

## **Town of Phillipston Position Management**

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a means by which the Town will manage the filling of vacancies, changes in hours, or creation of new positions, in the most efficient manner.

### **Background**

Position management ensures on-going accountability and effective fiscal management as an integral part of filling and modifying positions. Personnel services account for a major portion of the Town's budget. It is therefore critical that hiring balance the need for fiscal responsibility and effective hiring practices when filling and amending positions. The following policy and procedures provide guidance for ensuring sustained organizational effectiveness for position management.

### **Policy**

Except where specifically provided otherwise by statute, the ultimate authority to create new positions or fill existing positions rests with the Selectboard, and their approval is required prior to any change in hours or duties, or filling of a vacancy.

The Selectboard designates the Chief Administrative officer (CAO) to coordinate review of all staffing vacancies, proposals for changes in hours, for reclassification of existing positions, or for new positions to determine if there are alternative methods of providing service deliveries associated with the position. The objective of this review is to coordinate and optimize existing staffing resources to reduce operating expenses, manage budget, make long-term structural changes and improve efficiencies in the Town's work force. This review should include evaluating whether responsibilities can be shared within or between departments, whether offices or positions can be consolidated, and whether shared or intermunicipal options can be explored with neighboring communities.

The CAO, Department Head (or supervising authority) and Town Accountant will evaluate the need for the position by examining the functions it serves, whether they fit with the town's long term community service goals and objectives, whether these can be assigned to other staff, opportunities for out-sourcing or regionalization.

### **Procedure**

The procedure for extending temporary positions, filling existing positions, increasing or decreasing hours of existing positions, reclassifying existing positions or creating new positions is the same. Requests for new positions must be made prior to the annual budget process to ensure that sufficient salary and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) allocations are provided in the Town budget.

Department Heads will submit their request to the CAO who will coordinate the request with the Department Head and the Town Accountant. In addition to determining the fiscal impacts the review will address the following:

- Determine the current department/office staffing levels (FTEs)
- What is the timing of vacancy?
- What are the key duties/functions of the position?
- Could we eliminate the position and reassign the duties?
- Should we keep the position but realign the duties to meet emerging/current needs?

- Can we collaborate with other departments or municipalities using a shared position?
- Can the duties be done by temporary or seasonal staff?
- What is the impact of not filling the position?
- How have the duties been covered since the position was vacant? Can this continue?
- Is the position required legally? By contract? or by public health and safety ?

Staffing requests that are determined by the Town Accountant to be budget neutral and do not increase the FTE staffing level can be approved by the CAO. Staffing request that do not meet these two thresholds will be submitted with the CAO's recommendation to the Selectboard for consideration.

Requests will be considered only when it is clear that:

- The CAO and DH have examined current work and staffing to identify and implement changes that improve service, reduce costs and reduce the number of staff required to get the department's work done;
- Alternatives to getting the work done have been seriously explored including redesigning the work, reassigning current staff, streamlining and any other staff-suggested means;
- Lower priority work has been eliminated, deferred, or handled in some other way; for example, with approval, can some of the department's current duties be discontinued?
- There is no reasonable alternative to the proposed option.

***Approved by the Selectboard December 17, 2018.***