

PAXTON, Massachusetts



Town
Administrator

Profile

Introduction

The Town of Paxton presently seeks to hire a Town Administrator. The Board of Selectmen has appointed a screening committee to undertake the task of recruiting applicants and performing initial screening interviews. This recruitment profile was created by the committee members with input from the current Town Administrator as well as Paxton residents and employees. This profile includes essential information about the town with links to additional facts for prospective candidates. It is also intended to capture the qualities being sought in a new Town Administrator as well as some of the challenges that the next Town Administrator will face.

The Town of Paxton

According to the [2020 United States Census Bureau](#), the population of Paxton is approximately 5,004. Paxton was settled in 1748 and incorporated in 1765, with roots as a rural farming community. Over the years, Paxton has been described as an idyllic rural oasis. Currently, Paxton is mostly a bedroom community with little industry to contribute to the tax base. Despite regional development pressure, Paxton has maintained its rural character and remains home to several natural resource areas and extensive trail systems including [Moore State Park](#) and Eames Pond, Illig's Pond, [Muir Meadow, Treasure Valley Scout Reservation](#), and the [Moose Hill Wildlife Management Area](#). Moore State Park is particularly popular for hikers, photographers, and bloggers during the blooming season for rhododendrons and mountain laurels and is home to a recently renovated covered bridge and several waterfalls.

The [Town of Paxton](#) is conveniently located near Worcester. In addition to Worcester, it borders Holden, Spencer, Leicester, Rutland and Oakham. Routes 56, 31 and Scenic Byway route 122 all intersect in the quaint center of Paxton where the triangular town common lies, and where many of the Town's activities take place.

Major town buildings include the Town Hall, John Bauer Senior Center, [Richards Memorial Library](#), Public Safety Complex, DPW facility and the [Paxton Center School](#). There is a 55+ community located on Grove Street known as [The Hills at Paxton Village](#). Paxton has its own water enterprise as well as a [municipal light department](#).

The median household income in [2019](#) was approximately \$120,000. The average single family home is [currently](#) valued at approximately \$440,000. Additional data on the Town's demographic trends can be found in the [Paxton Community Snapshot](#) from the [Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission](#).

A 2006 survey of Paxton residents determined that the three most popular reasons they chose to live in Paxton were its rural character, low crime rate and open space.

Form of Government

Paxton has an [open town meeting form of government](#) and a 3-person Board of Selectmen who serve as the executive officers of the Town. The Board of Selectmen are the appointing body for the Town Administrator. Pursuant to [Ch. 122 of the Acts of 2013](#), the Paxton Town Administrator is the chief administrative officer of the town and is responsible to the Board of Selectmen for the proper operation of Town affairs.

The Town Administrator appoints the Treasurer, Collector, Town Clerk, Town Accountant, Town Services Coordinator and Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen, as well as all department heads and officers, subordinates and employees except those of the school district, fire department, or those who are under the supervision of elected officials, boards or commissions of the Town. Paxton currently has 103 town employees. The Town Administrator is the primary procurement officer for the Town.

Schools

Paxton is a member of the [Wachusett Regional School District \(WRSD\)](#), serving grades pre-k through 12. It is the largest school district in Massachusetts by area, and consists of the five towns of Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, and Sterling. The [Paxton Center School](#) is the elementary school for Paxton students in grades kindergarten through grade 8 and is located right near the center of Paxton. The [Wachusett Regional High School](#) for Paxton students in grades 9 through 12 is located in Holden.

In addition, Paxton students have the opportunity to attend the [Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School](#) which opened in 1972. Located in Charlton, MA, this school serves students in grades 9 through 12 from ten communities, offering educational opportunities in twenty-three careers.

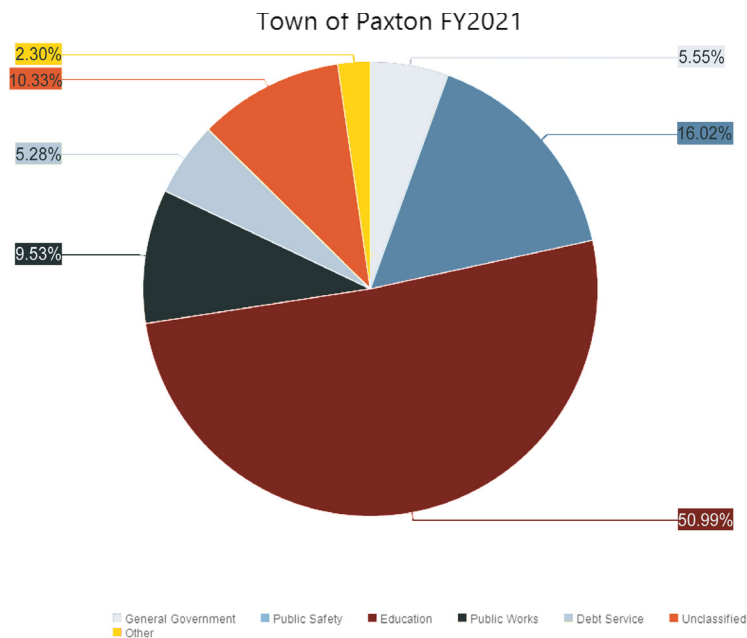
Paxton is currently represented on the Wachusett Regional School District School Committee by two elected residents and the Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational

Technical School District School Committee with two elected residents.

The Town is also proud to be the home of [Anna Maria College](#). Anna Maria College integrates education with real-life career preparation. The quality academic programs include majors such as art and music therapy, business, criminal justice, education, fire science, legal studies, nursing, paramedic science, psychology, social work and sport management. The Town has a history of collaborating with the college, including providing campus policing on a contractual basis.

Town Finances

Paxton has achieved a strong municipal bond rating of Aa3 with Moody's Investor Services. The Town's annual budget for FY22 is \$14,711,430. The tax rate is \$18.98 per \$1,000 and FY21 revenue was allocated as per to the following chart:



This and more information regarding the details of the Town's financial picture can be found on the [DLS dashboard](#).

Challenges for the Next Town Administrator

Financial Management

Paxton experiences limited local growth and has a primarily residential tax base, which burdens residential taxpayers. The Town Administrator will need to fiscally aware and work toward:

- Increasing the financial stability of the town,
- Building stabilization funds,
- Identifying areas for potential budget savings and

- opportunities for revenue growth,
- Identifying areas for potential budget shortfalls throughout the fiscal year,
- Aggressively seeking and maintaining grant opportunities, and
- Securing funding for infrastructure and capital needs.

Infrastructure Improvement:

Aging infrastructure throughout town needs to be addressed including the senior center, town hall, water supply lines, and information technology. A successful candidate will:

- Work with the departments of the town to identify potential infrastructure needs and develop plans for improvement.
- Improve and streamline IT infrastructure including cyber security.

Town Planning:

The Town does not have a town planner; therefore, town planning activities fall on the Town Administrator, who will need to:

- Work to fund, update and implement the Master Plan, with the assistance of the Planning Board, and
- Work with the Business Bylaw Committee to review opportunities for Paxton to become more business friendly.

Stormwater Management:

[The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System \(NPDES\)](#) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit requires permittees to develop and implement a comprehensive Storm Water Management Program (SWMP). The next Town Administrator will:

- Work with the DPW Director to establish what resources are needed to comply with the MS4 Stormwater Permit, and
- Set out a plan to maintain MS4 compliance.

DPW Facility Replacement/Refurbishment:

The current DPW facility is no longer sufficient for the town's needs. The next Town Administrator will need to:

- Work with the DPW Facility Committee to develop an appropriate plan to replace or refurbish the DPW Facility.
- Seek funding approval to move the project to fruition.

School Budget:

The WRSD budget combined with the state funding formula has resulted in assessment increases to the Town in excess of 2.5% for several years, leading to inequities of resource allocation. The next Town Administrator will need to:

- Coordinate with the other Wachusett Regional School District Town Administrators to discuss individual town challenges with funding the school budget and communicate this information to the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee.
- Work with town departments and the finance committee to reconcile overall budget deficits.

Candidate Qualifications

Personal

The Town of Paxton seeks a Town Administrator who is:

- A self-starter with strong organizational, leadership, collaboration and problem-solving skills who can work with minimal supervision.
- Able to demonstrate the highest integrity and ethical standards in all interactions and actions with officials, volunteers, and members of the community.
- Able to work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Board, town employees, and members of the Town.
- Able to support personnel and maintain current talent for longevity and smooth operations.
- Able to work strategically to address both short-term needs of the town and build a long-term plan.
- Willing and able to engage with the community about needs, initiatives, policies, and concerns, including attending meetings and events off-hours.
- Comfortable with public speaking and possesses strong presentation skills.
- Committed to open transparency, confidentiality, and mutual respect.
- Willing to engage in professional development opportunities and learn new skills.

Professional

The Town of Paxton seeks a Town Administrator who has:

- Significant experience (at least 5 years) as a manager or administrator in a municipal environment, or state/ government agency.
- A graduate degree in public administration or a related field.
- Extensive experience in finance, budgeting, and management.
- A track record of grant writing, administration, and management.
- Experience hiring, supporting, evaluating, and managing employees with a focus on staff development and maintaining a positive work environment.
- Ability to negotiate contracts and agreements.
- Thorough knowledge of Massachusetts municipal laws, policies, and regulations.

- Excellent communication skills with a high level of attention to detail.
- Capability to leverage digital tools including Microsoft Office applications, website maintenance and social media management.
- Direct experience with collective bargaining agreements as the principal negotiator.
- Experience with preparing and reviewing reports, budgets, warrants, meeting articles, and other documents.

Salary & Benefits

The currently budgeted salary for the town administrator is \$94,000+, and salary will be negotiable for the next fiscal year. The Town offers a competitive benefits package and participates in the [Worcester Regional Retirement System](#).

Timeline

Applications will be accepted until noontime on **February 28th, 2022**.

How to Apply

Apply by forwarding your resume along with a cover letter describing the qualifications and experiences that make you a good fit for this position and for the Town of Paxton to:

Donna Graf-Parsons:
dparsons@townofpaxton.net.

All submission materials will be held in confidence.

Questions?

Please contact:
Donna Graf-Parsons 508-754-7638 Ext. 10