

CHARTER TRANSITION COMMITTEE
ISSUE NUMBER 004

From: Mac Donald Mitch [mailto:mitchmacdonald@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2019 1:36 PM
To: Keith Lapointe; Michael Lennox; Joann Cathcart; John D. Simmons; Julie Boyce; Darius Gregory; Adam J. Scanlon; Kathleen T. Prescott; Justin Pare
Cc: dgklaw@aol.com; Chris Sweet; Don Bates; Anthony Rianldi
Subject: Re: opinion

Hi Joann:

Always happy to help to the extent that I can. Your question is certainly appropriate. It was always anticipated that adjusting everyone's approach from the old form to the new would not be immediate and have to occur over time. Questions such as yours are not only appropriate and anticipated, but welcomed. The more we all understand it, the more quickly our new government form can reach its full positive potential for our community.

To answer your question succinctly: Yes. Mr Gallagher's position on both the language and spirit of the Charter is correct.

As you know, one of the more important driving principles of the Charter is a more centralized, efficient, streamlined, and accountable municipal government. Attaining this goal requires some basic operational practices and standards be introduced. Among them, of course are things like reporting structure and clearly-defined channels of communication, which seems to be the organizational concept most pertinent to your question.

Your question also brings attention to the important shift in dynamic of which we must all remain mindful. The manner in which Town Council relates to the Town Manager does not parallel how the BOS related to the Town Administrator.

In the old form, the BOS was the executive branch, and the Town Administrator was subordinate to the BOS, essentially the equivalent of the chief of staff of the executive branch. In the new form, the TM is the executive branch and the TC is the legislative branch.

As such, it's only logical and natural that legislative branch interactions regarding government affairs with departments heads, and in fact any position appointed by the executive branch, go through the executive branch. In our case, of course, that is the TM.

- MM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Joann Cathcart <joann.cathcart@nattleboro.com>

Subject: opinion

Date: July 17, 2019 at 2:38:30 PM EDT

To: "mitchmacdonald@yahoo.com" <mitchmacdonald@yahoo.com>

Hi

I would appreciate your opinion on this memo. I believe that the ATA is interpreting it differently than I do. I want the reasoning behind this language from the charter.

Thanks

If you can respond back to me by tomorrow I would appreciate it very much. Also will you be attending our meeting tomorrow evening?

Jo Ann Cathcart

Michael H. Gallagher
Acting Town Manager



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43 South Washington Street
North Attleborough MA 02760
508-699-0100

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: Thursday, July 11, 2019
TO: Town Council
CC: Department Heads
FROM: Michael H. Gallagher, Acting Town Manager 
RE: Town Council Role Regarding Access to Employees

It has come to my attention that a member of the Town Council was in Town Hall yesterday and met with a couple of department heads regarding an official matter currently under consideration by the Town. I would remind the members of the Council that Article II, Section 2-5 (d)(2), reads, "The Town Council shall deal with the officers and employees serving under the Town Manager solely through the Town Manager and the Council President and members of the Town Council shall not give any orders or directives to any such officer or employee, either publicly or privately." As such, I would appreciate any member of the Council wishing to make an inquiry or interact in any way regarding official Town business with department heads, employees and others appointed by the Town Manager to do so only through me. Thank you for your cooperation and adherence to the spirit of the Charter.