to be a part of it all.**

3. (Jim)

What are the two most important features you feel a Town Administrator needs to have to be successful?

**McGovern explained that the Management and leadership style is important. He believes that bring everyone together to talk about their challenges and needs is very helpful. Being fair, consistent and honest is key. He always makes sure to acknowledge the staff with respect and to make them feel comfortable with their work environment.**

4. (John)

Can you provide a brief summary of why you are leaving your current position and what attracted you to the current Town Administrator position for the town of Carver?

**McGovern explained that him and his wife own a house in Plymouth and would love to be able to move down here. They are looking to retire in this area.**

5. (Jen)

What would you bring to the position that sets you apart from other candidates? (Note: I'm curious if the answer would involve specific experience, knowledge, values, or something else.)

**McGovern explained that he would bring his experience from Lowell to Carver, but not bring Lowell's environment to Carver. He also has a strong crisis management which he also used at Greater Lowell Tech, and is able to coordinate the different efforts.**

6. (Mark)

Are you familiar with the Select Board Financial Management Policies? What are your thoughts regarding them?

**McGovern explained that he has not read these and apologizes.**

7. (Sarah)

What is your management style and how will that foster professionalism, employee satisfaction, initiative, and self-esteem among department heads and staff?

**McGovern respects and treats staff with dignity. He has an open door policy and would even go down to where they are and to let the staff know that they are supported. He is very flexible, but will make the expectations clear.**

8. (Jim)

What do you feel the Town Administrator's role is in getting the budget prepared for the annual town meeting?

**When it comes to this, he is very hands on, inclusive and conservative. He would work with the Department Heads and Finance Committee. Consistent management and monitoring of this is what he would focus on.**

9. (John)

Please describe your typical budget process as it relates to revenue forecast, departmental expenses, and funding reserve funds.

What is your methodology for predicting state aid and how do you manage that resource when you are trying to finalize a town budget?

**McGovern would try and reduce debt as much as possible. Focusing on Free Cash and when working Capital Plan – he would try and move around/take off some of the big items. He stated that he would work on the budget with a conservative outlook.**

10. (Jen)

Extensive solar farm development in town, coupled with the impending Route 44 development, could result in a sizable increase in commercial tax revenue. What do you think is a better use for the money - lowering residential taxes or having a larger town budget to spend?

**He explained that he would build up as much reserves as possible and be conservative. Also, he would focus on keeping the taxes low for residents.**

11. (Mark)

Does the working environment have an impact on employee productivity? Why? What is your role in establishing that environment?

**It is important for employees and residents to work in a happy and friendly environment. He highlighted that he always hosts a cookout for everyone every Thursday before Memorial Day.**

12. (Sarah)

An overwhelming majority of respondents to our 2022 Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey feel that Carver's rural character is worth preserving. Do you agree and, if so, how do you plan to help preserve Carver's unique rural character?

**McGovern has worked on a Greenway committee in Shirley for this and has also had 3 different committees for Conservation. He has a Forest Legacy Grant that included 60 acres total (two different lots).**

13. (Jim)

The Town Administrator appoints people to various boards and committees in Carver. Would you have a problem rescinding an appointment you made? If no, what would be the reason(s) you would rescind your appointment and if yes, what would be the reason(s) you wouldn't rescind your appointment?

**He explained that it is all about the facts and it would have to get to an unprofessional level for him to let them go.**

14. (Jen)

If a resident emails or calls you with an problem, how long does it take for you to respond?

**McGovern explained that he would get back to them as soon as possible. He started his career in the Statehouse in constituent services, which he considers critical. He tells his staff to respond as soon as possible also. It could be embarrassing for him and for the Select Board to hear from a resident that they never heard back from someone.**

15. (Mark)

How would you get “involved” in our community? Please give us examples of your previous community involvement.

**In Lowell, there are a lot of events to that help you get involved. In Shirley, it’s more focused on the different committees where you can meet with local business owners, and the historical societies.**

16. (Sarah)

What is the professional accomplishment that you are most proud and the one that you most regret?

**In Shirley, McGovern explained that he had to rebuild trust in staff and the community because of employee who was previously in that position. He was transparent about everything because of them. Also, when it came to the Town Meeting it was a very quick one and it showed that there was a lot of trust involved between the Town & Residents**

**McGovern explained a regret where there was a student who passed away in the pool area. He was aware of the many changes that needed to be done prior to this, but did not get to them soon enough. He knows that this could have been avoided if they did not keep pushing the changes off.**

17. (John)

Have you been involved in establishing or redefining departmental responsibilities? How do you ensure that all departments work in a collaborative manner?

**In Shirley, there are not many employees but in Lowell there were some changes. They had added staff in the Health & Human Resources department that did not have an extra cost. Also, the Waste Water Department & Water Department were combined to make different projects flow easier.**

18. (John)

With any municipality, one of the biggest challenges involves negotiating employment contracts. What is your methodology for a win/win negotiation and please give an example of a difficult contract you were able to negotiate successfully.

**In Shirley, McGovern explained the bargaining that went into Personnel contracts, because of how dramatically underpaid employees were.**

19. (Jen)

Do you have any financial/professional relationships with someone who either lives in Carver or owns a business here?

**McGovern explained that he did run into someone who was on the Assessor's Board, Mike Paduch and he did purchase something for his garden. That is the only interaction he has had related to this question.**

**McGovern thanked the Board and apologized again for not have read the Financial Policy before hand. He feels as though he should have been more prepared for that.**

**Chair Townsend began recess at 11:30am**

**Chair Townsend returned from recess at 11:44am**

**Discussion and possible vote on the hiring of a Town Administrator & to designate a subcommittee for the purpose of negotiating a contract with the Town Administrator:**

Townsend asked the Board on their thoughts of coming to a decision and voting on the hiring of a Town Administrator.

Bogart explained that she would like to discuss with the Board, but believes she would be ready to vote on this today.

Cotter explained that he would like to take the weekend and then vote on this at the next meeting.

Hewins explained that she would be ready to vote today.

Hoffman agreed with Cotter and would like to take the weekend as well.

Townsend confirmed that this item will be on their next agenda on May 24, 2022.

Cotter asked Mercier about their screening process.



Mercier explained that they worked with the screening committee and closely with Chair Walsh. Most of the candidates dropped out at the essay question stage.

Motion to adjourn by Cotter at 11:51am, second by Hoffman.

Vote 5-0