



Providence COO Melissa Malone named Natick town administrator

By Daily News Staff

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NATICK - The chief operating officer for the city of Providence was chosen Wednesday night as Natick's new town administrator.

Selectmen appointed Melissa Malone after considering three finalists for the job, including Acting Town Administrator Bill Chenard and former Deputy Town Administrator/Finance Michael Walters Young.

"The board is excited that Ms. Malone will bring her diverse legal, financial, and municipal experience and expertise to lead Natick as we address the challenges and opportunities in both the short and longerterm," Board Chairman Jonathan Freedman said in a statement after the meeting.

Malone, who has a law degree, served in her current position since August 2017. Prior to becoming a lawyer she worked as an investment professional for Fidelity Investments, according to the statement. She later worked as a litigation associate at Barton and Gilman, LLP and held several positions with the State of Rhode Island, including assistant director of member services, general counsel/ deputy treasurer and municipal finance council. She opened M2 Consulting in 2016. The firm focused on strategy to create and build momentum for growth opportunities.

Chenard will resume his role as deputy town manager for operation when Malone takes over as town administrator, according to Patricia O'Neil, executive assistant to the Board of Selectmen.

Malone replaces Martha White, who planned to retire at the end of June. White and selectmen, however, agreed upon an early departure late last year. She will be available to assist and will continue to be paid through the end of June.

During her Feb. 15 interview with selectmen, Malone said she sees opportunities in Natick to keep and attract companies and pursue public-private partnerships.

"My management style is very direct and I believe that is appreciated," she said. "It gives

people a clear sense of what they have to do and helps everyone work toward a common goal.”

She highlighted her ability to walk into a room and listen. “I can do that and I do that every single day,” she told selectmen.

A nine-member screening committee appointed in August narrowed the list of candidates to the three finalists. Selectmen thanked committee members for their service and commended the result of their work. The final choice was not an easy one.

“The decision was difficult because the caliber of the finalists was strong,” the statement said, “and the board had the deeply-felt responsibility to identify the next leader of Natick during a dynamic time in which the town has different paths to pursue.”

“With many priorities and limited resources, the Board of Selectmen is confident that Ms. Malone has the experience, skills, and ability to lead the town for years to come.”



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