



Town Council Special Meeting  
May 7, 2016  
10:00am



**A** quorum being duly present, Council President Jessica Rapp Grassetti called the May 7, 2016, Town Council meeting to order at 10:00 a.-m. in the Hearing Room of Town Hall, 367 Main St., Hyannis, MA.

An announcement was made by President Rapp Grassetti regarding the meeting being televised live and questioning if anyone was actively taping the session to please make their presence known. This session is recorded and broadcast on Channel 18.

**PRESENT:** Frederick Chirigotis, James Crocker, Jr., William Crocker, Jr., Jennifer Cullum, Sara Cushing, Debra Dagwan, John Flores, Jessica Rapp Grassetti, Paul Hebert, Eric Steinhilber, Philip Wallace. **Absent:** John Norman, James Tinsley, Jr.,

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Rapp Grassetti

**INTERVIEW CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION OF TOWN MANAGER:**

**Nicole Ard**

**President Rapp Grassetti** - Please tell us about yourself and in particular how your experience in terms of education and training and prior employment qualifies you for this position?

**Ard:** stated her accomplishments, her managerial experience as a City Manager in Public Administration and her extensive education, including training to be a Town Manager. Brings a passion for local government, wants to help the transition in Barnstable.

**Councilor Flores** – In particular, the profile piece for the position listed 8 separate categories where the town manager will face some challenges. Would you speak to those issues and tell us how you would lead, manage and oversee operations in those areas bringing all to resolution at a level of excellence?

**Ard:** Bring an understanding of budgeting, strategic goals, making sure we stay on task, served as a public information officer, traditional activities for community outreach, some of the same issues regarding water quality, protection of habitat.

Follow Up: Please speak to the issues from Sandusky, Ohio and leaving that position of Town Manager?

**Ard:** worked successfully with a city commission, had a positive evaluation. Afterward a newly elected city commission decided to terminate me; it was political; not due to a lack of professionalism. Inaccuracies sent to the newspaper, the Councilor did not correct the information sent to the newspapers.

**Councilor Chirigotis** - Barnstable citizens expect a high level of service but also expect the Town to be managed in a financially prudent way. If it becomes necessary, how would you guide the Council and the community in making difficult choices with regard to budget reductions?

**Ard:** Stay on task, support community outreach through newspaper, agencies, leadership, follow the ICMA code of ethics, support the public, and keep the public trust. Envision, working with the community, make sure a strategic plan is in place, that the staff has resources it needs, make sure expectations are clear.

**Councilor Cullum-** The opioid crisis has left many communities reeling from gaps in services and unfunded extra costs to taxpayers in the way of enforcement and social services. What experiences have you had in your careers that have readied you to handle Barnstable's unique problems with respect to the homeless population and addiction?

**Ard:** Worked with the social services organizations, has served on many committees that deal with the same issues, it is a work in progress.

**Councilor W. Crocker** Who should be the voice of the town with respect to communications with the following: Department Heads, employees, residents and the media?

**Ard:** The role of the manager is to support the Council, and make sure that everyone is informed including the staff and the public.

**Councilor Dagwan** - There are 7 villages in the Town of Barnstable some with more diverse populations than others. What are some of those examples of your interactions and experiences, working with such diverse populations?

**Ard:** Bring the experience of working in many communities of varying sizes, having community forums, budget meetings, getting out into the public

**Vice President Steinhilber-** Describe your approach to working with your Board of Selectmen or Town Council. How do you communicate with the elected officials? Do you have any particular strategies for promoting the effectiveness of the elected body?

**Ard:** Meet with public officials to gain an understanding of each person's agendas; bi-weekly reports televised; keep lines of communication open with staff and elected officials.

**Councilor Cushing** - What do you see as the biggest challenges in working with a Town Council-Town Manager form of government?

**Ard:** I don't find it a challenge

**Councilor Hebert** - Today many cities and towns are faced with the challenges surrounding homelessness, and substance abuse. Share with us your knowledge and comprehension, of these current but important topics, affecting our social environment?

**Ard:** Supported through grants and having worked with social agencies, workers that are in the field; re-entry programs appropriate resources

**President Rapp Grassetti** - We have asked you many questions on a range of topics from leadership, management and operations experience to issues dealing with Staff, Communications, Finances, Economics, Environmental and Social issues. As the potential Town Manager realizing and understanding that you work for and at the pleasure of the Town Council and like all of us on the Town Council ultimately for the

citizens of Barnstable, please give us your closing comments about this opportunity and any questions you might have?

**Ard:** Thanked the council for the opportunity, has extensive experience in communities undergoing change; worked in communities that have an seasonal visitors; supported legislation; passenger rail service; knows the issues faced by small harbor front communities with aging infrastructure.

### **Troy Clarkson**

**President Rapp Grasseti** - Please tell us about yourself and in particular how your experience in terms of education and training and prior employment qualifies you for this position?

**Clarkson:** moved to the Cape in the early 70's, returned to the Falmouth area after graduating from college and has remained on the Cape; served in an elected official in Falmouth, passionate about local government. Clarkson passed out his record of accomplishments from the Town of Hanover.

**Councilor Flores** – In particular, the profile piece for the position listed 8 separate categories where the town manager will face some challenges. Would you speak to those issues and tell us how you would lead, manage and oversee operations in those areas bringing all to resolution at a level of excellence?

**Clarkson:** explained the difference between leadership and management. Would employ motivation to implement the goals of the Town Council; would work directly with the business community to stimulate economic development, create an environment where business can do business; meet on a weekly basis with the Department Heads.

**Councilor Chirigotis** - Barnstable citizens expect a high level of service but also expect the Town to be managed in a financially prudent way. If it becomes necessary, how would you guide the Council and the community in making difficult choices with regard to budget reductions?

**Clarkson:** Economy is cyclical, need a budget policy implemented by the Town Manager, based on revenues. Maintain a commitment to the public not overestimate and under perform. Sound budget policy passed by the Council, ensuring we are all operating from the same place.

**Councilor Cullum-** The opioid crisis has left many communities reeling from gaps in services and unfunded extra costs to taxpayers in the way of enforcement and social services. What experiences have you had in your careers that have readied you to handle Barnstable's unique problems with respect to the homeless population and addiction?

**Clarkson:** Addiction is the most important public health issue of our time. The solution has to be a multi disciplinary approach. Insurance companies need to provide long term recovery programs; we need to work with the medical community and the Police Department.

**Councilor W. Crocker** Who should be the voice of the town with respect to communications with the following: Department Heads, employees, residents and the media?

**Clarkson:** If the Town Council makes it a policy that the Town Council President is the voice of the Town, then that is the policy. If you are informed as to what is happening in town hall; then we can both do it. Making sure the Council is in the loop, and everyone is getting the same information. Have experience with the media; we would

decide how to make the communication flow. Success is based on relationships; trust and respect flowing both ways.

**Councilor Dagwan** - There are 7 villages in the Town of Barnstable some with more diverse populations than others. What are some of those examples of your interactions and experiences, working with such diverse populations?

**Clarkson:** Experience comes from my time as a Selectman in Falmouth, which has a very diverse population; we have to be responsive to the community as a whole. Have had traditional public policy training; need to know how public policies will impact our community. Work with the private sector to provide multigenerational housing, as seniors age out of their houses to create a community.

**Vice President Steinhilber-** Describe your approach to working with your Board of Selectmen or Town Council. How do you communicate with the elected officials? Do you have any particular strategies for promoting the effectiveness of the elected body?

**Clarkson:** Making sure each of the Councilor's knows what is going on in town hall, by sending out a report every Friday afternoon. Working on a new program in Hanover to embrace technology and creating paperless meetings to selectmen. Among our goals we need to communicate in a consistent manner.

**Councilor Cushing** - What do you see as the biggest challenges in working with a Town Council-Town Manager form of government?

**Clarkson:** Council/Manager form of government challenge is keeping the public informed and to reach out to the public. Council needs to work on policies that reflect the values of the Town Council, and then set the towns priorities on each area of concern. The Town Manager needs to move those policies along.

**Councilor Hebert** - Today many cities and towns are faced with the challenges surrounding homelessness, and substance abuse. Share with us your knowledge and comprehension, of these current but important topics, affecting our social environment?

**Clarkson:** Very familiar with the way addiction can impact families; there is a link between homelessness and addiction. Narcan is a piece to the puzzle; these are urban issues; need to work with the non profits and move the shelter to a different location with the resources; addiction treatment and law enforcement is needed. No easy answers.

**President Rapp Grassetti** - We have asked you many questions on a range of topics from leadership, management and operations experience to issues dealing with Staff, Communications, Finances, Economics, Environmental and Social issues. As the potential Town Manager realizing and understanding that you work for and at the pleasure of the Town Council and like all of us on the Town Council ultimately for the citizens of Barnstable, please give us your closing comments about this opportunity and any questions you might have?

**Clarkson:** Thank you for a great process. Hope to work with all of you; my career has led me to this moment. Understand the challenges that face this community and have the tools to bring people together to work towards a solution. Despite the challenges, this community is financially stable and thriving. Please look through the information provided, before you make your vote.

**Mark Ells**

**President Rapp Grasseti** - Please tell us about yourself and in particular how your experience in terms of education and training and prior employment qualifies you for this position?

**Ells:** It is an honor to be considered for this position, I have been the Assistant Town Manager for the past three years; have worked for the Town of Barnstable since 1989; and to further my understanding of municipal government, returned to school to build skills in communication, concentrating on state and local laws.

**Councilor Flores** – In particular, the profile piece for the position listed 8 separate categories where the town manager will face some challenges. Would you speak to those issues and tell us how you would lead, manage and oversee operations in those areas bringing all to resolution at a level of excellence?

**Ells:** my leadership style is participative, like to involve all that I can in that process, and believe we have been effective to achieve the goals. A fair manager enjoys working with staff. While in the DPW focused on sustainable growth, balance the need for growth, but still focus on the quality of life in Barnstable. Adjunct faculty for the Cape Cod Community College, Barnstable is viewed as a leader.

**Councilor Chirigotis** - Barnstable citizens expect a high level of service but also expect the Town to be managed in a financially prudent way. If it becomes necessary, how would you guide the Council and the community in making difficult choices with regard to budget reductions?

**Ells:** Begins with the communication, what are our goals and objectives; that is the framework. Have in place our five and ten year plans. Give us the tools of how we are going to move forward. Directly involved in the 2002 to 2005, decreases of greater than 10 percent over that period time, but still had the needs of the community to fulfill.

**Councilor Cullum-** The opioid crisis has left many communities reeling from gaps in services and unfunded extra costs to taxpayers in the way of enforcement and social services. What experiences have you had in your careers that have readied you to handle Barnstable's unique problems with respect to the homeless population and addiction?

**Ells:** Most recent responsibilities have been working on the homeless issue, looking at the gaps, so we can have more meaningful progress. We have an action plan; identifying the resource, looking for regional and state assistance; going beyond the immediate issue; hands on and active involvement. Need to look at housing, where will these people transition to as a community.

**Councilor W. Crocker** Who should be the voice of the town with respect to communications with the following: Department Heads, employees, residents and the media?

**Ells:** In general, the Town Manager and Town Council should sit down and have an on going relationship. Department heads and employees should go to the Town Manager. The leadership from the Council and the Manager needs to be consistent, accurate and timely; keeping an open line of communication.

**Councilor Dagwan** - There are 7 villages in the Town of Barnstable some with more diverse populations than others. What are some of those examples of your interactions and experiences, working with such diverse populations?

**Ells:** As your Assistant Town Manager and through my children interacting with school systems; have developed relationships through committees, and working at the

college, gives me the opportunity to know where these groups live. Each of these diverse populations requires different forms of communication.

**Vice President Steinhilber-** Describe your approach to working with your Board of Selectmen or Town Council. How do you communicate with the elected officials? Do you have any particular strategies for promoting the effectiveness of the elected body?

**Ells:** Good consistent lines of communication in a timely manner; critical to the success of the organization. Making sure that is in place, especially with more challenging issues. Positive working relationship, we have never had an issue on state or regional boards as your representative. What is the best means of communication; so we can be efficient?

**Councilor Cushing** - What do you see as the biggest challenges in working with a Town Council-Town Manager form of government?

**Ells:** Establishing that relationship, so we can get down to business. Don't believe it has to be a challenge; convinced this Town Manager/Town Council form of government is a very effective form of government; assuring we are moving forward with accurate communication and decision making to meet our goals.

**Councilor Hebert** - Today many cities and towns are faced with the challenges surrounding homelessness, and substance abuse. Share with us your knowledge and comprehension, of these current but important topics, affecting our social environment?

**Ells:** We are faced with pressing issues; we have many well intended and needed services and agencies, but we need to bring them together. Our Police Department does an excellent job for us; we need to educate our school children and our seniors, and engage people to move in that direction.

**President Rapp Grasseti** - We have asked you many questions on a range of topics from leadership, management and operations experience to issues dealing with Staff, Communications, Finances, Economics, Environmental and Social issues. As the potential Town Manager realizing and understanding that you work for and at the pleasure of the Town Council and like all of us on the Town Council ultimately for the citizens of Barnstable, please give us your closing comments about this opportunity and any questions you might have?

**Ells:** Thank you for the unique opportunity to be able to move up in my career. Believe that we all have an important role to play and when we do this together we can make tough decisions; have done my job to the best of my ability, working with the community on various issues. We will not always agree; looking forward to the next challenge. This is my community.

**Timothy King**

**President Rapp Grasseti** - Please tell us about yourself and in particular how your experience in terms of education and training and prior employment qualifies you for this position?

**King:** Gave an overview of his educational and professional years; and up to the number of years in the Municipal government field including as City Manager

**Councilor Flores** – In particular, the profile piece for the position listed 8 separate categories where the town manager will face some challenges. Would you speak to those issues and tell us how you would lead, manage and oversee operations in those areas bringing all to resolution at a level of excellence?

**King:** My whole career has required me to be a leader; support the idea that I lead by example; work with the department heads and employees to show them they are valued employees and their hard work is appreciated.

**Councilor Chirigotis** - Barnstable citizens expect a high level of service but also expect the Town to be managed in a financially prudent way. If it becomes necessary, how would you guide the Council and the community in making difficult choices with regard to budget reductions?

**King:** Regarding the financial condition of Barnstable, I would rely on the Finance Department to guide our way through any difficult time, communicating with the community

**Councilor Cullum-** The opioid crisis has left many communities reeling from gaps in services and unfunded extra costs to taxpayers in the way of enforcement and social services. What experiences have you had in your careers that have readied you to handle Barnstable's unique problems with respect to the homeless population and addiction?

**King:** Services needed by the homeless are located here in Hyannis; working with the homeless each has their own situation and experiences. We have to treat these people with respect and address their situation one person at a time.

**Councilor W. Crocker** Who should be the voice of the town with respect to communications with the following: Department Heads, employees, residents and the media?

**King:** As Town Manager I need to communicate with the Department heads to make sure the wishes of the Council are carried out. Joint communication with the Town Council and Town Manager, need to be as transparent as possible. Website provides an opportunity to share information. Public will appreciate the opportunity to be heard.

**Councilor Dagwan** - There are 7 villages in the Town of Barnstable some with more diverse populations than others. What are some of those examples of your interactions and experiences, working with such diverse populations?

**King:** Westport has a diverse population, have reached out to various groups to help them get the services they need. What struck me was how different each of your villages is; it is important for the Town Manager to get out into each village

**Vice President Steinhilber-** Describe your approach to working with your Board of Selectmen or Town Council. How do you communicate with the elected officials? Do you have any particular strategies for promoting the effectiveness of the elected body?

**King:** No such thing as a small problem; set up some mechanism to send out messages to Councilors. Prepare a bi-weekly report to the Town Council; covering the issues important to them; include a section of my recommendations.

**Councilor Cushing** - What do you see as the biggest challenges in working with a Town Council-Town Manager form of government?

**King:** the large number of members of the Town Council is a little daunting. Offer better communications; the Councilors can come see me at any time, email me or call me.

**Councilor Hebert** - Today many cities and towns are faced with the challenges surrounding homelessness, and substance abuse. Share with us your knowledge and

comprehension, of these current but important topics, affecting our social environment?

**King:** This is a national problem. We had problems with needles showing up in our playgrounds; we have to start addressing some of these issues; asking how can we provide you with the services you need.

**President Rapp Grasseti** - We have asked you many questions on a range of topics from leadership, management and operations experience to issues dealing with Staff, Communications, Finances, Economics, Environmental and Social issues. As the potential Town Manager realizing and understanding that you work for and at the pleasure of the Town Council and like all of us on the Town Council ultimately for the citizens of Barnstable, please give us your closing comments about this opportunity and any questions you might have?

**King:** You have a back log of capital improvement needs, share ideas do you have to begin to address that major problem?

(J Crocker) New growth dollars, we are not really adding any more, we are trying to develop zoning.

Do you think you have good strong group norms, how do you insure that?

(Rapp Grasseti) We meet on an annual basis to work on our strategic plan, have developed many sub committees of the council; communicate pretty effectively.

(Cullum) we bring the concerns of the people to the dais, we don't always agree about things, our ultimate goal is to make Barnstable a better place to live and work

(Flores) no one here is afraid to communicate

What are you looking for in a Town Manager?

(W. Crocker) an open door policy, you need to come and talk to us regarding our precincts and our villages

(Hebert) none of us have power individually.

(Chirigotis) we have an outstanding employees and Finance Department; we have significant issues with waste water and clean water.

(Dagwan) this Council is very diverse in terms of abilities, we all have our expertise and share it, and thus far it seems to be working

**King:** Been there, tenure as city manager in Ellsworth, know how this form of government works, have the skills, very good critical thinking skills, and the ability to work with groups.

### **Council discussion:**

President Rapp Grasseti thanked the finalists and the committees for qualified candidates.

Councilor Flores is prepared today to make a motion, as Chair of the Screening Committee, thanked the committee members; we believe we brought forward quality candidates; we have an important decision to make today. Looking for a solid management style, building relationships, take the leadership direction of the Council and someone who can listen to and handle conflict, someone has risen to the top.

Councilor Cullum of the four candidates one for me rose above the rest with his commitment to the town, I am thankful for the candidates brought forward, and Mr. King's questions.

Councilor Chirigotis thanked the diligence of the committee bringing forth quality candidates, we have someone who knows the villages, firm understanding of the major infrastructure problems coming forward, we have a clear candidate who is vested here;



he has my full support

Councilor Dagwan in my six years on the Council, have seen transition of leadership, I believe Mark Ells would make this a smooth transition. Mark would be the best person for the Town Manager position.

Councilor Hebert no surprises to me, awesome job, we are looking at serious problems, Mark Ells has the training; the public hopes we choose our current Assistant Town Manager.

Councilor W. Crocker marvelous presentations, communication between the Council and Town Manager needs to be two way. Needs to maintain the municipal organization structure, we may take criticism from the community if we choose Mr. Ells; I believe he would want to be vetted. I would vote for Mark Ells.

Councilor Cushing

Thanked the other members of the subcommittee, we were very lucky to come to this point, we are where we need to be, in a public forum, interviewing four very strong candidates; one rose to the top demonstrating integrity and commitment to the town, Mark Ells has my vote.

A motion was duly made and seconded pursuant to section 4-1 of the Charter of the Town of Barnstable, that the Town Council appoint Mark S. Ells as our new Town Manager, contingent upon an employment contract

Councilor J Crocker definitely our biggest item; we had a chance to see four quality candidates; transparency at every step, all the way through the process, we have to trust him and ourselves, this is a unique opportunity, someone who has come up through the ranks. Mark knows our town, is vested in the community, he will do well.

President Rapp Grassetti received many emails, texts and calls. One stated "Mark is willing to listen, earned this position through hard work, over many years, honest and honorable, great ideas and always prepared," I will be supporting Mark Ells

**VOTE: Roll Call 11 YES**

President Rapp Grassetti thanked everyone for this lengthy process, today the Town of Barnstable can hold its head high and be proud that we have appointed the most qualified person to serve as our Town Manager.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded it was

**VOTED to adjourn:**

**Adjourned at 2:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M Quirk, CMC  
Town Clerk/Town of Barnstable