

Proposal to Study the Roles and Authority of the Town's Personnel Board

A. Problem Statement

The current role of the Personnel Board, as defined by the 1985 charge by the Select Board and the current Personnel Bylaw is outdated, not reflecting the needs of the Town's 21st century workforce, the challenges in recruiting, retaining, and developing high-quality Town employees, nor the efficient use of key resources—including the Personnel Board, Human Resources Director, Town Manager, and Town Meeting.

B. Study Purpose

Evaluate and make recommendations on the roles and authority of the Personnel Board in supporting the following objectives:

- Providing a fair and equitable Classification and Compensation Plan for non-union Town employees
- Assuring efficient use of key resources, including the Personnel Board, Human Resources Director, Town Manager, and Town Meeting
- Recruiting, retaining, and developing high-quality Town employees
- Providing accountability and governance for the Town's personnel operations
- Providing transparency to Town citizens and opportunity for them to provide input into personnel operations
- Determining what employee grievance process should be available to non-union employees
- Developing a strategic workforce plan, including factors influencing employee retention

Key questions that need should be addressed by this study might include:

- What are the range of roles of a Personnel Board in MA towns that have a strong Town Manager form of government? For example:
 - What is the Personnel Board's role in job classification and compensation, governance/oversight, or employee (non-union) grievance processes?
 - Does the Personnel Board have any role in union or contract employees?
 - Is the Personnel Board involved in strategic workforce planning? If so, how?
 - How does the Personnel Board work with the HR Department, Town Manager and Town meeting (as applicable)?
- In towns with strong Town Manager form of government, but no Personnel Board:
 - How many have a professional HR Department
 - How are the provision for accountability, governance and transparency, and grievance process for non-union employees handled?
- Note: Of the 256 municipalities in the state, only 21 % (63) have Town Managers, while 58% (172) are headed by a Town Administrator.

C. Research Funding

The Personnel Board will review Section D Research Approach and Options and, in consultation with the HR Director, define a budget to fund the consultant's role in completing the research.

D. Research Design and Options

Part 1: Current State

Select towns with a strong Town Manager form of government. Include towns with municipal services that Concord offers, such as a municipal light plant, municipal internet/broadband, and a municipal fitness center. Investigate the role of a Personnel Board, detailing its responsibilities in the overall personnel operations.

- See document entitled “Municipality Profiles”

This investigation could be completed by an outside consultant or, if cost is an issue, by town staff and members of the Personnel Board by reviewing each town’s website, interviewing members of the Personnel Board or HR department in the town, and utilizing the resources of the MA Municipal Management Association.

Part 2: Best Practices

Engage a consultant to advise on best practices for personnel operations in towns with strong Town Manager form of government and, in specific, make suggests for the town of Concord and the role of the Personnel Board. This could be completed by preparing and presenting a report and/or the consultant’s joining a meeting of the Personnel Board.

Part 3: Deliberation

The Personnel Board will deliberate to finalize a recommendation for changes in its role, process to review with key groups (e.g., Select Board, Town Counsel), and steps to finalize the change, including article for Town Meeting, changes to the Select Board charge, and any other steps.