



August 19, 2020

To: Town Council

From: Town Administrator

Subj: TOWN ADMINISTRATOR GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR 2020/21

1. I have attached goals and priorities I am currently concentrated on. This is provided for your consideration during your discussion of Town Council assigned goals and priorities for the next fiscal year.

Very respectfully,

NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL – Produce a comprehensive set of programs and policies that guide how we grow our community in a manner which conserves and protects in perpetuity the abundant natural resources that sustain us and enhance our quality of life.

- Continue to work with adjacent towns state, federal, NGO and private organizations to develop effective natural resource protection plans and strategies.
- Support periodic beach clean-ups and other natural resource maintenance activities in cooperation relevant volunteer organizations.
- Continue to implement the recommendations of Portsmouth’s RIPDES Phase II Storm water Management Program Plan.
- Review Portsmouth Wastewater Management District and Storm Water Management ordinances for their effectiveness in abating non-point source pollution of our soils.

RECREATION

GOAL – Organize a system of high quality well-maintained active recreation facilities and passive recreation areas sufficient to meet the ongoing needs of present and future citizens of Portsmouth.

- Develop a comprehensive recreation master plan to identify long and short-term needs for recreational programs and facilities.
- Establish an efficient and accessible scheduling and permitting system for recreational facilities use.
- Pursue state, federal, and private funding opportunities for recreation facilities maintenance.
- Work with RIDEM, CRMC and other state agencies on a long-term plan to address issues at the Weaver Cove Boat Ramp and the Old Stone Bridge.
- Investigate the development of an indoor, multi-purpose Community Recreation Center.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL – Achieve a self-sustaining level of public awareness in promoting historic and cultural heritage as a vital part of Portsmouth’s community character and quality of life.

- Seek grants and other sources of funding to improve the Town Hall storage environment for Portsmouth’s town records and archives.
- Review the Town’s Stone Wall and Tree Ordinances for adequate enforcement provisions and amend as necessary.
- As opportunities arise, partner with governmental and private funding sources to purchase development rights to farmlands and other properties of historic significance.

HOUSING

GOAL – Provide a range of housing types that meet the needs of present and future residents of all economic status and household groups.

- Continue to waive all building permit fees for the construction Low Moderate-Income housing units.

- Explore restructuring the present Senior Center site to include affordable senior housing plus the Senior Center at the same site.
- Continue the Town's property tax abatement program for our elderly and impoverished residents.
- Work with local non-profit housing providers to identify collaborative projects and programs that will lead to more affordable or low-moderate income housing units.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL – Achieve a high and growing standard of living for Portsmouth's citizens and entrepreneurs by empowering a 21st century workforce to match a 21st century economy.

- Develop a 5-year Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Work closely with the Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance (SENEDIA), which is the primary defense Industry group that advocates for defense industry support in the area.
- Work closely with Navy officials to ensure that excessing of Navy property is handled consistent with the needs of businesses in the Melville area.
- Evaluate development plans for the West Side Defense Highway (i.e., the "Burma Road") and Stringham Road to ensure any plans are consistent with the support of local marine, technology, defense and other businesses.
- Collaborate in and prioritize the development of high-speed, broad band internet to all of Aquidneck Island.
- Work with RIDOT to implement traffic improvements to both East and West Main Roads.
- Create a "Handbook for Starting a Business in Portsmouth" as an aid to prospective business applicants.
- Work with state partners to identify grant opportunities for Portsmouth's businesses.

AGRICULTURE

GOAL – Achieve a balance of land uses that accommodate non-agricultural development pressure all the while preserving the remaining parcels of land containing prime farmland soils for intensive agricultural uses.

- Maintain the Municipal Farm Tax exemption program.
- Continue to work with the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council to facilitate approvals for aquaculture permits in Portsmouth waters.
- Continue to support the Portsmouth Water and Fire District's water rates and availability policy applicable to farmers enrolled in the local Farm Tax Assessment Program.
- Reinstate the Restricted Account in the General Fund to receive a portion of the Real Estate Conveyance Tax dedicated to the acquisition, development and protection of the natural, agricultural and recreational resources of the Town of Portsmouth.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

GOAL – Deliver cost-effective, high-quality municipal services and ensure that all public facilities are well-maintained.

- Develop comprehensive and detailed maintenance and/or phased replacement/divestiture plans for all structures, facilities and town-owned land.
- Inventory all Town-owned buildings and facilities for ADA compliance and follow-up with compliance repairs if needed.
- Prepare the annual budget and tax rate calculation in Q4 of Portsmouth's fiscal year.
- Prepare and annually update a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). All improvements to the Town's facilities and assets are to be prioritized through the CIP.
- Pursue Pension Plan, OPEB and employee healthcare reforms in a fair and equitable manner.
- Evaluate annual budgets with the goal of restoring and maintaining Portsmouth's Fund Balance at a minimum of 16%.
- Evaluate annual budgets with the goal of maintaining Portsmouth's bond rating at current Standard & Poor's AAA and Moody's AA2 ratings.
- Continuously evaluate fiscal management, tax collection methods and record keeping procedures for ways to improve efficiency and transparency of government.
- Review and update the Impact Fee Ordinance.
- Pursue Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for projects that meet program guidelines.
- Pursue advanced technological means to improve transparency of government and communications with citizens.
- Review all Town Boards and Committees for mission, performance, and consistency of by-laws.
- Continue the road paving and maintenance program as a top priority.
- Review Town's a Solid Waste and Recycling plans.
- Investigate the establishment of a primary emergency shelter within the Town to adequately meet the needs of Portsmouth residents.
- Update the Portsmouth Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).
- Pursue Federal and State accreditation for the Portsmouth Police Department.

ENERGY

GOAL – Produce a set of programs and policies that can for the efficient use of energy, the development of sustainable energy resources and the utilization of energy-efficient transportation options.

- Continue to study energy usage by municipal buildings, equipment and vehicles to determine where improvements in energy conservation and efficiency can be realized.
- Work with Federal, State, regional and utility partners to capitalize on grants and other incentives to help fund public and private energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

WATER SUPPLY

GOAL – Deliver a cost-effective set of programs, policies and cooperative initiatives that protect and preserve both the quality and quantity of Portsmouth's drinking water supply.

- Continue to work with the Portsmouth Water & Fire District, Newport Water and Naval Station Newport regarding future water distribution in areas along the west side that are outside the PWFD District.

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL – Deliver a cost-effective network of town-owned and maintained roadways that allow for the safe and efficient circulation of vehicular traffic throughout the Town.

- Provide a safe town-owned roadway network through maintenance of infrastructure, consistent road surface conditions, and plowing and sanding of roads during and after winter storms.
- Establish complete streets ordinance.
- Establish and maintain well-defined crosswalk pavement markings and enforce regulations for motorists to STOP for pedestrians in crosswalks on all town roads.
- Institute a Pavement Management Program and continue to fund annual paving budgets in order to maintain an average Road Surface Rating (RSR) of 72.
- Review and update all Zoning Ordinance, Land Use and Subdivision regulations and Design Review Guidelines having to do with roadway design for procedural and regulatory consistency.
- Work with RIDOT to improve pedestrian safety with special emphasis on crosswalks and pedestrian controlled traffic lights and lighting on all state roads in Portsmouth.
- Participate as an active partner in the development of the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for projects of local and regional significance.
- Work with RIDOT to accelerate major road maintenance and improvement programs within Portsmouth, particularly the north-south through traffic routes of East and West Main Roads.
- Collaborate with RIDOT in the design of left-turn lanes, road diets and/or other traffic calming and safety measures on all state-owned principal and minor arterial roadways in Portsmouth.
- Collaborate with RIDOT to prioritize enhanced roadway conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists in future transportation projects.
- Work with the RIDOT to prioritize improvements to existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and to include such facilities as part of any upgrade to state-owned roads in Portsmouth.
- Work with RIDOT to provide sidewalks or a multi-mode path and crosswalks on East and West Main Roads where appropriate and feasible, with special attention to public transit stops.

NATURAL HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

GOAL – Achieve a level of economic, societal and ecological resilience in our built and natural environment that enables Portsmouth to recover quickly from the effects of natural hazards and climate change and minimizes long-term community disruption.

- Work to identify ways to mitigate future impacts and increase resilience to flooding, storm surge and sea level rise along vulnerable areas.
- Establish a category in the 5-year Capital Improvement Program specifically for community resilience and hazard mitigation projects.

LANDUSE

GOAL – Achieve a balanced, orderly and harmonious land use pattern that preserves historic and cultural resources, supports economic stability, maintains neighborhood integrity and protects the quality of our natural environment.

- Work with regional partners to study the condition of sewer and water infrastructure and develop options for their proposed transfer from Navy ownership.

- Continue to work with the Portsmouth Water & Fire District, Newport Water and Naval Station Newport regarding future water distribution in areas along the west side that are outside the PWFD District.
- Develop an open space acquisition plan.
- As opportunities arise, partner with governmental and private funding sources to purchase development rights to farmlands and other properties of historic significance.