

# Dighton, MA – Town Administrator



## Position Statement

Dighton, MA (8,500 pop.), is a small, historic town located along the Taunton River in southeastern Massachusetts. It is seeking a talented Town Administrator to provide collaborative leadership to help advance the goals of the community. Named in honor of Frances Dighton, the wife of one of the Town's founders, Dighton was incorporated in the spring of 1712. Dighton maintains its small town, rural feel as a Right to Farm community and by offering a variety of community services and social events. Dighton is also a designated Green Community. Dighton has an Aa3 rating and an FY21 budget of approximately \$22.3 million. The Town's finances are healthy, but the operating budget is tight and securing state and federal grants is considered a high priority. As with most communities, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is having an impact on Dighton's revenues.



Dighton's current challenges involve implementation of a capital outlay process and a facility management plan, successfully securing and administering state and federal grants, and working with the Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District and the Town of Rehoboth to determine the school district's future and the best path forward for both communities in regard to public education. Dighton's local government is led by a three-member Board of Selectmen.

To serve as its next Town Administrator, Dighton is seeking a collaborative leader with strong financial acumen, excellent communication skills, and economic development experience. Grant writing and grant administration are essential skills for this role. The next Town Administrator must be able to bring key stakeholders together to study issues and reach consensus. The successful candidate will be confident in making recommendations but also flexible and accepting if those recommendations are not followed. There are expected to be a number of key staff retirements in upcoming years and the next Town Administrator will need to work on succession planning. Candidates with a master's degree in public administration, business administration, management, or a related field are preferred; a bachelor's degree is required. Preferred candidates will have a proven record of leadership, be strategic, proactive, and able to build collaborative relationships.

**Annual salary: \$115K+/- DOQ.** The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Town of Dighton is a smoke free, drug free, and EOE/AA employer.

## Government

Dighton has a Board of Selectmen-Town Administrator form of government with open Town Meeting. The three members of the [Board of Selectmen](#) are deemed the Chief Elected and Executive Officers of the Town and are vested with all the municipal authority not specifically retained by the Town's legislative body, town meeting, or other elected boards. The Selectmen issue the warrants for town meetings, initiate legislative policy by inserting articles in town meeting warrants, and implement the votes subsequently adopted. They adopt town administrative policies, appoint members of various official boards and commissions, hold public hearings on important town issues, and enforce town bylaws and regulations. The Selectmen also serve as the licensing boards. The Board of Selectmen appoints the [Town Administrator](#) who serves as the chief administrative officer for the Town as well as Chief Procurement Officer, Equal Employment Officer, and Administrator of Insurance.

Dighton has numerous elected positions, boards, and committees including: Board of Assessors, Board of Selectmen, Bristol Plymouth Regional Technical School District Committee, Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District Committee, Housing Authority, Library Trustees, Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning Board, Sewer Commission, Tree Warden, Town Clerk, Town Collector, Town Moderator, and Town Treasurer. Several years ago, Town Meeting created an appointed Board of Health to take on oversight of food protection, community sanitation, animal control, storm water, landfill management, and septic systems. The next Town Administrator must be skilled at collaboratively engaging and coordinating with Dighton's various elected and appointed positions, boards, and committees.

## Finances

Dighton's finances are strong and the Town tends to be fiscally conservative. Dighton has an FY21 budget of approximately \$22.3 million and a Moody's rating of Aa3. In FY20, free cash was certified at \$1.32 million. The FY20 tax rate is \$14.98 for residential and \$27.57 for commercial, industrial, and personal properties. The tax base is approximately 86% residential, nearly 3% industrial, and about 2.6% commercial. Approximately 76% of the Town's revenue comes from the tax levy, with about 3.9% from state aid. Local receipts bring in about 11.1% of the annual revenue. New growth in FY20 was \$554,081. Maintaining or improving Dighton's financial strength and bond rating while keeping tax increases to a minimum are priorities. Seeking and securing grants to help fund various projects is important in Dighton. The Town's first Town Administrator successfully secured about \$1 million in grant funding over a three-year period and the community anticipates the next Town Administrator will achieve similar success.

According to a 2018 Moody's rating action, Dighton has a limited-size tax base with above average wealth and income levels, a healthy financial position with conservative management, low debt burden, and manageable pension liability. There is a desire for economic development that fits the character of the community to help fund town services, support infrastructure needs, provide additional local employment for residents, and allow the Town to plan for the future.



### Important Links:

- [Town of Dighton](#)
- [Dighton General By-Laws](#)
- [2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant](#)
- [FY19 Audit Report](#)
- [Dighton Master Plan 2014](#)
- [Sewer Extension Feasibility Study](#)
- [Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings](#)
- [Organizational Chart](#)
- [Monthly Newsletters](#)
- [Dighton News and Events Portal](#)

## Economic and Community Development

Dighton began as a town of small, independent, largely self-sufficient farms. Due to its proximity to the Taunton River, it later became a port of entry, attracting shipbuilding, manufacturing industries, and cotton mills. Today, Dighton is



primarily a residential suburb retaining much of its small-town rural character. Many of the farms have been sold for residential construction; there are currently four 40B developments in progress. There are a number of industries providing employment in Town including Manheim, Advanced Looseleaf Technologies, Armin Innovative Products, Zatec, Draka Cableteq USA and Dighton Power. A former Raytheon facility has some commercial tenants with room for more. There are three solar farms with PILOT agreements in Dighton and a recreational and medical cannabis retail dispensary that is scheduled to open in spring 2021. Most

commercial development in Town is along Route 138, with some development on Route 44 and Williams Street. Dighton has grown rapidly over the past few decades, increasing from a population of 5,352 in 1980 to over 8,000 today. Route 44 affords the Town access to Providence and Taunton and Route 138 provides access to Route 24 and to Route 44 into Taunton.

The next Town Administrator must be adept in attracting economic development projects and businesses that fit and complement Dighton's character. There is limited sewer infrastructure, mainly on Route 138, and the lack of town-wide sewers can be perceived as an impediment by some developers. Preferred Town Administrator candidates must be able to explain the benefits of locating in Dighton to industry and then to achieve community buy-in.

## Open Space and Recreation

Preservation of open and recreational spaces is a priority for Dighton residents. The Town has a land area of 22.8 square miles. The Taunton River claims much bordering space along the eastern part of Town and provides beautiful scenic views. Dighton is also home to portions of the Segregansett, Three-Mile, and Coles rivers as well as Broad Cove, a popular fishing spot. Sweets Knoll State Park, a 56-acre park, includes picnic areas, a small boat launch, fishing, and a walking path. The Dighton Trails Committee was established in 2018 and has a vision of building multimodal trail infrastructure that will integrate with the existing South Coast Bikeway through Somerset into Taunton, and developing local trails using existing inventory of parks and Town-owned properties. There are various playgrounds and sports fields as well as tennis and basketball courts located in Dighton. The community also provides the Osprey Landing boat ramp. Working collaboratively to help create a thoughtful and acceptable balance of open space and appropriate economic development is critical.

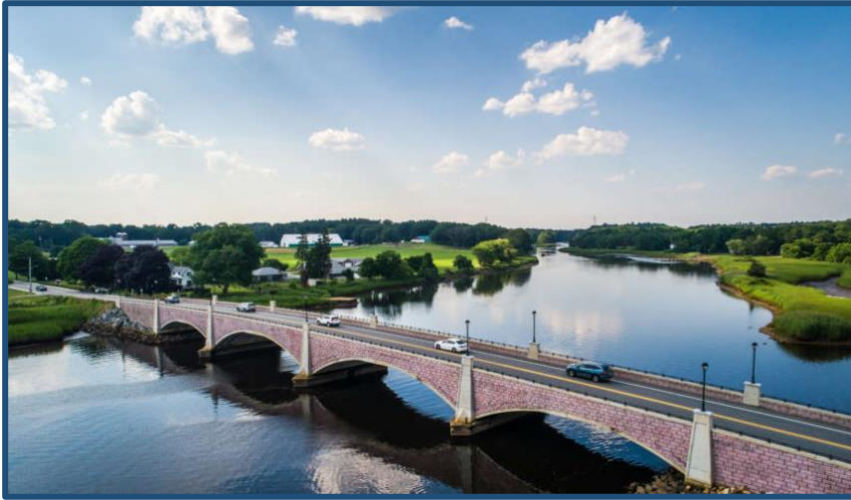
## Current Projects

- Sidewalk and roadway work in adherence with Complete Streets program guidelines.
- Ongoing Green Communities projects.
- Ongoing reconstruction and repairs to culverts and bridges.
- Implementation of a capital outlay process and a facility management plan.
- Continuation of the North Dighton playground project.

## Potential Projects

- Sewer expansion along Route 138 to allow for increased economic development.
- Construction of a new highway department facility.
- Exploration of the renovation or replacement of the Town's public library.
- Renovation or construction of a new fire station.





## The Ideal Candidate

- Master's degree in public administration, business administration, management, or a related field preferred; bachelor's degree required.
- Skilled in financial management and budgeting, economic development, personnel management, and collective bargaining.
- Experience as a Town Administrator/Town Manager is preferred.
- Demonstrated skill in grant writing and grant administration required.
- Knowledge of municipal procurement.
- Skilled communicator; active listener; articulate.
- Demonstrated success in working collaboratively with staff, boards, committees, and citizens.
- Ability to focus on broad goals.
- Forward thinking; strategic.
- Ability to bring people together; consensus builder.
- Supportive of transparency in government.
- Ability to build trust; approachable.
- Respectful; fair but firm.
- Team-oriented; calm under pressure.
- Able to provide strong and inspirational leadership.
- Engages and empowers staff to share ideas.
- Tenacious; focused; proactive.
- Enjoys engaging with the community.
- Excellent follow-through; strong work ethic.
- Technologically savvy.
- Experience with ADA requirements.
- Exhibits excellent attention to detail.
- Diplomatic; strong conflict resolution skills.
- Values diversity and inclusiveness.
- Ability to multi-task.

## How To Apply

Send cover letter and résumé via email, in a single PDF, by December 4, 2020, 5:00 p.m. EST to:

[Apply@communityparadigm.com](mailto:Apply@communityparadigm.com)

**Subject: Dighton  
Town Administrator Search**

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal  
Community Paradigm Associates  
[Blynch@communityparadigm.com](mailto:Blynch@communityparadigm.com)  
978-621-6733

*The Town of Dighton, Mass., is a smoke free, drug free, and EOE/AA employer.*