

# SELECT BOARD

## *General Business*

First off, an acknowledgement that at our 2015 Town Meeting, Concord residents elected to change the name of the Board of Selectmen to the Select Board. And hence it shall be known.

The Select Board is elected by Concord residents in Town-wide election and is responsible for the development and implementation of Town policy. It performs these functions by sponsoring Town Meeting Warrant articles and making recommendations to Town Meeting, implementing the decisions of Town Meeting, managing the bylaws and budget of the Town, monitoring and evaluating the annual goals and objectives of the Town Manager, making appointments to a variety of Town boards, committees and task forces, guiding the development and evaluating the performance of the Town's operating and capital budgets, and acting as the authority for the granting of numerous licenses. The Select Board also represents the Town in a variety of roles with Federal, State, regional and other local government agencies. The Town Manager reports to the Board.

## *Select Board Agenda and Goals*

Each year the Board establishes short and long-term goals and objectives to guide its deliberations and actions. The challenge of meeting our goals and adhering to our guiding principles while managing the tax burden and meeting the expectations for services for Concord residents is always in the forefront of our minds. The values and guiding principles for our actions are:

**Governance:** Effective, Responsive and Transparent Governance

**Financial Stability:** Fiscal Responsibility and Financial Stability/Sustainability

**Infrastructure:** Sufficient, Well-maintained and Reliable Infrastructure

**Natural Resources:** Protection and Enhancement of Natural Resources

**Sustainability:** Sustainable Management of Energy and Resources



*From left: Steven Ng, Alice Kaufman, Chair; Jane Hotchkiss, Michael Lawson, Carmin Reiss.*

**Quality of Life:** Maintaining a high level of Town service to Concord citizens

**Historic & Cultural Heritage:** Preservation and Promotion of Historic and Cultural Heritage

**Diversity:** Economic and Social Diversity

**Balance & Equity:** Balance & Equity among divergent individual, neighborhood & Town-wide interests

**Regional & State Interests:** Advancement of Concord's Interests in the Region and the Commonwealth

## *Communications*

In order to carry out our responsibilities, the Board continued its practice of meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Monday evenings, every other week, with additional meetings as necessary. To allow greater time for consideration of more substantive matters, the Board employs a consent calendar for routine and non-controversial matters such as gift acceptances and special licenses. The Board strives for greater transparency on all matters of Town policy. Meetings are open to all interested Concord residents and time is allotted for the Board to hear public comments. Copies of supporting materials for meetings of the Board are posted on the Town website. CCTV records the Board's meetings and broadcasts live on Concord's local access cable channel. The *Concord Journal* ([www.concord.wicked-local.com](http://www.concord.wicked-local.com)) and *Concord Patch* ([www.concord.patch.com](http://www.concord.patch.com)), both regularly report on the Board's meetings.

Members of the Board also meet regularly with Carlisle officials, the Town's representative to the Massachusetts House of Representatives and State Senator, and with representatives of the MBTA. In addition, this year there have been many meetings with officials of neighboring towns regarding the Minuteman Vocational Technical School's proposal to construct a new school. The Board continues its practice of assigning Board members as liaisons to the various Town committees.

The Town of Concord website at [www.concordma.gov](http://www.concordma.gov) is a good place to find information about the Select Board and all other Town committees and boards. Sign up from the home page for a short weekly update from Town Manager Chris Whelan of important and timely happenings in our Town. You may also want to sign up for emergency notifications from the Town or Police Department. Many of us no longer use a landline and prefer receiving emergency updates to our cell phone. Click on the link from the website to enroll in this community service.

#### *Boards and Committees*

Concord residents are truly the backbone of local governance. Each year some 250 residents volunteer to serve on one of the 53 committees/boards that provide guidance, regulatory review and policy insights on a variety of community interests. Residents offer a wealth of strategic and specialized knowledge and service to our Town. Completing a Green Card is the first step to serve on a committee. All interested residents are encouraged to call the Town Manager's office to receive a Green Card. We welcome your service.

The Board continued its practice of holding monthly Chair Breakfasts that serve to provide an overview of recent or planned activities from each of the Town boards and committees in an informal information-sharing format.

The Board continues to make progress on implementing recommendations from the Town Governance Study Committee. Working in cooperation with Town Clerk Anita Tekle and Director of Adult & Community Education Court Booth, a program was developed and made available to all members of boards and committees in Concord. The Program

consisted of: 1) a Handbook for Committee/Board Members and Chairs, 2) a three-hour orientation session, conducted in September, that focused on effective meeting management, public hearings, and regulatory responsibilities and 3) a Chairs' Forum for incoming committee and board chairs. The Handbook will be available online and in print version for new committee/board members.

In addition, acting on another recommendation of the Town Governance Study Committee, the Board created the Financial Audit Advisory Committee. The Board charged the committee with the responsibility to: 1) recommend to the Town Manager the selection of the independent external auditor; 2) review the arrangements for scope and progress of the annual audit; 3) review the draft audited financial statements and consider the management letter recommendations and management's response; 4) review internal accounting and control procedures as necessary; 5) participate in the presentation of the annual audited financial statements by the external auditor at a public meeting of the Select Board; 6) prepare such reports and recommendations to the Select Board from time to time, within its assigned scope, as it may deem to be in the best interest of the Town. The Committee met during 2015 and 2016 to carry out these responsibilities and met with the Select Board to report their findings.

#### *Notable Issues*

Construction of the new Concord-Carlisle High School was completed, on time and within budget. Students, faculty and staff have now moved into the fantastic new facility for both Concord and Carlisle. A special thanks should be extended to all involved and especially the School Building Committee. The Select Board looks forward to conducting the first Special and Annual Town Meetings in this new facility in February and April.

Most notable issues arise from actions stemming from Town Meeting votes and those that will appear on subsequent Town Meeting warrants. Among the actions from the 2015 Special Town Meeting was the Board taking by eminent domain the WR Grace property at 214Y Main Street on which will be constructed a significant solar array and a school bus

transportation facility. Further, pursuant to a Town Meeting vote, the Select Board authorized a bid for a transportation facility and the CMLP has received bids for solar arrays on the site. The EPA has certified that they will rehabilitate the land at 2229 Main St. to 'residential standard.' The Select Board can consider further action including acquiring the property.

The path of the Minuteman Vocational Technical School toward construction of a new facility has been challenging. After considerable negotiating by the School Committee, the School's administration and Selectmen and Selectwomen of district towns, a path forward was developed and is in the process of unfolding. The components consist of: 1) a new regional agreement that alters the mechanism for calculating contributions to capital and operating costs and relaxes the process for the withdrawal of district members; 2) a vote by some towns to withdraw from the district; and 3) a vote on the proposed bonding amount to construct the school. The vote on the new regional agreement and withdrawal by some towns will take place at special Town Meetings in the coming weeks. Concord's Special Town Meeting is scheduled for February 4. The bonding vote for the new construction will first occur at our regular Town Meeting. If it is approved, a vote at the polls will be taken on April 14.

The Select Board approved a change in parking fees and the location of some meters following the receipt of the report by the parking consultant, a public hearing and the recommendation of the Planning Department. The changes went into effect in January.

The Select Board also accepted the Housing Production Plan 2015. This plan defined in regulations and administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), is a proactive strategy for planning and developing affordable housing in Concord. The plan is extensive and can guide the Town in achieving its affordable housing goals and ensuring we are in compliance with State statute. The Board also voted to support the Junction Village affordable housing project, a proposed 83-unit assisted living development at the end of Winthrop Street in West Concord. Funding for the project will be challenging and the Board created the Junction Village Task Force to assist with this effort.

The Board also took action to help resolve numerous long-standing issues at White Pond. Funds were made available for some trail restoration and a ranger was hired to help enforce a no-swimming ordinance in effect this summer. Additional remedial work is planned.

Looking forward, the Board is in the process of filling positions on three newly-created committees. The first is a Comprehensive Long-Range Planning Committee to assist the Town in developing its long-range plan using the sustainability tools developed by the American Planning Association. The second is the Public Private Partnership Study Committee. This Committee's charge will be to develop policies for the Town for this type of partnership. Third, is an Energy Futures Task Force. This Committee's task will be to develop an overarching energy strategy for Concord's energy future that can guide the various Town committees, boards and departments.

Finally, the Select Board again perambulated the Town Boundaries on a cool autumn day and marked 7 bounds, six along the Concord/Lincoln line and one at the Concord/Lincoln/Sudbury/Wayland bound. Joining the Select Board were Natural Resources Director, Delia Kaye and Town Engineer, Bill Renault.

#### *Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting*

On April 12, Concord voters assembled for the Annual Town Meeting to take action on fifty-eight Warrant Articles. For the second year, Town Meeting was opened on Sunday afternoon to allow for greater participation of families with young children and for other residents who may find evening attendance a hindrance. Within the Town Meeting, we also held a Special Town Meeting on April 14 consisting of three Warrant Articles.

Highlights of Town Meeting were the following: voted to approve Town and School budgets; voted to further the Town's commitment to sustainability by eliminating the use of thin-film plastic checkout bags by retailers but declined to support an article aimed at discontinuing the fluoridation of the Town's water; declined to support an article calling for the recall of public officials; approved numerous zoning bylaw amendments but declined to support an amendment aimed at restricting building height dimensions; and,

approved borrowing authorization of \$400,000 for school bus replacement, \$550,000 for a new fire engine and \$700,000 for renovations of the interior of the Town House.

Special Town Meeting voted to authorize the Select Board to acquire by an eminent domain taking pursuant to MGL c.79, for municipal purposes, including but not limited to school transportation, solar power generation, and waste water treatment, the property in Concord located at 214Y Main Street; authorize the Select Board to take by eminent domain pursuant to MGL c.79, for municipal purposes, including residential housing, the property at 2229 Main Street in after the US Environmental Protection Agency has published in its Record of Decision that the property will be cleaned up to a residential standard; voted down an article requiring a two-year moratorium on the installation of artificial turf playing fields and playgrounds on publicly owned land within the borders of Concord and to establish a diverse task force to research the issues and propose regulations governing the materials to be used in athletic fields and playgrounds.

#### *Gifts and Acknowledgements*

The generosity of Concord residents, visitors and organizations to our Town stands as a truly remarkable tribute to the community we have built and share. The Town was very fortunate to receive numerous gifts from residents, charities and other organizations. The Select Board is pleased to formally acknowledge all gifts in excess of \$500. The Town is grateful for each and every gift.

The Board accepted, among many others, the following generous and greatly appreciated gifts: CC Community Chest gift of \$32,2500 to the Community Services Coordinator gift account and a gift of \$25,657.75 to the Council on Aging gift account, Concord Academy gift of \$93,489 to the Main Street

Sidewalk Improvements gift account, Concord Housing Foundations gift of \$2,937.60 to the Planning Division gift account, Jet Aviation Holdings gift of \$33,000 to Environmental Improvement Gift Fund, CHNA 15 award of \$1,000 to Healthy Communities Initiatives honoring Susan Rask, Concord Free Public Library Corporation gift of \$22,150 for the

First Parish Archives Gift Account, Friends of Concord-Carlisle Fields gift of \$50,000 to the Concord Fields maintenance account, the Boston Foundation gift of \$2,500 to the Nanae Gift Account, Concord Land Conservation Trust gift of \$11,599 to the Conservation Land Management gift account, John Hamilton gift of \$16,050 to Walden Street Sidewalk Extension gift account, an anonymous donor's gift of \$1,000 to the Council on Aging Gift Account, REUSIT gift of \$1,500 to the Public Drinking Water Fountain gift account, Rotary Club donations of Cop trading Cards for the Concord Police

Department valued at \$3,800, Elizabeth Roberts gift of \$1,000 to the Council on Aging Gift Account, Concord-Carlisle Youth Baseball gift of \$7,000 to Ripley Baseball Field gift account, Concord Lions Club gift, in kind valued at \$1,264.12 to Concord Police Community Policing initiatives, and Winchester Public Library in-kind gift to Concord Free Public Library of a microfilm reader valued at \$3,295.

The Board wishes to thank Town Manager Chris Whelan, Assistant Town Manager Kate Hodges, Finance Director Tony Logalbo, Staff Liaison Ruth Lauer, and all of the employees of the Town of Concord for their professionalism and dedication in serving the residents of Concord.

We also wish to acknowledge and thank the hundreds of citizen volunteers willing to devote their time and skill to Town affairs and without whom the Town simply could not function.



*Select Board members perambulating the bounds in 2015.*

# TOWN MANAGER

Christopher Whelan,  
Town Manager

2015 was a year of continued progress in a wide variety of areas. Annual Town Meeting voted to approve a Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw and to approve the leasing of many municipal and school properties for the installation of ground-mounted and rooftop solar panels which will generate renewable energy. The April Special Town Meeting voted to authorize the Select Board to take approximately 75 acres of land owned by WR Grace by eminent domain for solar power and other municipal purposes. That taking was completed in August. Special Town Meeting also voted to authorize the Select Board to pursue the future acquisition of the former Starmet/NMI site at 2229 Main Street. After two years of experimenting with Sunday sessions of Town Meeting, the Board decided not to continue these in 2016.

A series of winter storms in late January, and throughout February, resulted in record-high snowfall totals which put a strain on Public Works staff and the overall Snow & Ice budget. Fortunately, the federal government provided \$100,000 in assistance following the Governor's declaration of a disaster state-wide.

Town staff was pleased to assist in the completion of the marvelous new Concord-Carlisle Regional High School facility, and to work with the non-profit group CC At Play to complete the redevelopment and enhancement of playing fields on the high school campus. In addition, the Public Works Director is coordinating the development of a new School Trans-

portation Facility, which is planned to be stationed at the former WR Grace site.

Two new positions were included in the FY16 operating budget approved by Town Meeting. In September, the Town's first Public Information Officer was hired with the primary responsibility of getting information out to the public in a variety of ways including traditional communication methods and the development of various social media outlets. Also, the first Facilities Manager position was created in order to coordinate the maintenance of Town buildings and to assist with long-range planning for facility improvements. The new Assistant Town Manager, Kate Hodges, hired in February, will manage both of these positions.

Danner DeStephano retired in January after more than 35 years of service as the Town's Recreation Director. We are grateful for the many creative ways his programs positively impacted the Town's residents. His announcement is a continuation of the retirement process we are experiencing in our overall workforce as the baby boomer generation transitions. The Select Board voted in June to extend the Town Manager's employment agreement for a three-year term through June of 2018.

The annual budget also included funding to support enhanced management of White Pond, including funding for park rangers and environmental improve-



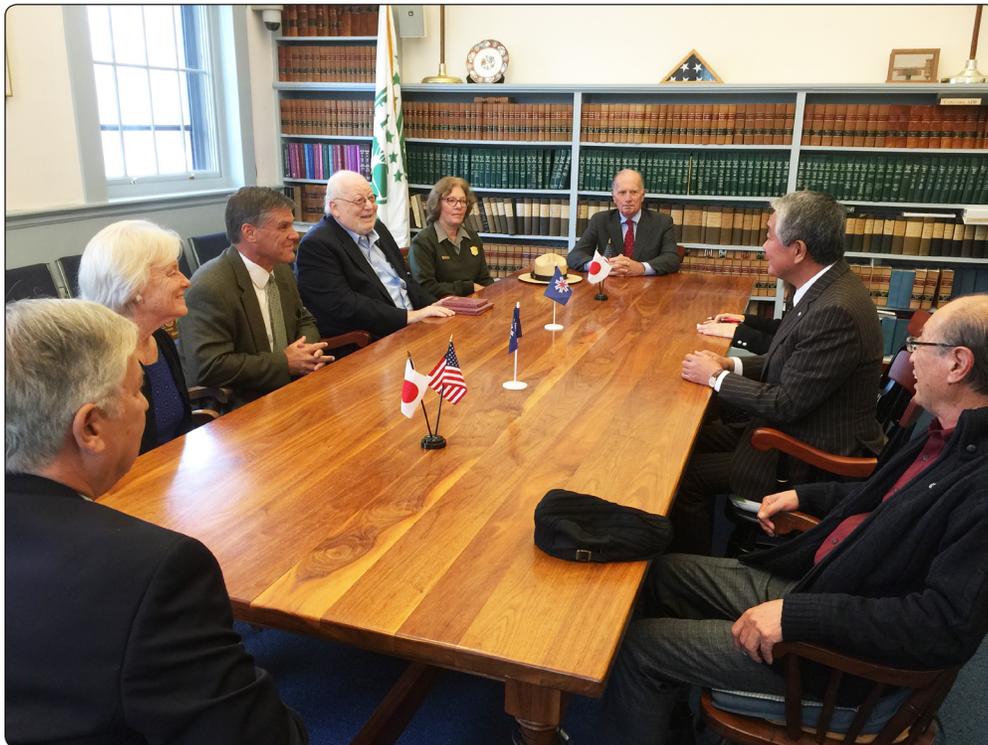
*Town Manager Christopher Whelan and Assistant Town Manager Kate Hodges.*

ments. Unfortunately, an outbreak of cyanobacteria at the pond, also seen in many water bodies throughout Massachusetts during the summer, greatly diminished the public's enjoyment of pond for recreational purposes.

Two significant State projects achieved substantial completion in 2015: the Massachusetts DOT's Crosby's Corner project will significantly improve safety for motorists on Route 2, and the MBTA's Main Street Bridge project will help improve travel time for commuters using the commuter rail system.

I look forward to working with the Comprehensive Plan Committee in 2016 to develop a plan for Concord's future. I am grateful for the commitment of the members of the Select Board and the Town's numerous volunteer committees for their dedication and service to the community. Their efforts truly improve town government.

Finally, I wish to express my deep appreciation to the Town's Employees for their professionalism and commitment to public service. I am fortunate to work with such caring and creative colleagues.



*Concord Officials meet with Officials from Concord's Sister City, Nanae, Japan.*

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mark Howell, Chief Information Officer

Leslie Koplow, Senior Information Systems Technician

Russ Gaulin, GIS & Application Integration Program Manager

Jill Kern, GIS Analyst

The Information Technology function became an independent department in 2011. It is managed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO), Mark Howell, who reports to the Town Manager. The Department's mission is to provide information systems and technology to support all Town Departments and Enterprises. Key accomplishments in 2015 included upgrades to the following systems: the telephone system, electric and water utility billing, the Curbside Collection billing system, Geographic Information System (GIS) Imagery, the GIS Master Address Table, the Human Resources information system database, the ADMINS Financials System, and ArcGIS license administration, as well as major improvements in overall server storage, internet capacity and wireless LANs.

Below is an outline of the responsibilities of the IT staff and highlighting of some of the accomplishments of 2015 in more detail.

The CIO oversees all staff members of the IT department, providing strategic guidance and feedback, and directs all major initiatives undertaken by his staff members. The CIO is responsible for making the capital investments in information technology such as servers, workstations, telephone systems, data networks and information storage. The CIO also guides all major application system investments made by departments. This strategic focus emphasizes collaboration and coordination to address common needs in applications systems and business process across departments.

The Senior Information Systems (IS) Technician manages all aspects of end user computing for Town employees. Her responsibilities include management of the IT help desk (staffed by a vendor), planning, purchasing and overseeing replacement of all workstations, laptops, printers and other peripheral end user equipment, writing and maintenance of help desk procedures, direct support to individuals to install job-specific hardware, software, and applications,

first-level technical support for the Town's phone system and support of Town Meeting by receiving, testing and displaying all the electronic presentations submitted by Town departments and Concord residents. The Town owns and uses 325 workstations and laptops. In 2015 the IS Technician planned and oversaw the replacement of 68 workstations and laptops which were approaching obsolescence, required an upgrade, or failed. Of the 70 plus printers that are in use, 13 failing or obsolete printers were replaced.

The position of GIS and Application Integration Program Manager was created within the IT Department in 2014. The role focuses on major application systems, sharing data between multiple systems and integrating Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data into business systems. The Program Manager provides support to all departments. The position was filled near the end of 2015. In addition, the IT department began to use the services of the GIS Intern who supported the Water and Sewer department to perform Town-wide data maintenance and WebGIS tasks in early 2015. This arrangement provided immediate benefits and was formalized into a .75 FTE GIS Analyst Technician position in the IT Department in September 2015. The GIS team has already made notable improvements in the quality of the maps and data available to departments to support their mission. Concord's parcel layer data now has MassGIS (State of MA) Level 3 accuracy certification, and the Concord Building outlines are now derived from 2015 images.

Maps and aerial images were also greatly improved in 2015. The last time Concord acquired new aerial imagery before 2015 was in 2007. In 2013, Concord joined a regional effort known as Massachusetts Orthoimagery Consortium (MassOrtho) to sponsor a flyover of the Town. The flyover was conducted in April and May of 2014. The new images have three-inch resolution, which allows for mapping of hydrants, manholes, and single trees with one-foot horizontal accuracy which will allow for the development of two-foot contour mapping. This increased detail greatly improves the usefulness of the maps department use today. The imagery was made available in early 2015. Also added in 2015 were oblique images

by Pictometry. This “birds-eye view” of buildings and land adds both perspective and detail to the existing WebGIS images by presenting images from four compass points, as well as directly overhead. All these improvements support planning and land use goals by ensuring the best available information is available to both the staff and the public.

Major IT infrastructure investments in 2015 included expanding the server data storage at the CMLP and Public Safety Building server rooms, upgrading the telephone system software, and replacing the telephones at the Main Library and Harvey Wheeler Community Center. The server storage project added twenty-five percent to Concord’s storage capacity, enabling the IT Department to continue replacing physical servers with virtual servers and upgrade the servers to more current operating systems. Both of Concord’s server sites are always processing work and each site provides backup for the other. All critical processing can be moved to either site when needed without disruption. The telephone system software upgrades was an important milestone in a four year plan to completely refresh the phone system, which is more than ten years old. The project began in 2014 and is expected to be completed within the next two years.

Data and voice communications are critical to municipal operations and network requirements continue to grow rapidly. In order to address these needs and stay aligned with IT strategic direction the Light Department’s telecommunications staff is managed by the CIO. In 2015, the telecommunications staff supported the Town’s operations by installing additional fiber-optic based connections for the Town’s water and sewer system, coordinating the telephone system upgrade projects and planning a new core network for the Town’s data network for 2016. This was accomplished even as that same staff continued to deploy internet service to residents and businesses as described in the CMLP Telecommunication Operations section of this Annual Report.

Effective Information Technology depends on a mix of hardware and software, personnel and business applications. Performing ongoing maintenance is critical to stability, security and functionality of the applications

used by employees. In 2015, multiple servers were upgraded to the latest operating systems. Three major application upgrades were completed across Town Departments. In the Light Plant and Water Department a much needed utility billing system upgrade was completed. In Human Resources, the primary HR information system was moved from an older database to ADP’s Workforce Now platform. Lastly, the billing process for the Curbside Solid Waste Disposal Program was moved from an independent application to a new Miscellaneous Billing system module within the Town’s financial system.

In summary, over the past several years as the pace of technology as well as the demand for information have continued to increase, the Town has increased the resources expended on Information Technology. These investments are resulting in a more stable, secure, and functional platform for Town operations. The work to replace outdated systems and technology will continue in 2016. But the results of recent years’ efforts are that increasingly, staff is also able to focus on deploying new capabilities requested by departments and residents.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

Sean Dugan

A rapidly changing world and new technology offers new opportunities for quick and cost-effective ways to get information out. Busy schedules mean that many citizens will appreciate convenient, comfortable, and quick ways to stay informed about government services and community issues. Web or phone-based self-service options and requests for action provide convenient, every day, 24-hour access to government information. Technological tools can create buzz, boost meeting participation, quickly gauge the views of those who attend meetings, and even make the process more fun. It is with these facts in mind that the position of “Public Information Officer” was created this past fiscal year. Sean Dugan began working for Concord as of August 25, 2015 as Concord’s first “Public Information Officer”. In this role, Sean is responsible for a variety of tasks including the weekly Town Manager’s Report, monthly Employee Connection, Annual Town Report, social media communication, media relations, website maintenance and

development, and training other employees on communications best practices, just to name a few.

The Administrative officials in Concord recognize that beyond simply making information available, evolving communication technologies greatly expand opportunities to hear back from citizens. For instance, we hope to use certain media outlets to request citizen comments or critiques about proposed plans or projects that are available online to residents. Going one step further, we hope to engage citizens in two-way dialogs via social media. For example, it is the plan to use social media to provide live updates of progress at Town Meeting, and hopefully answering questions residents may have in real time. As of December 31, 2015, four months after the creation of the pages, the Town's Facebook page had 420 'likes', and the Town's Twitter account had 189 followers.

Such technologies will supplement, rather than entirely replace, traditional outreach methods, at least for the present. Some citizens will continue to favor the energy and immediacy of traditional face-to-face interaction or a live voice on the phone; however, creating a position which oversees these efforts in interactive communication/participation technologies will be highly effective in Concord's efforts to engage younger generation of citizens, who grew up with these types of technology. In addition, these plans shall offer the Town Administration an effective way to reach citizens who reside in more remote corners of our jurisdiction or are unavailable during 'normal business hours' or for evening meetings.



*Public Information Officer Sean Dugan.*

## FOLLOW THE TOWN'S ACTIVITY VIA SOCIAL MEDIA



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