

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT AND PERSONNEL BOARD 2017 ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

The Norwood Personnel Board and the Department of Human Resources are pleased to submit their annual report for calendar year 2017.

The Personnel Board (Board) is a five-member board appointed jointly by the Town Moderator, and the Chairs of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Commission. It was established in accordance with Article XXXIX of the Town of Norwood By-laws approved at the 2003 Town Meeting. The Board generally meets monthly and meetings are posted and open to the public. Article XXXIX also established a Department of Human Resources (HR) and the position of Human Resources Director.

In calendar year 2017, the Board and the HR Department celebrated their fifteenth-year anniversary by continuing in the development of policies and procedures that would be in the best interest of the Town, its employees and applicants.

In January 2017, the Board published a list of objectives to both the Board of Selectmen and Finance Commission. This is meant to indicate the Board's priorities for the year and to take input from these key elected officials. Tasks are also added during the year based on operational needs. In support of these tasks and objectives, the Board tracks all activities and publishes a report that indicates the status of all activities.

Classifications: The Board completed four new classification requests in 2017. One for the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development, one for the Department of Information Technology and two for the Board of Health Drug Free Communities Grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A request for a new position with the Norwood Airport was received in December of 2017 and work related to this request will continue into 2018.

Department of Community Planning & Economic Development:

- Assistant Director of Community Planning & Economic Development – Grade N08, 40 hours per week

Public Health Department:

- Program Director – Grade M11, 40 hours per week
- Program Coordinator – Grade N6 PTn 15 hours per week

Department of Information Technology:

- Assistant Director of Information Technology – Grade M14, 40 hours per week

Reclassifications: The Board heard four requests for reclassifications. These requests included:

- Executive Assistant to the Assistant Town Manager & Risk Management Administrator from grade N07 to N09
- Clerical Coordinator to the NPD Bureau of Criminal Investigations Unit, from grade PS05 to PS06
- Water Meter Repairman, Department of Public Works, no change to classification

- Director of Information Technology, from grade M17 to grade M18

The Board also updated the position descriptions of Norwood Police Department titles Detective Sergeant and Investigations Commander at the request of the Police Chief and General Manager.

The Board also continued its work throughout the year in reviewing positions descriptions to ensure proper classification as exempt or non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The Board uses a structured *Point-Factor System*, which was implemented by HRS Services, Inc. in 2002 / 2003, to rate positions. This structured point-factor system ensures equity among classification ratings. It can take up to several months to complete a reclassification request. This can depend on the proposed depth of change and the time it may take to complete an outside salary survey with our comparable communities, if applicable.

Policies and Procedures:

Much of the work of the Board is in the continuation of developing and updating personnel policies for the Town and support procedures for the HR Department. The Board utilizes a standardized format and numbering system for all personnel policies, which groups them by category. All adopted Town personnel policies are public documents and are available on the Town website www.norwoodma.gov.

Policy Updates:

The Board spent a significant amount of time in 2017 reviewing existing policies for operational or statutory updates, some included:

- (1) **Paid Sick Leave Policy [#P-304]** – This policy was reviewed upon a request from a department head. Following this review, a clarification was made to appointing authorities and departments heads regarding sections relating to paid sick leave use due to illness or injury of household members.
- (2) **Personnel Records Policy [#P-402]** – Legal changes in 2016 to the Personnel Records law would be taking effect in 2017. As a result, the Board and HR Director consulted with Town Counsel and held a hearing in March of 2017 to review the existing policy. The updated policy was adopted by the Board and disseminated town wide.
- (3) **Workplace Smoke-Free Policy [#P-409]** – The Board held a joint hearing with the Board of Health in March of 2017 to review this policy following changes in the laws regarding recreational marijuana use. The policy and the applicable laws were reviewed by Town Counsel prior to the hearing and all recommendations were taken into consideration by both boards. Minor changes were made and the policy was adopted as updated and disseminated town wide.

(4) Alcohol & Drug Policy [#P-404] – The Board requested a review of this policy by Town Counsel to determine if there was a need for updates based on changes in the law regarding recreational marijuana use and medical marijuana use. After the review and a hearing held by the Board, a reference to legal changes in Massachusetts was added at the recommendation of town counsel. The policy was adopted with updated and disseminated town wide.

(5) Family and Medical Leave Act Policy [#P-301] – the Board directed one member to work with the HR Director and Town Counsel to review for possible statutory updates. Based on the recommendations of this team, the Board held a hearing in March of 2017 and adopted the changes as recommended. The updated policy was disseminated town wide.

(6) FLSA Policy and FLSA Exempt Test [#P-104] – With the guidance of Town Counsel, the Board updated this policy by placing the “exempt test” in line with federal guidelines and the test template from the Department of Labor website.

New Polices:

The Board adopted one new policy in 2017:

(1) Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy [#P504] – At the direction of the Board, the Board Chairman and HR Director worked with the Town Accountant to develop a policy that would set a clear standard for employee business related expense reimbursement. This policy provides guidelines and standardized forms that applicable employees can use to process authorized work related expenses. The Board very much appreciated the guidance, expertise and willingness to work together, given to the team, by the Town Accountant in making this important process and policy possible.

Comparable Communities Project:

In 2017, the Board and the Human Resources Department also worked on a review of the Town’s comparable community list for the purposes of personnel matters such as organizational structure, wages, position descriptions, benefits, policy development, etc.

It had come to the attention of the Board over the last few years that the communities which had been determined as comparable in 2002 and 2003 might no longer be appropriate. Through the HR Director, the Board coordinated the venture with the help of members of the Finance Commission, Board of Selectmen and Personnel Board, the General Manager, Assistant General Manager, and the Town Accountant. The committee met over several months and reviewed data which had been collected by the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services. Data components from the original study were used and the team agreed to add other relevant components such as “total budget” and other budget related factors. The data was calculated using a method in excel that would result in a pool of communities that were comparable to Norwood based on these factors. The committee agreed to keep communities outside of the 495 belt out of the pool in order to

bring the list down to the most comparable communities within reasonable distance and a list that would not exceed 14. After much discussion, 12 data components were agreed upon, and with the regional restriction of route 495, the result was a list of 14 updated comparable communities. The committee recommended this group of communities and the methodology which was used to identify them, to the full Personnel Board, and the list was adopted and disseminated town wide. It was an important task that was ten years overdue. The Personnel Board would like to thank all of the dedicated people who assisted in this important process.

The Board also met with the Library Director and sought out recommendations from the Library Board of Trustees to establish a comparable list of communities appropriate to library services. The Board considered all of the factors as they were presented and adopted a list of communities for the purpose of library comparison as well.

The Board is continuing to work with the Light Department to establish a final list of comparable municipal light departments to use in the future. This will continue into 2018.

Continued policy work:

The Board started various policy work and other personnel related projects in 2017 that will continue in 2018. Some included:

- Injury Leave of Absence Policy
- Workers compensation and Safety Policy
- Parental Leave Policy
- Benefit Value chart

The Board also began discussing implications on operations and on policy development which may be caused by the pending changes in the law in 2018 such as the *Act to Establish Pay Equity* and the *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act*. It is important to begin this type of review prior to any changes in the law.

The Board continued its work in creating several guideline documents related to personnel issues. Guidelines are documents that seek to simplify a set of processes with regards to an established practice. Guidelines are not compulsory or mandated, but are still an important part of the entire process:

- **Guideline G-101** is a document under development to assist Appointing Authorities with Business Continuity Planning. This will be a tool for the Town to ensure key departments have a plan in place to operate if a key employee suddenly departs. The Town Treasurer/Collector and the Town Clerk and Accountant have provided their departmental plans, which will be used as the template for all key employee positions. As this is a business operational matter, the Board has referred this to the Board of Selectmen.
- **Guideline G-102** is a document under development to assist Appointing Authorities and Department Heads in identifying potential annual or biannual goals and objectives for employees. This is meant as a tool to potentially document what the different work groups should stay focused on.

Other Major PB Activities:

- **ORG Charts** - The Board updated and published the General Government organization charts in December 2017 for each department, in a continuing effort to keep the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Commission abreast of all Town positions. Department organization charts identify each position by name and title to ensure there is a match with the department budget/pink sheets. This document also helps the Board with classification and position description issues, as well as the Board of Selectmen and Finance Commission with the backfilling of vacant positions. This document is also available on the Town's website and reflects the approved FY18 budget. The Board's review of information provided by the Town Accountant enables the Board to be in alignment regarding headcount figures. Norwood is one of the only communities with a published organizational chart of this depth in the state.
- **FLSA Exempt Test** – Based on updated U.S Department of labor regulations, all 49 Exempt positions in general government had to be reviewed to ensure they still were Exempt. This whole process was confusing, as a federal judge issued a nation-wide injunction to the issued regulations, which were to take effect December 1, 2016. However, Town Counsel advised the Personnel Board to complete the task anyway, because if the injunction was listed, the effect could be retroactive. In addition, the incoming federal administration had indicated a roll-back of these same regulations, which would mean a whole or partial retreat of the decisions made. In any case, to ensure that the Town would be compliance with the Federal Department of Labor regarding the Federal Labor Standards Act, the Board indicates on every position description whether they are Exempt or Non-exempt from certain wage and overtime provisions. This process started in 2016 and is a continuous project for the Board.
- **Town Benefits Value Chart** - To assist the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Commission, the Board is updating a previously developed *Town Benefits Value Chart*. The Board reviews the current level of benefits and determines each benefit value/obligation, as contributed by the Town. This is not an exercise in determining the appropriate level of benefits, only the range value of the total benefits provided by the Town for each position. This exercise includes the provided benefits of Sick Time, Vacation Time, Retirement, Medical, Dental, Longevity, Holidays, Funeral, Stipends and Clothing. A finalization of this effort has been delayed until 2018.

The Board would like to thank Selectmen Thomas Maloney for his support and coordination in 2017. Selectmen Maloney was designated as the Board of Selectmen liaison to the Personnel Board. Mr. Maloney takes the extra time to work with the Personnel Board and attend monthly meetings, in addition to all of the time he already commits to the Selectmen. The partnership has turned out to be a successful coordination of

these two important boards. We thank you Mr. Maloney for your assistance in making 2017 another successful year for the Personnel Board.

And finally, a last special thank you is presented to Mr. David Hajjar. David served as the Chairman of the Personnel Board for over ten years. He was an incredibly dedicated member of the Board and was known for spearheading some of the greatest actions taken by the Board. He was the voice of the Personnel Board and a public advocate for its work. David was successfully elected to the Finance Commission in 2017 and as a result had to step down from the Personnel Board. He will be missed, but the experience he gained as Chairman of the Personnel Board, his skill in understanding governmental operations and his passion for public service and getting things done, will surely benefit the Finance Commission and our community. David, you will be missed but the Board and the HR Department wishes you the best as you continue to serve our community in your new capacity.

Recruitment and Staffing:

The HR Department had an extremely busy year of recruitment and staffing. With the retirement of many long time employees and several management positions, the HR Department coordinated the advertising, recruiting, interviewing and background checks of non-union and union vacancies in over 14 departments, marking this, yet again, one of the busiest recruitment years since the development of the Department. Some of those departments included:

- Office of the General Manager
- Morrill Memorial Library
- Light and Broadband Department
- Department of Public Works
- Information Technology Department
- Council on Aging
- Police Department
- Purchasing Department
- Fire Department
- Veteran's Office
- Community Planning and Economic Development Department
- Recreation Department
- Treasurer/Collectors Office

Some notable retirements and recruitment efforts included the following positions:

General Manager:

It goes without saying that the biggest recruitment process managed by the Department to date has been the recruitment of a successor General Manager following the retirement of Mr. John Carroll. After serving the Town of Norwood as General Manager since 1978, John notified the Board of Selectmen of his intent to retire in December 2017. John was a veteran of the U.S. Army and served in various government roles, including with the Town, for over 55 years.

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) began the recruitment process by instructing the HR Department to conduct a salary and benefit survey and begin the process to procure a recruitment firm to assist the Department. The BOS designated the Chairman, Mr. William Plasko to coordinate as liaison to the HR Department and recruitment firm, and authorized him to designate a secondary board member to assist. Mr. Plasko designated Selectmen Thomas Maloney. Mr. Plasko and Mr. Maloney quickly worked with the HR Director to develop a bid to secure a recruitment firm. *Community Paradigm Associates, LLC.* was selected through this process and the HR Director, and BOS recruitment liaisons Mr. Plasko and Mr. Maloney, worked closely with primary representatives of the firm, Mr. Bernard Lynch and his associate, Sharon Flaherty. Through this team effort, an updated salary range for the position, updated position description, position advertisements and a community profile was created. Mr. Lynch, the HR Director and the BOS liaisons, held a community forum to gain insight from community members. The forum was well received and the feedback was very much appreciated by the BOS, the HR Director and Mr. Lynch. Mr. Lynch also conducted interviews with town leaders and department heads in order to gain insight into the future management needs of the Town. All of this information was compiled into a *Community Profile*. Advertisements and the community profile were placed in various state and national locations and recruitment efforts aggressively began. The HR Department also set up a webpage specific to the recruitment process, keeping those interested updated on the progress and allowing anyone in the community an opportunity to provide feedback. The vacancy notice was made available on September 15, 2017 and the deadline for applications was October 11, 2017.

The Town received twenty-eight applications of interest. During the posting period, the BOS designated a *Preliminary Screening Committee* made up of the two BOS liaisons and five other members from the community. The committee members all represented significant experience in the field of management, public administration, human resources and recruitment. The committee met on several occasions to review resumes and develop a professional selection process. The committee conducted seven interviews over a period of two days and recommended three finalists to the Board. The HR Department coordinated reference checks and thorough background checks of the three finalists, and the Board conducted final interviews on Saturday, November 4, 2017. The following Tuesday, the Board voted to select Mr. Tony Mazucco to succeed as the Town's next General Manager. Tony comes to the Town with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Bridgewater State University. Tony has served as a Town Administrator and Assistant City Manager and he is a nationally credentialed public manager through the *International City/County Management Association*. He is also a member of the *Massachusetts Municipal Management Association* having served on the MMMA program committee, strategic planning committee and civic education committee.

John Carroll retired on December 15, 2017 and Tony Mazucco started the following Monday, on December 17th. John served the town honorably for 39 years and was celebrated as he retired after a long and successful career. Tony was welcomed to the Norwood team the following week and John and Tony worked closely together to ensure that it was a smooth transition.

The Board of Selectmen held a wonderful swearing in ceremony for Tony Mazucco on Monday, December 17, 2017. The event was very well attended by Town and School employees and managers, members of appointed and elected boards and committees, members of the local business community, town managers and administrators from neighboring towns and from across the commonwealth, local legislators and of course residents from the Norwood community, among many others. The event started with the presentation of the Norwood and Commonwealth flags by the Norwood Police Department Honor Guard. The audience was then led in the *Pledge of Allegiance* by Ted Mulvehill, the Norwood Veteran's Director. The *National Anthem* was sung by Norwood High School Junior, Ms. Giovana Rodriguez and an invocation was given by Archpriest Joseph Kimmett of St. George Orthodox Church of Norwood. Mr. Carroll gave an inspirational speech welcoming Tony Mazucco to Norwood, essentially passing the "torch" to his successor. Mr. Plasko provided positive remarks regarding John's service, the recruitment process, and shared his confidence in Tony Mazucco's ability to be our next leader. The event ended with a very heartfelt speech by Tony and refreshments were provided immediately after. It was a wonderful way to welcome our new General Manager.

Recreation Director:

Jerry Miller served the Town of Norwood for over 40 years, significantly contributing to the Recreation Department and the community. Jerry had been a staple part of the Norwood community since his days at Norwood High School and later in his professional recreation career starting in 1969. Some of his major accomplishments included starting the Norwood Summer Fest Series, the Post Prom Party, the NHS Last Hooray, the Farmer's Market, the Halloween Haunted House, Norwood Day, the Rubber Ducky Run and the Fishing Derby events, as well as completely revamping and creating a Master Plan for all Norwood Fields, with the Coakley Field topping the list. Following Jerry's retirement, the Town Manager promoted Travis Farley to Recreation Director. After serving under Jerry for over a year as the Program Director, Travis gained the experience and knowledge of the Department and the recreational needs of the Norwood community. Travis brings over 16 years of related experience in various roles including the Assistant Superintendent of Recreation and Parks for the Town of Marblehead, the Assistant Athletic Business Manager for the Boston University Department of Athletics and the Athletics and Recreation Operations Manager for the Fitchburg State University Athletics Department. Travis holds a Bachelor's Degree from Plymouth State University in Interdisciplinary Studies and a Master of Science Degree in Sports Management from Springfield College.

Recreation Program Director:

The promotion of Travis Farley left the Recreation Program Director position vacant. With an overwhelming amount of applications the selection committee decided on Catherine "Katie" Seastedt. Katie comes to the Town from Mount Ida College in Newton where she was the Program Specialist for first year students; she was also the Summer Programs Director for the Town of Hull Recreation Department. She holds a dual Bachelor's Degree from Curry College in Communications and Education and a Master's Degree from Northeastern University in Higher Education Administration. Katie had also worked closely with the Brockton Mayor's Office in community outreach and youth council prior to coming to Norwood. She is a welcomed addition to the Recreation Department team.

Treasurer/Collector:

In 2017, the Town welcomed Mark Good as the new Treasurer/Collector. Mr. Good has over 25 years of municipal experience. He has worked for the City of Malden, Town of Walpole and Town of Weston. Mr. Good holds a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration from Indiana University. He is an active member in multiple state associations such as, the Massachusetts Treasurer and Collector Associations, the Massachusetts Associations of Government and Finance, and Norfolk County Government Finance Association. His vast experience has been a great strength to the Town's finance team and business operations. Having had so many years of experience in municipal operations, Mark was able to hit the ground running. He is a great addition to the Town of Norwood management team.

Assistant Director of Information Technology:

Technology is one of the fastest growing markets in the world. The Information Technology Department added the position of Assistant IT Director in 2017, and selected Mr. Sean Warnock to be the first person to fill this role. Mr. Warnock is a Norwood Resident with experience in both desktop and systems management. Mr. Warnock holds a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from Franklin Pierce College. He has experience in both federal government and private information systems. Mr. Warnock is a great addition to the Norwood IT team and in his short time has already made his mark on improved internal operations and excellent computer user customer service.

Assistant Director of Community Planning and Economic Development:

Mr. Patrick Deschenes was hired as the Town's first Assistant Director for Community Planning and Economic Development. Mr. Deschenes came to the Town from the City of Worcester where he was the GIS Technician for the Worcester Department of Public Works. He also has experience working for the City of Springfield Planning and Economic Development Department and a private engineering firm. He graduated from Westfield University with a Bachelor's Degree in Regional Planning and then earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from

Clark University. Mr. Deschenes is a great addition to the CPED and the Town.

Retirements:

The HR Department would like to thank the following employees for their years of dedicated service, all who retired in 2017:

- Patricia Baltadonis, DPW Administrative Assistant , 24 years
- Martin Baker, Police Lieutenant, 32 Years
- Kathy Bane, Fire Department Business Manager, 31 years
- Richard Breen, Firefighter, 34 years
- Martha Buckley, Veteran Administrative Assistant, 52 years
- John Carroll, General Manager, 39 years
- Robert Curran, Norwood Light General Foreman, 37 years
- Robert Doucette, Police Sergeant, 34 years
- Daniel Kehoe, Police Officer, 31 years
- Joseph Prendergast, DPW Mechanic, 13 years
- Jerry Miller, Recreation Director, 44 years
- Phillip Morrison, Firefighter, 34 years
- Claire Murphy, Planning Board Admin. Asst., 20 years
- Karen Murphy, Traffic Supervisor, 28 years
- Thomas Starr, Firefighter, 34 years

These represent just some of the major retirements in 2017 but together tally up almost 500 years of service to the Town of Norwood.

Public Service is one of the highest honors and these employees went above and beyond for the Town of Norwood. They will certainly be missed and we wish them a happy, healthy and relaxing retirement.

Other recruitment related activities:

The HR Department also continued its effort in maintaining and improving upon the Town's background check program and new employee orientation and onboarding efforts in 2017. Our commitment is very strong in ensuring that all candidates exceed our expectations, as you can see by the credentials of some of our significant hires in 2017. We are also committed to ensuring that we properly check the suitability and credentials of all new hires.

In 2017, the HR Department also worked with the IT Department staff and other members of the management team to put in place a progressive skill assessment program which can be used to determine if candidates for employment meet the skill requirements needed for the positions to which they are applying. The skill assessment is a web based program which can be individualized based on the needs of the hiring department and skill requirements. The HR department would like to thank the IT Department for its assistance in implementing this important assessment tool.

Employee Relations and Labor Relations:

The HR Director acts a member of the Town's negotiating team, providing support in terms of research, strategy and labor law compliance. Additionally, the Director provides advice and

counsel to department heads, supervisors and union officials to assist in effective employee relations. The HR Director also provides occasional assistance to the School Department in areas such as EAP related matters, health insurance, workers' compensation, labor relations and labor law compliance.

As it relates to Labor Relations, 2017 included the important process to negotiate eight successor collective bargaining agreements for FY18 – FY20. While the agreements did not expire until June 30, 2017, the HR Department begins the process of researching cost of living adjustments, changes in municipal employee benefits and paid leave time, and other labor relations matters in anticipation of beginning the bargaining process. The first to begin the bargaining process for FY18-FY20 was the Norwood Morrill Memorial Library. The Library employees were previously represented by a private association, but in 2017 they began being represented as the fifth general government chapter of Local 1451 of AFSCME (the American Federation of School, County and Municipal Employees). The new relationship proved fruitful as the Library was able to quickly settle a successor agreement well in advance of the expiration of the current agreement. By the end of the 2017 calendar year, the management negotiating team settled all AFSCME units and two police department units. The only remaining contract not yet settled for FY18-20 at the close of calendar year was the contract covering the Norwood Firefighters. We are hopeful that continued meetings will result in a settlement early in 2018.

Compliance Efforts:

The HR Department staff also worked on various projects to audit the town's compliance with federal and state labor law such as continue to work to update all labor law posting requirements and disseminating information regarding the changes to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, Personnel Records laws, the Conflict of Interest Law and the Open Meeting Law, Fair Labor Standards Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as other mandatory updates.

Compliance efforts in 2017, in preparation of implementation in 2018, relate to the *Act to Establish Pay Equity* and the *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act*.

In 2017, the HR Department once again implemented the yearly process to put the entire town in compliance with the Massachusetts *Conflict of Interest Law*. This requires that all employees as they are defined by the law (which includes board and commission members and employees of the School Department), are in acknowledgement of the Town's *Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law* and take an online test created by the Massachusetts Ethics Commission. The acknowledgement requirement is yearly, but the test component is required every other year. In 2017, the Town was due to be in compliance with both components. It is quite a process to coordinate, but an important one that the HR Department is committed to. We began the compliance efforts in early 2017 with the goal of town wide compliance by the spring. All compliance efforts

were successfully met throughout town and recorded for auditing purposes.

Employee Health and Dental Insurance Benefits:

In 2017, the Town was in its third year of a successor six year agreement with the Public Employee Committee to offer health insurance to its employees and retirees through the Group Insurance Commission (GIC). The GIC originally only provided health insurance to state departments and agencies prior to 2007 but now offers both health and dental insurance to municipalities.

The GIC plan offerings include 12 Active employee/Non Medicare plans through 6 providers. They include Fallon Health, Harvard Pilgrim, Health New England, Neighborhood Health Plan, Tufts Health Plan and Unicare. The Town's most popular plans include Harvard Pilgrim, Tufts and most recently Unicare. On the Medicare side, the GIC offers plans through 5 providers. These include Fallon Health, Harvard Pilgrim, Health New England, Tufts Health Plan and Unicare. The Town's most popular choice for Medicare plans is the Harvard Pilgrim Medicare Enhance Plan. The Town's average monthly enrollment, including actives and retirees, is 1350 subscribers. The average active employee/non Medicare individual and family monthly enrollment is 762. The average Medicare monthly enrollment is 588. The Town and School Departments Dental Insurance is offered through Delta Dental of Massachusetts and enrollment averages at 1255 subscribers monthly.

During the July 2017 open enrollment period, in an effort to control both the state and local budgets and control health care costs the GIC froze enrollment in 3 of their active/Non Medicare plan offerings including Fallon Health Select Care, Harvard Pilgrim Independence Plans and Tufts Navigator. Subscribers already enrolled in these plans were allowed to remain enrolled but new enrollment was not permitted. In an effort to control prescription drug costs the GIC renegotiated their contract with CVS Caremark. The GIC continued to encourage their subscribers to take action to lower their out of pocket costs. The suggested subscribers work with their Primary Care Provider, use urgent care facilities instead of emergency room services, eat healthy and exercise regularly, avoid stress and quit smoking.

The Town's Benefits Administrator continued processing our retirees that are turning 65 by moving them onto the GIC Medicare plans. As 10,000 "baby boomers" turn 65 every day in the U.S., the increase in the Town's Medicare plan enrollment has continued to increase. This change has modified the makeup of the town's enrollment requiring continuous review and close monitoring. As our employees retire the Town hires new employees and this year has been a busy year. The Benefits Administrator reviews the GIC health insurance plans and our Delta Dental plan with all new employees to help them choose the best plan for their medical and dental needs.

The Benefits Administrator communicates with the GIC and Delta Dental on a regular basis to provide our employees and retirees with information on plans, rates, programs and changes in benefits. The Benefits Administrator also stays informed by maintaining communication with the Social Security Administration, Massachusetts Teacher Retirement Board and with our consulting firm on regulatory and statutory changes ensuring compliance. In an effort to stay informed, the Benefits Administrator frequently communicates with other surrounding GIC communities.

Employee Wellness Program:

The Wellness portion of our program had great success this year. The HR Department partnered up with the Recreation Department to provide a discount for employees to utilize the Recreation Department wellness and health programs. The full cost was paid to the Recreation Department but offset by wellness funds available through the HR Department. As a result, wellness opportunities are provided to Town employees, enhancing their health, well-being and productivity, while enrollment in Recreation programs is encouraged and funds spent on wellness supports another town Department. It was a wonderful collaboration and the HR Department extends a special thank you to the Recreation Department for its professionalism and continued support of the employee wellness program.

The HR Department also continued its partnership up with the *Vanderbilt Club* in Norwood to provide discounted health club memberships to employees. Participating employees were required to meet certain utilization expectations to continue in the program. In 2017, approximately 86 employees took advantage of the program tallying up over 2200 days of healthy activity through the *Vanderbilt Club*. This collaborative was yet again another great success. It provided an incentive to employees to stay healthy and active while also supporting a Norwood business. A special thank you is extended to the *Vanderbilt Club* and its managers and employees in supporting the Town's wellness initiatives.

Employees were offered the opportunity to take advantage of a discounted membership to Universal Power Yoga of Norwood. It is always our goal to support local Norwood business when we partner up for wellness programs.

Town of Norwood employees also participated in the *Treats-4-Troops Halloween Candy Donation* program. The HR Department partnered up with *Veteran Affairs Hospital* located in West Roxbury. The goal of the program is to remove excess Halloween candy from children (and town offices!) while supporting our troops. It is a great platform to help multiple causes while promoting healthy choices. Town employees resisted the urge to eat leftover candy by donating over 12 lbs. to this fun program, which is more than doubled from last year.

The HR Department also coordinated a dental hygiene awareness event in October of 2017. October is Dental Hygiene Awareness month and we wanted to encourage employees and

their families to maintain good dental hygiene. Bags of dental hygiene information, a tooth brush donated by *Delta Dental of Massachusetts* and travel size dental care products were provided to employees.

The HR Coordinator also attended various trainings this year and continues to stay connected to other municipal representatives who work to ensure the advancement of wellness initiatives and training programs for municipal employees.

The HR Director sits on the Board of Directors for the Massachusetts Municipal Personnel Association. Through this group, the Director stays abreast of all areas of municipal human resources management, attends and conducts various trainings in the area of municipal human resources and employee and labor relations, acts as a voice and advocate for the Town's interest in the area of human resources management and works to ensure the advancement of best practices in this field throughout the commonwealth. The HR Director also holds progressive membership roles in the International Public Management Association for Human Resources, National Public Employer Labor Relations Association, Northeast Human Resources Association, and the Society for Human Resources Management.

In 2017, the Massachusetts Collectors Treasurers Association (MTCA) requested that the Norwood HR Director return to present at the association's annual conference in June. The HR Director presented along with Mary Beth Bernard, the Assistant Town Administrator of the Town of Foxborough last year to present two opening session trainings which included various HR and Payroll Management related topics. The program was a wonderful event and a great partnership between two important fields of municipal expertise. MTCA has requested that the Norwood HR Director return again in 2018 to do another presentation.

New this year, the HR Director volunteered to present at the Norfolk County Finance Officers Association. This presentation focused on the DO's and DON'Ts of interviewing and on municipal management best practices. It was a fun event and a good opportunity to network with finance officers and other public administrators in Norfolk County.

The HR Director also volunteered to read to a 2nd grade class at the Oldham School as part of the *Read Across America* Program. The class was a perfect fit for her because the teacher had a "jobs" focus in the classroom. Students could complete a "job application" and be assigned various jobs within the classroom. They had to indicate why they were a good match for the classroom job. It was a perfect opportunity for the HR Director to explain to the students what she does for work and speak to them about the value of public service.

Strategic Planning:

The HR Department continued to work on strategies in 2017 that include streamlining services, making effective service

changes with department heads, increasing communication, positive labor relations, ethical performance and behavior, dealing with workplace conflict, and empowering employees to increase productivity levels and positive morale. These efforts will continue more aggressively in 2018 and will include various manager and supervisor trainings and the implementation of effective internal controls, training and policies. The HR Department also did a good amount of research into personnel data management and utilizing website mechanisms to better manage recruitment and applicant tracking in 2018.

Senior Tax Work Off Program (STWOP):

This year the HR Department was able to place six seniors in various departments. This program was adopted at Special Town Meeting in March of 2004. The program has set income limitations and earning caps set by regulation and Town Meeting. Over the years, the HR Department has noticed a decline in applications from seniors. Many have noted that the income limitations are too low for many to qualify and the amount which can be earned towards a reduction in property tax is also too low. In 2017, the HR Department began researching the use of this program internally and externally in other communities. A recommendation was made to the Board of Selectmen to make changes to the program based on the result. The income limitations were increased and the total amount a senior can earn was increased. We hope in 2018 to see more department and senior participation in the program as a result of the changes.

The Personnel Board and Human Resources Department would like to thank the General Manager, Assistant General Manager, Finance Commission, Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting Members who continue their support of a professional Department of Human Resources for the Town of Norwood.

The HR Director, HR Coordinator and Benefits Administrator thank the employees and public servants of Norwood, as well as Norwood citizens, for their continued support as we celebrate our 15th year anniversary as a Town Department in 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Pizzi, Director of Human Resources
Patricia Pardi, Benefits Administrator
Chelsey Jennette, Human Resources Coordinator

Personnel Board

Patterson Riley, Chairman
Willard Krasnow, Vice-Chairman
John E. Taylor, member
Gregg Giambanco, member