

Halifax, MA – Town Administrator



Position Statement

The Town of Halifax is situated in Southeastern Massachusetts, has a population of 7,749, per the 2020 census, and is considered by residents to be the Heart of Plymouth County. Halifax is rich in history and was first settled



by Europeans, most notably the Bosworth family from Bosworth Fields, England, in 1669; and grew with the lumber and agriculture industries. The Town officially separated from the town of Plympton and incorporated in 1734 by an act of the General Court; and was named in honor of Halifax, West Yorkshire, England.

Halifax has many picturesque ponds and lakes; is a family-friendly, largely residential community. The Town offers the charm of living in a small New England town; yet is close to the many amenities of the South Shore, including only 12 miles to visit historic Plymouth and 28 miles to enjoy Boston. Halifax abounds in recreational opportunities and open space. It is the type of

community where neighbors know and help one another and value local spirit, activities, and events.

Halifax is 17.3 square miles, including 16.1 square miles of land and 1.2 square miles of water. Halifax is bordered by Hanson to the north, Pembroke to the northeast, Plympton to the southeast, Middleborough to the southwest, and Bridgewater and East Bridgewater to the west. Much of Halifax's geography is dictated by water. Bodies of water include Silver Lake, Robbins Pond, Indian Trail Reservoir, Burrage Pond and East and West Monponsett Ponds.

Halifax is seeking a dedicated and responsive Town Administrator, who understands small towns, to provide collaborative leadership to help advance the community's goals. Creative, forward-thinking municipal administrators/managers with strong financial acumen, excellent communication skills, human resources, economic development, and procurement experience are encouraged to apply. The successful candidate must have a bachelor's degree (master's preferred), preferably in public administration, business administration, management, or a related field.

Annual salary: \$125K+/- DOQ. The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package that is competitive with other Massachusetts towns, including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience. Residency is not required.

ECONOMY

Halifax consists primarily of residential properties with approximately 560 local businesses. The Town supports appropriate economic development that does not detract from its character. A few of the larger employers in Halifax include a major nationwide retailer and a well-known supermarket chain. According to [Metro South Chamber of Commerce](#) data, Halifax has a labor force of 4,576 people and 2.7% unemployment. The median household income is \$92,774. Halifax's total assessed value in FY22 was approximately \$1.16 billion, according to the [Massachusetts Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services](#), which represents an increase of 1.3% from FY21. Residential properties account for approximately 90.4% of the Town's total assessed value, while commercial properties account for approximately 5.3%, industrial for about 2.6%, and personal property for approximately 1.7%. The median FY22 residential property value was \$411,324. While the Town's year-round population is primarily middle-income, 4.9% of residents are living in households with incomes below the poverty level.

CENSUS DATA

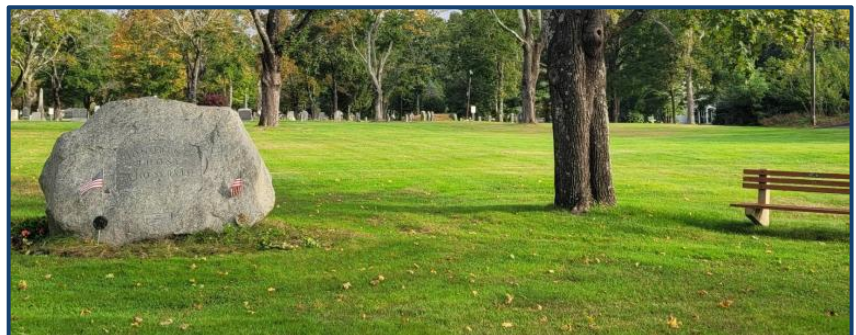
According to the [U.S. Census estimates](#) for 2015-2019, the Town of Halifax's racial composition is 96.2% white, 2.3% Black or African American, .7% Hispanic or Latino, .4% Asian, .4% two or more races, and .1% American Indian and Alaska Native. The median household annual income is approximately \$92,774, which is higher than the state median household annual income of \$81,215. The Town is demographically like the state. For example, the under-18 years cohort in Halifax is at 21.2% in the 2019 U.S. Census estimates versus 19.6% for the state. And, in the under-5 years cohort, Halifax has 4.8% of its population, while the state has 5.2%. Similarly, in the 65 years and over cohort estimate, Halifax is at 15.2% while the Commonwealth's is 17%. The median age of Halifax residents is estimated to be at 41.7 years, while the median age for the state is 39.5 years.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

[Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital](#), an acute care 164-bed complex in Plymouth and [Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital](#), an acute care 216-bed complex in Brockton, serve Halifax residents. Halifax is approximately 35 miles from Logan Airport in Boston and 54 miles to T. F. Green airport in Providence, Rhode Island. Routes 58 and 106 are Halifax's main highways; and the Kingston-Route 3 line of the MBTA Commuter Rail has a station near Route 36. There are several banks, medical offices, places of worship, small grocery stores and local businesses, restaurants, and two major supermarket and retail chains.

Important Links:

- [Town of Halifax](#)
- [By-Laws and Halifax Town Code](#)
- [Halifax Master Plan](#)
- [Annual Town Reports](#)
- [Fiscal Year Budgets](#)
- [Financial Policies](#)
- [Financial Audits](#)
- [FY21 OPEB Report](#)
- [Route 106 Corridor Study](#)
- [Integrated Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness and Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)
- [Housing Production Plan](#)



Government

Halifax's executive branch of government is a three-member Board of Selectmen that serves as the governing body of the Town. Board members are elected to staggered three-year terms to oversee all matters impacting the interest and welfare of the community. They are responsible for ensuring that Town government is responsive to and reflective of community needs and values.

The Board of Selectmen appoints the Town Administrator to oversee the general operation of Town governance; implement the broad policy directives of the Board of Selectmen for the attainment of yearly goals; and to conduct the daily administration of the affairs of the Town. Specifically, the Town Administrator administers and coordinates Town departments, personnel, and programs for the effective delivery of governmental services to the Halifax's residents.

In accordance with its Town Code and By-Laws, Halifax has an Open Town Meeting form of government. Town By-Laws state that Annual Town Meeting shall be held on the second Monday of May each year and can only be opened with a quorum of at least 100 registered voters. Special Town Meetings may be convened as deemed necessary by the Board of Selectmen or petition of voters. There are approximately 6,041 registered voters in Halifax.



Halifax elects three representatives to serve on the Silver Lake School Committee of which the Town is a member. The Town also has an elected five-member Halifax Elementary School Committee. Other elected positions include the Assessor, Library Trustees, Planning Board, Board of Health, Moderator, Park Commissioner, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer/Collector, Housing Authority and Water Commissioner. Additionally, the Town appoints citizens to numerous boards and commissions to conduct municipal operations, including the Capital Planning and Finance Committees. A listing of the various committees and the respective appointing authorities is contained within the Halifax 2020 Annual Report.

EDUCATION

Halifax is a member of the Silver Lake Regional School District, along with Plympton and Kingston. The three towns operate their own elementary schools, with middle school students attending Silver Lake Regional Middle School and high school students attending Silver Lake Regional High School. Halifax Elementary School is located between the library and fire station in the town center and serves students from K-6. Approximately 96% of Halifax's residents ages 25 and older have a high school diploma. About 31% of residents ages 25 and older hold a bachelor's degree or higher advanced degree.

WATER & PUBLIC WORKS

Halifax does not have a Wastewater Treatment Facility or a Department of Public Works. Various individual departments, including Highway, Tree Warden, Water Department, Municipal and School Building Committee, and Recycling and Solid Waste Department, have responsibility for and jurisdiction over programs and activities that would normally fall under a Department of Public Works.

HOUSING

There are approximately 2,904 housing units in Halifax, with about 90% comprised of owner-occupied units and 1.6% subsidized housing inventory (SHI) units. The median price of a single-family home from 2015 – 2019, per the U.S. Census, was \$299,300; while the FY22 median residential value of owner-occupied homes has increased to \$411,324.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Halifax Open Space and Recreation priorities, as excerpted from the [2010 Master Plan](#), identify preserving the Town's natural, historic, and scenic character; protecting the Town's many bodies of water, ponds, streams, and flood plains; expanding recreational opportunities for all residents; developing open space linkages with adjacent communities, and encouraging broader citizen participation in planning, conservation, and recreation activities. Halifax currently offers numerous outdoor active and passive recreation opportunities, including Burrage Pond, Monponsett Beaches, Striar Conservancy, Richmond Park, Halifax Town Green, Halifax Open Play Space, and more.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The [Halifax Police Department](#) works diligently to protect and serve the community; and has 12 full-time, one part-time, and eight on-call members. The [Halifax Fire Department](#) has 12 full-time and 19 on-call members whose mission is to protect the life and property of residents, businesses, and visitors through the efficient and effective delivery of fire suppression, emergency medical services and community risk reduction programs. Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services utilize the Regional Old Colony Communications Center for dispatch.



HOLMES PUBLIC LIBRARY & COUNCIL ON AGING

The [Holmes Public Library](#) is popular with residents who enjoy its various collections as well as its abundant programming for all ages and numerous events throughout the year. The [Halifax Council on Aging](#) provides a wide variety of services for older persons, disabled persons of all ages and their caregivers, and others in need of services and referrals.

Finances

Halifax's FY22 operating budget is approximately \$25.85 million, with 53% of the budget dedicated to the public school system. The FY22 Police Department budget is approximately \$1.5 million; Fire Department \$1.43 million; Water enterprise \$793,386; Highway Department \$947,346; and Recycling enterprise \$411,014. Property taxes account for the major source of revenue for the Town, generating approximately \$18.85 million in revenue, which is 71% of the budget. The Town stabilization fund has a balance of \$929,541, plus \$300,000 appropriated at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. Halifax has budgeted conservatively over the years and has a healthy free cash balance. Additional financial information is available on the [Town website](#).

Halifax has an FY21 Moody's rating of Aa+, which reflects the Town's strong financial position and healthy residential tax base with approximately 90% of the Town's assessed value attributable to residential uses. The FY22 tax rate was set at a single rate of \$16.01 per \$1,000 valuation.

Challenges and Opportunities

The Town of Halifax is fortunate that elected and appointed officials as well as dedicated Town employees and volunteer board members strive to ensure Town government is proactively implementing best practices and serving the community. There are, however, some challenges, and opportunities for growth, in the areas of capital and strategic planning, human resources, and economic development, including:

- Development of a detailed five-year capital plan and long-term strategic plan to guide Town planning and ensure Town departments are working toward unified goals.
- Aging Municipal buildings, including the fire station and council on aging, need significant repair and/or replacement.
- Continuing RFP process to purchase identified land for a future public safety/municipal complex and sourcing funding is important as the Town does not currently have land to accommodate it.
- Formalizing human resources processes to ensure best practices, consistency, and equitable compensation and benefits for all employees.
- Undertaking a wage and personnel study to ensure Halifax is offering a competitive wage for employees with the goal of maintaining staff and succession planning.
- Beginning effort to update Master Plan and other proactive planning initiatives and tools.
- Researching grant opportunities to help fund economic development needs, infrastructure improvements planning initiatives and more.

Upcoming Projects:

- *Town Meeting and Town Report Preparation*
- *Complete Streets Program*
- *Electricity Aggregation*
- *Green Communities Participation and Reporting*
- *Municipal Vulnerability Planning*
- *Solar Field on Capped Landfill RFP*
- *ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan*
- *Council on Aging Building Project*
- *Town Website Renewal*
- *Master Planning Initiative*
- *Pine Street Bridge Repairs RFP*
- *LED Streetlight Conversion*





Halifax

Massachusetts

The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree required (Master's preferred).
- Experience as a Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator, or head of a significant department in a complex municipal organization, or equivalent.
- Strong skills in economic development, community planning, human resources, financial management and budgeting, municipal procurement, strategic planning, and grant writing.
- Superior communication skills, verbal and written.
- Active listener, adept multi-tasker, and skilled at team building; supportive, respectful, approachable.
- Enjoys working collaboratively with the Board, staff, Town departments, elected & appointed officials, and volunteers.
- Able to build trust and morale within Town government and the community.
- Delegates effectively. Provides mentoring, guidance, support, and motivation to employees.
- Knowledgeable of municipal best practices and familiarity with municipal law.
- Understanding of small-town governance and culture.
- Leads by example; strategic, motivated, diplomatic, forward-thinking, and organized.
- Ability to negotiate compromise and/or find consensus.
- Embraces becoming actively engaged in community.
- Interacts with colleagues throughout the region and in professional organizations.

How To Apply

Interested applicants should send a résumé and cover letter, in confidence, by January 28, 2022, 3:00 p.m. EST, to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

Subject: Halifax Town Administrator

Submit materials via a single PDF

Cover letters and résumés will be reviewed according to the outlined qualifications. Finalists will be contacted for references and approval of background reviews before selections are publicly advanced to the Halifax Board of Selectmen. The Board will interview finalists and select the Town Administrator.

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal
Community Paradigm Associates

BLynch@communityparadigm.com

The Town of Halifax is an Equal Opportunity Employer.