

MARLBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

OPERATIONS & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MARCH 21, 2022

MEETING PACKET



IN CITY COUNCIL

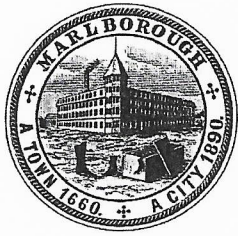
Marlborough, Mass., FEBRUARY 14, 2022

ORDERED:

That the Communication from the Mayor, re: Succession Planning Project Information, be and is herewith referred to **OPERATIONS & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**.

ADOPTED

ORDER NO. 22-1008513



City of Marlborough
Office of the Mayor

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
OF MARLBOROUGH

Arthur G. Vigeant
MAYOR

2022 FEB 10 A 11:45

Patricia M. Bernard
EXECUTIVE AIDE

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Marlborough, Massachusetts 01752
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Ryan P. Egan
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

February 10, 2022

Council President Ossing
Marlborough City Council
140 Main Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

A/G

O+O

RE: Succession Planning Project

Honorable President Ossing and Councilors,

As you know, the City of Marlborough participated in a succession planning project over the last year and a half and the last phase included an employee survey, as well as department head training. Enclosed are the results for informational purposes.

The survey was sent to all City employees and the Collins Center received 118 responses. One of the main highlights was the need for ongoing employee training with MUNIS, Excel and Microsoft applications. The HR and IT departments are coordinating with a vendor to implement these training programs once the MUNIS upgrade is completed in March.

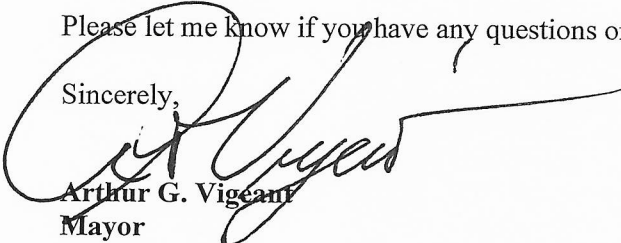
As part of the Succession Planning, the Collins Center performed a management/supervisory training that was offered to all department heads and supervisors. I'm happy to report that we had 43 employees attend the training which included managing and developing staff, and vital Human Resource policies.

The need for updated job descriptions is also a major highlight. Many have not been updated for decades and as positions become vacant, outdated job descriptions will be reviewed and modernized, as well as compensation levels. This has been an ongoing initiative, and we will continue the process.

These results will be reviewed with department heads with an emphasis on improving communication and expanding cross training where applicable.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,


Arthur G. Vigeant
Mayor

Enclosures



EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
JOHN W. McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES
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January 31, 2022

The Honorable Arthur Vigeant
City Hall
140 Main Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

Dear Mayor Vigeant:

The Collins Center has completed its work for the Succession Planning Project for the City of Marlborough that was funded by the Community Compact Best Practice grant received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The following report details the work completed, findings, actions taken and recommendations for the future.

Thank you for allowing the Collins Center work with the City. We would like to thank Ms. Christine Purple and Ms. Patricia Bernard for their assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary Flanders Aicardi

Mary Flanders Aicardi
Human Resources Practice Leader

INTRODUCTION

The City of Marlborough received a Community Compact Best Practice grant to implement a Succession Plan to help address the pending wave of retirements that will challenge a municipality's ability to maintain service levels and utilize expertise and experience of mature workers through consulting or mentorship programs.

The City engaged the services of the Collins Center for Public Management (Center) to develop an approach to succession planning, evaluate the current status of potential vacancies, and recommend steps for the short term and long term.

METHODOLOGY

In March, Collins Center staff members Mary Aicardi and Michael Hale conducted orientation sessions for key department managers and explained the basis and the process for the Succession Planning project. Worksheets were distributed and interviews were held with each department manager to gather the following data:

- Critical positions in each department
- Identification of significant departmental challenges in the next five-year period
- Competencies, skills and institutional knowledge that are critical success factors

Discussions focused on organizational and staffing structure, training opportunities, retention of valued employees, and likely retirements in the ensuing years. The individual meetings provided a valuable opportunity for department managers to discuss their staffing levels, competencies of employees in key positions, and human resource challenges that they anticipate facing in the ensuing years. The Center provided a memorandum of initial findings and recommendations which are detailed below and attached in Appendix A.

The Preliminary Findings were:

- The removal of positions from Chapter 31 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Civil Service statute, provides for the flexibility that the City needs in hiring a highly qualified work force for the future. Some proponents of maintaining a Civil Service system believe that it shields the hiring process from favoritism and political influence. Department managers were asked if there has been any political influence since the removal of Civil Service and all emphatically stated that there has not been any. The Police and Fire chiefs stated that they have been able to hire highly educated and, in some cases, fully trained employees.
- Department managers stated the current administration is fully supportive of providing training opportunities to all departments. Funds are adequately budgeted to address requests from department managers, which is critical in developing and retaining a skilled workforce. At the Mayor's request, the Collins Center has reached out to the Association of Municipal Accountants and Auditors to inquire about expanding training opportunities to those outside the existing municipal workforce.

- A recurring theme across all departments is the need for updated position descriptions. Accurate position descriptions are the foundation of a classification and compensation structure and are critical for an organization to effectively plan for succession. While some descriptions have been updated when vacancies occur, the format used is inconsistent. The City Ordinance states that at least ½ of all descriptions should be reviewed each year. It is not significant that this is not consistently done, however, the fact it was last done 18 years ago is significant.
- The City Ordinance states the City Council approves changes to position descriptions. The process is time consuming and inefficient. The professional Human Resources Manager should be tasked with the responsibility of maintaining and updating position descriptions. The priority of the City Council should be legislative and higher level issues such as recommendations from the Mayor on changes in staffing levels and potential organizational restructuring of municipal departments, not the administrative task of rewriting position descriptions.
- In many departments, there is no clear “second in command”. Efforts to address this concern has been formally addressed by the Fire Chief with the creation of a Deputy Chief position. The City should consider adopting the Police Chief’s request to create two Deputy Chiefs, one for administrative support and one for operations. The DPW Director, while only six months into employment, is also engaged in a review of department resources and formulating a plan to address areas in which he sees deficiencies.
- Most City Hall administrative departments, except the City Clerk do not have an “Assistant” classification. It is the Collins Center understanding that this designation was apparently removed in the past as a cost cutting measure during an economic downturn. An Assistant Collector, Treasurer, and Auditor are important roles and often perform statutory functions in the absence of the department manager. The creation, or reinstatement, of these classifications would also provide an opportunity to train highly qualified and motivated employees to be promoted to department manager positions when opportunities arise and provide for career growth.
- Although the City Ordinance states that there shall be a performance evaluation process for non-union employees, one is not currently in place. While this is not unusual in city governance, the lack thereof creates a void in annually evaluating, developing, and retaining high performing talent. Implementing a performance evaluation system in a highly unionized environment takes a considerable amount of negotiation, time, and training. An intermediate solution might be the establishment of a program which requires department managers to meet with employees under their direction and formulate annual development and training plans for those who wish to improve and be promoted within their department or another department. Requiring this annual discussion sends a strong message that the City is interested in developing and retaining future leaders.

- The current policy for granting vacation leave to new employees is an impediment to recruiting a talented workforce, especially at the department manager level. Prospective candidates with considerable experience are likely candidates from communities already granting them four to five weeks of vacation. Marlborough's current practice of granting two weeks of vacation to new employees, even though the Mayor may grant an additional week in limited circumstances, is a deterrent to hiring experienced managers. The policy also hinders some hiring at the lower levels. For example, the Police Department may be able to recruit a fully trained lateral transfer from another municipal department. An officer with five to seven years of experience is likely to have at least three weeks of vacation and will not want to take less. In addition, he/she may be at the top step of a pay scale and will not accept a job with a reduction in pay. The avoided cost of training a police recruit is greater than granting pay and vacation equal to what the officer is currently receiving so long as it is within range of the Marlborough plan.

The Recommended Next Steps were to pursue:

1. Conducting a survey of employees about their career development goals/aspirations
2. Working with department managers to evaluate the competencies of departmental staff, using a recommended evaluation tool.
3. Identifying gaps in competencies compared to those of key positions
4. Identifying prospective leaders/managers in each department
5. Developing recommendations on career development training programs to address the gaps in competencies
6. Conducting training programs as a result of decisions made in the aforementioned meeting. Depending on the training needs and budget remaining in the project, the Collins Center will create and present training to identified employees.
7. Preparing a final report for presentation to the Mayor and/or City Council that will include all findings and recommendations.

TRAINING FOR DEPARTMENT MANAGERS

After submitting the above finding to the City, as requested by the City, the Center conducted a comprehensive training session for all department managers. Managers were reminded that a key responsibility as a supervisor is to train, mentor, and develop employees. Training topics included:

- Performance Management
- Performance Planning
- Feedback and Coaching
- Performance Evaluation
- Key HR Policies, including FMLA, ADA, FLSA, Workers Compensation, IOD, EAP
- Supervising in a Unionized Environment
- Progressive Discipline
- Just Cause

COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY

The Collins Center developed and shared through a Google Form with employees. All employees were invited to participate and could do so anonymously. One hundred and eighteen (118) employees responded to the survey, which is a significant response. The Survey Results were provided under separate cover and are attached to this report in Appendix B. The survey elicited basic information about years of service and educational achievement. The substantive questions asked of employees were:

QUESTIONS ASKED
What do you like best about your job? (Not Salary!)
What do you like least about your job? (Not Salary!)
When you think about your career path, what job would you like to have, either within the department, the City, or somewhere else?
What skills would you need to gain to perform in that career path job you would like to have?
What skills would you like to obtain in your current job?
What tools do you need to be more effective and efficient in your current job?
Please describe your interest in promotional opportunities. What department? What job?
If you have had the opportunity to cross train, please describe and comment on the experience.
If you are interested in opportunities to cross train with another department, which one(s)?
Please list any certifications you may be interested in obtaining or pursuing.
Describe the Training Programs you have taken.
What training programs do you believe would help the City meet the training needs of employees?
How often does your supervisor communicate with you about your job expectations?
How does your supervisor communicate with you about your job expectations?
If you had a magic wand, what changes would you make to your job. (Not Salary)
If you were Mayor for a day, what changes would you like to make in City government. (Not Salary)
What suggestions do you have for the Human Resources Department?

The survey revealed most employees truly enjoy their jobs. The responses to the following questions are of note:

Promotional Opportunities: One third of respondents indicated they would be interested in promotional opportunities. A few comments indicated there were not enough promotional opportunities, or the systems for promotions was not fair.

Skills Needed. Approximately 90 respondents referred to skills needed currently and for career growth. The majority of responses included reference to a lack of training on MUNIS, Excel and computer skills.

Job Descriptions. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents indicated their job description were accurate.

Cross Training. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents indicated they have had the ability to cross train and shared how the experience has been beneficial to municipal operations.

TARGETED SUCCESSION PLANS

Initially, the scope of work for the project included the deliverable of recommending “targets” for promotions. The Center is not making specific recommendations at this time. While some departments have a clear delineation and hierarchy, others do not. The data collection and the survey revealed the City is not structured to provide this type of succession planning program. Barriers to such a program are twofold.

The first barrier is the fact that the majority of employees who are eligible for promotion are members of collective bargaining units, which can cause challenges in selecting specific candidates for training, mentoring and cross training.

The second barrier is the actual staffing structure of many departments. Many departments are extremely flat and do not have positions that provide for promotions which leads to existing employees not having the opportunity to grow and creates a large competency gap between existing employees and positions of leadership.

RECOMMENDED SUCCESSION PLANNING PRIORITIES

The Collins Center recommends the City address the following immediate priorities as the initial steps necessary to create a comprehensive, medium to long range succession planning program.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS. The City has not performed a comprehensive classification and compensation review in decades. Position descriptions are out of date and the compensation structure is lacking. Additionally, while some compensation levels are competitive, others are not. The Center recommends the City pursue additional grant opportunities to fund a comprehensive review. Additionally, approval of position descriptions should be removed from the City Ordinance and placed under the executive authority of the Mayor.

TOTAL COMPENSATION. A part of any strong succession planning program is the ability to recruit and retain employees with competitive compensation and benefits. The City's Ordinance which restricts the ability of the Mayor to hire personnel with flexibility of pay and leave benefits hinders the ability of the City to recruit highly qualified personnel. Not having highly qualified personnel in leadership positions, impacts the mentoring and cross training capabilities. In some instances, employees are training supervisors. The Mayor should be authorized to compensate new employees without approval of the Council.

ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT/DIVISION HEADS. The City should take advantage of any vacancy in a department to evaluate the possibility of creating an Assistant or Professional position . As mentioned in the initial memorandum, the City's departments and divisions are flat, and frequently have a supervisor and then clerical or staff positions, without any professional or supervisory positions to serve as "feeder" positions. The City should make it a goal to create an "Assistant" or "Professional Staff" position within each department. Doing so would provide promotional opportunities for current staff and provide an opportunity to have a trained professional to fill in for or take the role of the department manager.

TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND CROSS TRAINING. In many departments, work assignments foster the "siloeing" of duties where if a vacancy occurs few people in the department are able to perform the duties. The Mayor should insist wherever possible, department managers adopt the practice of cross training of departmental staff. Doing so will provide opportunities for skill development and transfer of knowledge.

FORMAL AND INFORMAL TRAINING. The City has a training budget that allows individuals to pursue professional development. Many have availed themselves of the benefit. However, the training is based on individual interest or pursuit. The survey clearly revealed a desire and need for training of departmental staff in the software used, particularly the integrated MUNIS system and Excel spreadsheet software. The Center recommends the City pursue in house training on both MUNIS and Excel which will provide hands-on, City specific learning.

As mentioned above, Informal training through cross training should occur as often as possible. The City may wish to consider creating a Mentorship Program where a department or division manager could "Mentor" an employee one day per week. The program could be developed as a volunteer program, an application program or a designation program. The City should confer with legal counsel regarding any collective bargaining obligations for such a program.

The City should work with through the department heads with any professional associations they are involved with to encourage shadowing, mentoring, and associate memberships to allow for and encourage attendance and participation in certification programs.

CLOSING

The Collins Center would like to thank the City for allowing us to work with the department managers and staff on this critical initiative, with special thanks to Ms. Christine Purple and Ms. Patricia Bernard for their support.

ATTACHMENT A

INITIAL FINDINGS MEMO TO MAYOR



EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
JOHN W. McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES
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May 14, 2021

The Honorable Arthur Vigeant
City Hall
140 Main Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

Dear Mayor Vigeant:

The Collins Center has completed its initial review for the Succession Plan assessment of City of Marlborough municipal departments. As you know, the project is funded by a Community Compact Best Practice grant received from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Methodology:

In March, Collins Center staff members Mary Aicardi and Michael Hale conducted orientation sessions for key department managers and explained the basis and the process for the Succession Planning project. Worksheets were distributed to the key department managers in an attempt to gather the following data:

- Critical positions in each department
- Identification of significant departmental challenges in the next five-year period
- Competencies, skills and institutional knowledge that are critical success factors

While most department managers completed the worksheets, some indicated it overly time consuming, especially those with larger staffs – police, fire, and DPW. To address this issue, as well as wanting to get deeper information about the departments and staff, the Collins Center staff arranged to meet (in person or virtually) with each department manager to gather the information needed.

Discussions focused on organizational and staffing structure, training opportunities, retention of valued employees, and likely retirements in the ensuing years. Meetings lasted from 20 minutes to more than two hours, depending on the size of the department. The individual meetings provided a valuable opportunity for department managers to discuss their staffing levels, competencies of employees in key positions, and human resource challenges that they anticipate facing in the ensuing years. The sessions were also extremely helpful to the Collins Center staff gathering data to present as findings for this memo.

Preliminary Findings:

- The removal of positions from Chapter 31 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Civil Service statute, provides for the flexibility that the City needs in hiring a highly qualified work force for the future. Some proponents of maintaining a Civil Service system believe that it shields the hiring process from favoritism and political influence. Department managers were asked if there has been any political influence since the removal of Civil Service and all emphatically stated that there has not been any. The Police and Fire chiefs stated that they have been able to hire highly educated and, in some cases, fully trained employees.
- Department managers stated the current administration is fully supportive of providing training opportunities to all departments. Funds are adequately budgeted to address requests from department managers, which is critical in developing and retaining a skilled workforce. At the Mayor's request, the Collins Center has reached out to the Association of Municipal Accountants and Auditors to inquire about expanding training opportunities to those outside the existing municipal workforce.
- A recurring theme across all departments is the need for updated position descriptions. Accurate position descriptions are the foundation of a classification and compensation structure and are critical for an organization to effectively plan for succession. While some descriptions have been updated when vacancies occur, the format used is inconsistent. The City Ordinance states that at least ½ of all descriptions should be reviewed each year. It is not significant that this is not consistently done, however, the fact it was last done 18 years ago is significant.
- The City Ordinance states the City Council approves changes to position descriptions. The process is time consuming and inefficient. The professional Human Resources Manager should be tasked with the responsibility of maintaining and updating position descriptions. The priority of the City Council should be legislative and higher level issues such as recommendations from the Mayor on changes in staffing levels and potential organizational restructuring of municipal departments, not the administrative task of rewriting position descriptions.
- In many departments, there is no clear "second in command". Efforts to address this concern has been formally addressed by the Fire Chief with the creation of a Deputy Chief position. The City should consider adopting the Police Chief's request to create two Deputy Chiefs, one for administrative support and one for operations. The DPW Director, while only six months into employment, is also engaged in a review of department resources and formulating a plan to address areas in which he sees deficiencies.
- Most City Hall administrative departments, except the City Clerk do not have an "Assistant" classification. It is the Collins Center understanding that this designation was apparently removed in the past as a cost cutting measure during an economic downturn.

An Assistant Collector, Treasurer, and Auditor are important roles and often perform statutory functions in the absence of the department manager. The creation, or reinstatement, of these classifications would also provide an opportunity to train highly qualified and motivated employees to be promoted to department manager positions when opportunities arise and provide for career growth.

- Although the City Ordinance states that there shall be a performance evaluation process for non-union employees, one is not currently in place. While this is not unusual in city governance, the lack thereof creates a void in annually evaluating, developing, and retaining high performing talent. Implementing a performance evaluation system in a highly unionized environment takes a considerable amount of negotiation, time, and training. An intermediate solution might be the establishment of a program which requires department managers to meet with employees under their direction and formulate annual development and training plans for those who wish to improve and be promoted within their department or another department. Requiring this annual discussion sends a strong message that the City is interested in developing and retaining future leaders.
- The current policy for granting vacation leave to new employees is an impediment to recruiting a talented workforce, especially at the department manager level. Prospective candidates with considerable experience are likely candidates from communities already granting them four to five weeks of vacation. Marlborough's current practice of granting two weeks of vacation to new employees, even though the Mayor may grant an additional week in limited circumstances, is a deterrent to hiring experienced managers. The policy also hinders some hiring at the lower levels. For example, the Police Department may be able to recruit a fully trained lateral transfer from another municipal department. An officer with five to seven years of experience is likely to have at least three weeks of vacation and will not want to take less. In addition, he/she may be at the top step of a pay scale and will not accept a job with a reduction in pay. The avoided cost of training a police recruit is greater than granting pay and vacation equal to what the officer is currently receiving so long as it is within range of the Marlborough plan.

Next Steps

The first phase of the Succession Planning project was information gathering about departments, staffing and priorities. The next phase of the process could be described as Succession "Development" rather than Planning. Our recommended next steps include:

- Conducting a survey of employees about their career development goals/aspirations
- Working with department managers to evaluate the competencies of departmental staff, using a recommended evaluation tool.
- Identifying gaps in competencies compared to those of key positions
- Identifying prospective leaders/managers in each department
- Developing recommendations on career development training programs to address the gaps in competencies

- Meeting with the Mayor, Human Resources Director, and City Council President to discuss recommendations regarding training.
- Conducting training programs as a result of decisions made in the aforementioned meeting. Depending on the training needs and budget remaining in the project, the Collins Center will create and present training to identified employees.
- Preparing a final report for presentation to the Mayor and/or City Council that will include all findings and recommendations.

Thank you for your support in this important project. Please let us know if you have any questions and if we are free to proceed as described.

Very truly yours,

Mary Flanders Aicardi

Mary Flanders Aicardi
HR Practice Leader

ATTACHMENT B

SURVEY REPORT

**THE EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR.
CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**

**MCCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL
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CITY OF MARLBOROUGH EMPLOYEE SURVEY

EDWARD J. COLLINS, JR. CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

JANUARY 2022



CITY OF MARLBOROUGH SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

The Collins Center for Public Management conducted an employee survey as part of the effort to develop a Succession Planning Program for the City. The following information is a summary of the information collected. The summary does not include every response and coalesces data from similar questions.

In developing a Succession Planning Program, knowing the current and gaps in competencies of current staff is critical. In addition to asking employees about current positions and skills, the survey sought to gain insight into how the City operates. The goal of the survey was to obtain information about employees, their training, education, skills, career goals, workplace, opinions about the City as an employer, the administration and the working conditions. The total number of respondents was 118, which is a significant response.

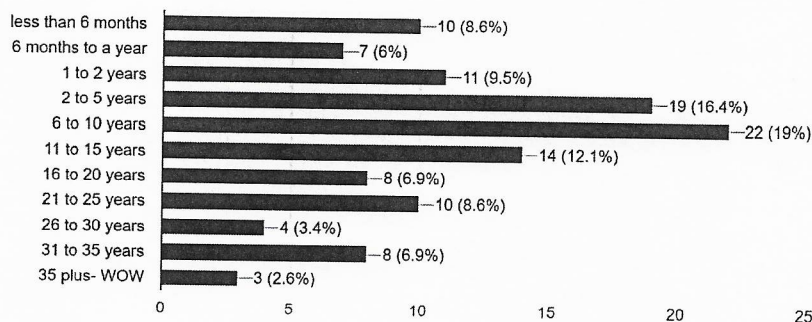
The following sections correspond to the questions contained in the survey.

SERVICE WITH THE CITY

Marlborough has experienced a significant amount of turnover in recent years, which is part of the reason for the Succession Planning Program initiative. Many long-term employees have retired, taking their institutional knowledge with them. As show in the following chart, 69% of the respondents have less than 10 years of experience. The City will need to use the information gathered to inform the next steps in the succession planning process.

How many years have you worked for the City?

116 responses



WHAT EMPLOYEES LIKE BEST ABOUT THEIR JOB

Asking employees what they like about their jobs provides information about interests, areas for development and what has been successful. The following information summarizes responses.

Everything!
Commute
Hours
Flexibility

Helping-(22 responses)

- Helping people and putting forth the Mayors' initiatives
- Helping victims of crime; solving cases
- Helping people solve their problems
- Helping children and the elderly
- Assisting and giving peace of mind to those in need
- Serving the community

People – (9 responses)

- The staff
- The team
- Working for the City
- Residents

Variety – (11 responses)

- Different every day
- Day to day challenges
- Every shift, every call, is different
- Variety of tasks

The Work (12 responses)

- Following a project from design to completion
- Interesting work involving me in all aspects of a project
- The work itself
- The numbers
- The challenge
- The work environment

WHAT EMPLOYEES LIKE LEAST ABOUT THEIR JOB

Similar to wanting to know what employees like best, finding out about what is not desirable in a job equally, if not more so, informs the City what work needs to be done and areas were targeted steps and resources need to be focused. The following information summarizes the responses.

Angry customers (3 responses)

Commute/Parking (5 responses)

Coworkers (9 responses)

Having to listen to far right conspiracy theories from coworkers

Delayed responses from other departments interfere with my ability to get my work done

Managing personalities

Difficult coworkers

Unions

Wish we could change the organizational culture

Lack of appreciation/respect

City has disdain for Library employees and does not understand the value to the community

Lack of respect from City Hall

Lack of morale and sense of pride

Lack of professionalism in a confidential office

Lack of respect, no appreciation

Lack of communication (6 responses)

No room for advancement (4 responses)

Politics (4 responses)

Poor Management (6 responses)

Manager worries about politics instead of managing people

Cycling people in and out with no change in behavior

Micro management

Software (3 responses)

Munis

Permitting and Inspection

WE need more help in the IT department

Work Itself (16 responses)

Filing is never ending

Paperwork, the necessary evil

- Boring
- Deadlines
- Seeing our constituents in their tough situations
- Sitting in a chair all day
- Meeting
- Stress
- Being pulled in many different directions; putting out fires

Working Conditions (19 responses)

- Hazardous environments
- Emergency call ins
- Bi-weekly payroll
- Unfair rotation of duties
- Isolation
- Wish we had a larger break area
- Offices could be cleaner
- Hours

Random (10 responses)

- I really like my job
- I am very blessed
- Small personnel issues take a long time to resolve
- There is day to day ignorance

CAREER PATH EITHER WITH THE CITY OR ELSEWHERE

The responses to the question revealed answers that indicated some respondents were not interested in promotional opportunities. A few said they are happy where they are. The following information summarizes the responses

Promotional

- Promotion within Finance departments (4)
- Promotion to General Foreman (3)
- Promotion to Head Clerk (2)
- General promotional (5)
- Promotions within the Police Department (3)
- Promotion within the Fire Department
- Promotion within the Water Department
- General promotion within public works (5)

Random Comments

- Current job
- Happy where I am
- I love where I am and what I do

Looking forward to retirement
I have my perfect job
I'd like to be president of the united stated
The promotions system is broken

Specific Career

Environmental engineering
Assessor
Assistant City Engineer
Chief Operator
Chief Procurement Officer
Code Enforcement Inspector
Command position
Lead Chemist
Human Resources

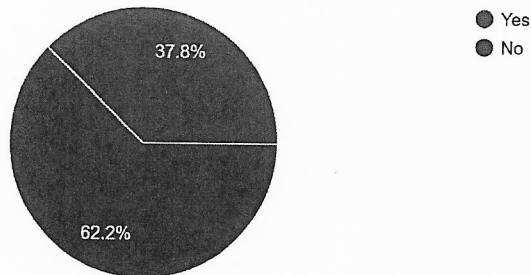
SKILLS NEEDED CURRENTLY AND FOR CAREER PATH SUCCESS

The responses (88) to the questions varied greatly and were specific to the respondent. However, many referred to improved computer skills and training, professional certifications, licenses, and continuing education.

CROSS TRAINING

Cross training and sharing knowledge are key components in any Succession Planning Program. Sharing critical knowledge is needed to ensure the continuity of operations in cases of vacancies.

Have you had the opportunity to cross train within your department?
111 responses

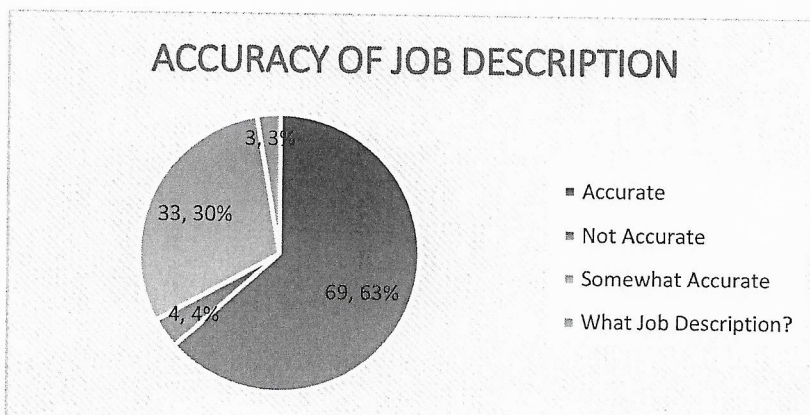


When asked to comment on the experience of cross training, most of the respondents (60) reflected positive experiences with cross training. The following are samples of responses.

- My experience has been unique in a very good and personally challenging way I would say. It has given me the opportunity to learn a little bit about the job the department does as a whole which in my opinion makes learning the things you are responsible for in your position a little easier to understand. It is always nice to know why something is being done a certain way and what other areas it affects.
- We had a task force of library staff to reach out to and learn more about the other departments in the city that work with citizens of Marlborough, such as Human Services and Community Cupboard. Members of that task force then trained other members of the library staff. It was important to understand how we can all work together. Within the library, we work hard to have all staff understand what other library departments are doing and work together as appropriate.
- We have been extremely short staffed, and we all needed to cross train to help out each other's departments.
- While I am training a recently hired employee in my current position and have shared knowledge of my past position, there is no cross training in my department. I would like very much to be cross trained.
- Cross training has occurred with other city departments and has been quite positive.
- Due to the majority of the staff being let go during the pandemic, we were forced to learn the jobs of other departments within the library. This was cruel and inefficient during the pandemic. Other libraries in Massachusetts were shocked that a staff of 6 had to do the work of 30.

ACCURACY OF JOB DESCRIPTION

An effective Succession Planning Program focuses on competencies and responsibilities. Having accurate position descriptions is critical. Employers should regularly review position descriptions, particularly at times of turnover to evaluate accuracy.

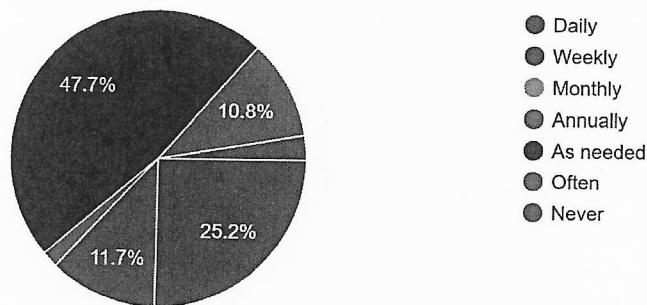


SUPERVISION

Supervisors are key partners in Succession Planning. Supervisors have the responsibility to provide training, mentoring, promote cross training, and skill development. Accurate position descriptions help supervisors define expectations and supervisors must communicate with employees about those expectations.

How often does your supervisor communicate with you about your job expectations?

111 responses



When asked “How does your supervisor communicate with you about your job expectations”, respondents (102) the majority indicated “face to face”, “verbally”, or “in person”. The following are selected responses.

- Explaining what is needed/expected prior to starting a project and providing feedback throughout the work process
- He made it clear to me from the start that He expects his guys to be held to a high standard. He doesn't feel the need to micromanage as long as we're doing what we're supposed to be doing. And in the event that we aren't doing our jobs or meeting his expectations he will let us know.
- My supervisors are an open door 110% of the time and always made it extremely easy to talk about any given situation. They are very consistent making it easy to know what their expectations are, but always give you a chance to explain yourself if something's done out of their expectations. If there is something they don't agree with- they always give an explanation why so you can learn from the experience.
- I know when needs to be done day to day. First thing in the morning, I will check in with my supervisor to see if anything special is going on. Otherwise, I know what needs to be done.
- It's not necessary. I know my job expectations very well at this point.
- No news is good news. It means there are no complaints against you

- There is an open dialogue with my supervisor regarding job expectations. I have also been provided with training documents which give me something to refer back to.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources (HR) department is at the core of a Succession Planning Program. HR has the responsibility of position descriptions, professional development and training. Responses (60) included a number suggesting improved onboarding processes, including an improved online option. Additional comments suggested more training programs. The following are selected comments provided about the Human Resources Department.

- Advertise certification courses to all employees
- Be more on the employee side of things. HR is for the worker not the employer.
- Come down and take a tour of our plant to see it
- Department heads don't get any training when they first come on board in regard to unions, family leave act, reprimanding employees, etc.
- Exit interviews to identify issues surrounding staff retention.
- Figure out how to more easily reward good behavior and punish bad behavior of public employees.
- Gather all this information and offer training and opportunities for the City to learn about the resources available to us. Offer health classes for employees, such as yoga or stress management or healthy eating, to encourage self-care.
- I would suggest they be more consistent with their procedures and make sure they know what each employee's responsibilities are. HR should continue to have surveys and my suggestion for the next one is "what suggestions do you have for your department head.
- Modernize job descriptions, streamline onboarding, take back HR work that departments have had to do for lack of HR leadership.
- Stop replacing qualified candidate's with out of town personnel
- My one suggestion would be consistency. Sometimes when situations come up, they are not handled the same way they were last time, and it causes confusion.
- Reevaluate job titles and Pay Grades. We are languishing under archaic Civil Service Titles and Pay Grades and the Civil Service Requirement in clerical positions was dropped years ago in the City of Marlborough.

MAYOR FOR A DAY

The role of and support by leadership is critical in any Succession Planning Program. The survey contained a question asking employees what they would do if they were Mayor for a day.

Approximately half of the respondents (65) made comments. The themes were

- Hours of City Hall, such as half day on Fridays for everyone
- Allow people to work from home

- Interacting with staff and visiting all offices more regularly
- Improve infrastructure and equipment
- Vaccinations and masks

Selected comments about being Mayor for a day include:

- Couldn't pay me enough to be Mayor... even pretend
- Educate city government on the duties that employees perform.
- For a day? I believe the City has a lot of problems and can't be solved in one day.
- Give current employees the opportunity to grow within the city and expand their knowledge
- Marlborough has come a long way to beautify the downtown area. Keep up the good work.
- I would expect better transparency and communication up and down the governmental departments and agencies.
- I would look for opportunities to bring staff together in a way that promotes a sense of teamwork to provide the best services possible to the Marlborough community.
- I would use my platform to bring to light the many great things each of us do for this great community whether it would be via social media, the local cable station, newspaper, billboards etc., so we could better appreciate each other in all we do for our city.
- Not a Marlborough resident but as a City employee I always compliment the community's appearance; it is obvious the Mayor invests in the City and its residents
- One day to thoroughly go through old-old city law/ordnances that should be abolished
- Our Mayor is doing a wonderful Job for our City - No changes !
- Try as best as I could in regard to personal and professional growth to create an environment that embraced change for the better - meaning specifically in professional growth. .
- I would acknowledge everyone's hard work. We have some very talented staff in the city and monthly "shout outs" to various staff who have done, little or big things should be acknowledged - it also informs the rest of the staff of things that are important that are going on - so it helps make us all feel proud to work for the city. Department head meetings are good too, as it acknowledges we are all part of a team

IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND

The survey asked employees what they would do if they had a magic wand. Many commented staffing levels were insufficient. Others commented on eliminating politics and improved communication. Selected responses include:

- Ability to move on from older non-productive employees and select more skilled replacements
- Better feeling of home and work life balance.

- Educating coworkers in the importance of being a profession and the divide between resident and nonresident employees
- Flexible schedule in order to supervise 24 hour operation.
- Hiring more staff, so that we can accomplish our goals and daily tasks and not be under so much stress.
- I wish that everyone was more receptive and less threatened about cross training
- I wish the city offered a yearlong training course to prepare people before they ran for City Council.
- I would demand fair and consistent leadership from department management!
- I would like to remind everyone how great our jobs are and how fortunate we are to have them. I would try to improve morale so people were more excited to take pride in our jobs so we can be great at them!
- I would have more time to do my work and spend less time doing other jobs due to staff we do not have
- I would make it more rewarding and be recognized for a job well done. I would like to socialize with other coworkers at work events/meetings.
- I would wave the wand and be able to communicate with everyone on their timelines and provide them with wait free inspections.
- If I had a magic wand, I'd fill in the open patrolman spots that we need especially when promotions take place, taking more bodies off of patrol.
- More defined roles, training, and opportunities for personal development, and growth in your career.
- Shut the phones off and close the door for day
- In house mentoring program
- The general public would be educated on what it is their police force actually does

CLOSING

The City has taken many critical steps in the process of creating a Succession Planning Program. Department heads have been interviewed about their departments, staffing and training needs. Employees have been surveyed asking about their own goals, professional development needs and thoughts and suggestions for the City. Department managers have received training on supervision. The next step will be to coalesce the information contained in the survey, in meetings with department heads and the review of the organization to recommend short and long range steps to formalize into a Succession Plan.

City of Marlborough Public Meeting Posting

The following City Council Committees will meet on Monday, March 21, 2022 in the City Council Chamber, second floor, City Hall, 140 Main Street, Marlborough, MA.

These meetings will be held in the City Council Chamber and are open to the public. They will be televised on WMCT-TV (Comcast Channel 8) or Verizon/Fios Channel 34) or you can view the meetings using the link under the Meeting Videos tab on the city's website, home page (www.marlborough-ma.gov). Please note per Mass Open Meeting (OML) Law requirements meetings may start later than the appointed time but not before the time posted herein.

Personnel Committee at 6:00 PM to review Order No.22-1008511: Reappointment of George LaVenture to the Planning Board for a five-year term to expire February 1, 2027.

Operations & Oversight Committee at 6:10 PM to review Order No.22-1008513: Succession Planning Project information submitted by Mayor Vigeant.

Climate Resiliency Committee at 6:35 PM to review Order No.22-1008523 Information from MassDevelopment PACE (Property Assisted Clean Energy) program and impact/opportunities.

Legislative & Legal Affairs Committee at 7:00 PM to review Order No.22-1008516: Communication from Engineering Design Consultants on behalf of Lacombe Business Center re: Sewer Taking and Easement relative to certain parcels on Lacombe Street.

Finance Committee at 7:20 PM to review the following Orders:

- 1) Order No.22-1008525: Transfer in the amount of \$361,080.93 from PEG Funds to Marlborough Cable Trust to fund the operation of WMCT-TV for FY2023.
- 2) Order No.22-1008526: Proposed Order for the establishment of the West Side Fire Station Stabilization Account.
- 3) Order No.22-1008402B-2: Proposed amended Transfer request relative to the acquisition of 100 Locke Drive for a new Fire Station clarifying the funding sources.
- 4) Order No.21-1008402A-1: Proposed Order to authorize the purchase of 100 Locke Drive for the purpose of building a new Fire Station.

THE LISTING OF TOPICS THAT THE CHAIR REASONABLY ANTICIPATES WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING IS NOT INTENDED AS A GUARANTEE OF THE TOPICS THAT WILL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED. NOT ALL TOPICS LISTED MAY IN FACT BE DISCUSSED, AND OTHER TOPICS NOT LISTED MAY ALSO BE BROUGHT UP FOR DISCUSSION TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.

The public should take due notice that the Marlborough City Council may have a quorum in attendance due to Standing Committees of the City Council consisting of both voting and non-voting members. However, members attending this duly posted meeting are participating and deliberating only in conjunction with the business of the Standing Committee.

Electronic devices, including laptops, cell phones, pagers, and PDAs must be turned off or put in silent mode upon entering the City Council Chamber, and any person violating this rule shall be asked to leave the chamber. Express authorization to utilize such devices may be granted by the President for recordkeeping purposes.