



**Board of Selectmen  
Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street  
Regular Meeting Notice Agenda – Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Opened**

**Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair**

**Consent Agenda**

- Approval of Meeting Minutes of November 4, November 5, November 19, November 26, November 29, and December 23, 2019
- Special Event Permit Application, 2020 Rosary Rally: October 10, 2020
- One-Day Beer & Wine License Applications, Workshop 13: January 17, February 15, February 21, and February 23, 2020

**Scheduled Appearances**

**Old Business**

- Complete Streets Policy
- License Clarification and Approval: Gillespie Car Care 1
- Safety Surveys: High Street, Pulaski Street

**New Business**

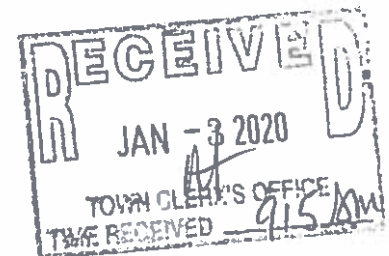
- School Regionalization Study, Schedule Joint Meeting Date
- Accept Resignation: Francis W. Cote, Bylaw Review Committee

**Comments and Concerns of Citizens**

**Town Manager Report**

**Adjournment**

**Executive Session: M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) #1 Discussion of Complaints Regarding a Public Employee: Town Manager; #2 Contract Negotiations with Acting Fire Chief**





**Board of Selectmen**

**Ware Junior/Senior High School Auditorium, 237 West Street, Ware, MA**

**Regular Meeting Minutes – Monday, November 4, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Due Process Hearing for Contemplated Action of Discipline, Up to Termination: Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe, Per M.G.L. Chapter 31, Section 41.**

**Present:** Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman John E. Carroll, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski, Town Manager Stuart Beckley, Town Labor Attorney Layla Taylor, Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe, Attorney Jack Collins

**Absent from Selectman's table, present in the audience:** Selectman Nancy J. Talbot (previously recused)

**Chairman Whitney stated the following:**

Good evening, it's the Board of Selectmen meeting of November 4, 2019, and we are going to open our meeting at 6:30 p.m. The meeting is being audio and video recorded. Please join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first item on our agenda tonight is for the Board of Selectmen to consider the discipline of Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe, up to and including possible termination of employment.

Although the Board of Selectmen would have held this meeting in executive session under exception #1, Chief Coulombe requested in writing that this meeting be open. That is his right. Nevertheless, even though this is an open meeting, given the sensitive personnel nature of the topics under discussion, I am announcing some ground rules for the conduct of tonight's meeting. Also, I believe that Selectman Tracy Opalinski wanted to address the meeting.

**Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski read a statement regarding her recusal from the meeting:**

Six business days prior to today's hearing, Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe, the subject of today's hearing...filed a complaint at the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination against the Town of Ware's Fire Dept. and specifically named me in the complaint. It is a public record. On the advice of legal council and in order to prevent "even" the "illusion" of any impropriety in today's hearing's ....as it relates to discussions, deliberations or decisions, I am recusing myself from this Town of Ware discipline hearing.

**Chairman Whitney read the ground rules of the hearing:**

1. The public is permitted to attend this meeting as long as the Chief continues to desire to have this meeting in open meeting. Should he, at any time, desire executive session we will close this meeting and reconvene in the posted executive session. The public will not be allowed in any executive session.
2. The public is permitted to attend this open meeting; however, no individual may address the Board of Selectmen without the permission of me, the Chair.

3. An individual may not disrupt the Board of Selectmen meeting, and at the Chair's request, all members of the public shall be silent.
4. If, after clear warning, a person continues to be disruptive, the Chair may order the person to leave the meeting.
5. If the person does not leave, the Chair may authorize a constable or other officer to remove the person.
6. Given the nature of this matter, I, as Chair, have made the decision not to allow for public comment. While we understand that public participation is encouraged by the State, it is not required at all meetings.
7. Any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of an open session of a public meeting. However, any member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the Chair and must comply with reasonable requirements regarding audio or video equipment so as not to interfere with this meeting. If you have arrived and wish to record this meeting, although it is being videotaped by Ware TV, please pass a note to the Town Manager in a manner that does not disrupt this meeting and I, as Chair, will endeavor to acknowledge such attempts at notification and announce the fact of any recording to those in attendance.
8. This is a hearing pursuant to MGL c. 31, s. 41, the Civil Service Law governing the Discharge; removal; suspension; transfer; abolition of office; reduction of rank or pay; hearings; review of a covered civil service employee.
9. The purpose of this meeting is to give Chief Coulombe notice and an opportunity to hear from the Board of Selectmen about the allegations against him, answer questions from the Board of Selectmen and to provide the Board of Selectmen any information he thinks is important for them to have and/or consider before rendering a determination.
10. The Chief shall be allowed to answer, personally or by his counsel, any of the charges which have been made against him. However, the Chief and others on his behalf are not entitled to cross examine the Board of Selectmen. This is a due process hearing before the appointing authority under the Civil Service law, it is not a trial.

**Chairman Whitney commenced the hearing.**

Attorney Collins, representing Fire Chief Coulombe, stated that Selectman Kruckas should recuse himself from the hearing due to his clear bias and animosity for over 8 months, and his own personal gain from the outcome. Attorney Taylor, representing the Town of Ware, asked Mr. Collins to elaborate on the conflict of interest. Attorney Collins stated that Selectman Kruckas had financial interests in the outcome of this hearing.

**Chairman Whitney read the Notice of Hearing for Contemplated Action of Discipline, Up to Termination of Employment, Dated October 30, 2019 (attached).**

Attorney Collins noted there are no witnesses for these allegations. Attorney Taylor noted this is a pre-termination hearing with notice and opportunity to respond, a De Novo review before civil service should there be adverse determination. Attorney Collins stated there should be a full hearing as in recent case law of Town of North Reading, with adequate notice of charges and right to cross-examine witnesses. These are only allegations with no evidence.

Chairman Whitney began to address each item. Attorney Collins noted that Fire Department documents and rules and regulations were not in effect as the documents were never presented to the union, and therefore have no effect or application here. He further stated the document was not properly promulgated, and not enforceable. Attorney Collins continued to defend Fire Chief Coulombe and stated his conduct was above all standards set forth by ethics. He accused Selectmen of having already made their decision. Chairman Whitney stated he resented "you saying that I've made up my mind". Attorney Collins noted that when issues arose, Chief Coulombe would consult Town Counsel Wojcik to be sure to follow all rules. Attorney Collins questioned the amount of money spent to date on this issue. Town Manager Beckley noted that \$30,000 had been spent to end of September 2019.

Fire Chief Coulombe noted that he does "inspire confidence of the public" and described the civil service hiring process. He stated that he consulted Attorney Wojcik regarding his role in the process. He noted the union was not presented a code of ethics under the previous Fire Chief. He stated that he should be allowed to provide witnesses, and this process was insulting. He noted that it was his and his wife's work that obtained the \$5 million Federal grant and \$1 million State grant to build the Fire Station. Fire Chief Coulombe noted air packs, ladder testing, safety equipment testing, and other items that have been in budgets or applied for grants to keep current.

Chairman Whitney noted that the Chief was told not to go to the fire station while on paid administrative leave. He noted that the Chief has threatened litigation and spoken several times to media. He noted these actions were insubordination.

**Break – fifteen minutes total**

Attorney Collins questioned the charge of conduct unbecoming. He noted that Selectman Kruckas has made this a personal situation numerous times. Fire Chief Coulombe defended his request to go to the fire station to collect his personal items, and Police Chief Crevier accompanied him. He stated that Selectman Kruckas arrived and yelled at him. He noted that Selectman Kruckas previously harassed other town and DPW employees, this is workplace harassment, and the Selectman has harassed Chief Coulombe's family.

Selectman Kruckas stated these are not accurate descriptions of the events. Attorney Collins noted that the Selectman "makes things up". Fire Chief Coulombe noted that he checked with Town Manager Beckley before any of his actions regarding going to the fire station. Attorney Collins noted Conflict of Interest Law and no one on the Board of Selectmen have questioned the Chief before, but there are concerns about the Deputy Chief going back two years that should have resulted in discipline of the Deputy Chief. Fire Chief Coulombe explained an incident involving a brush fire on West Street in which the Deputy Chief was disruptive and yelling at Captain and crew as they worked the brush fire. Chief Coulombe noted that he gave coaching and gave a pass to the Deputy Chief who should have disciplined.

Attorney Collins disputed this hearing and stated that two Selectmen have told the Fire Chief to retire. Attorney Collins stated "Shame on you." He stated that the investigation and Daigle Law Firm report were untruthful and there is a "cancer" on the Board of Selectmen. He stated that the charges tonight have all been answered.

Attorney Taylor noted that the Board may take time for deliberations or take under advisement. If the decision is adverse, the Board must send a written decision with three days' notice to the Chief and his counsel. Attorney Taylor noted the hearing could remain open, but be tabled.

Attorney Collins questioned how soon the Board would reconvene on this matter.

Chairman Whitney noted the hearing would remain open, and stated the Board will reconvene no longer than two weeks. Selectman Kruckas made the motion to table and to not close the hearing; Selectman Carroll seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No.

Selectman Carroll made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No.

Attest:   
Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to  
Town Manager



## TOWN OF WARE, MASSACHUSETTS

Town Manager  
126 Main Street  
Ware, MA 01082  
Tel. 413-967-9648

October 30, 2019

Chief Thomas Coulombe  
116 Church Street  
Ware, MA 01082

Re: Notice of Hearing for Contemplated Action of Discipline,  
Up to Termination of Employment

Dear Fire Chief Coulombe:

You are hereby advised, pursuant to your contract and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 31, Section 41 that a hearing will be held by the Board of Selectmen, your Appointing Authority, on the question of whether there is just cause for disciplinary action, up to and including the possible demotion or termination of your employment as Fire Chief, for the following reasons:

- Failure to comply with the Fire Department's Code of Ethics/Canons of Fire Ethics Policy as explained and outlined in the attached Exhibit A *Administrative Investigation of Fire Lieutenant Brian Coulombe and Chief Thomas Coulombe.*<sup>[1]</sup> See Exhibit A and document number 1 and 2 of Exhibit E.
- Failure to attend to your job duties as Fire Chief, including but not limited to the following:
  - Failure to put Town on notice of need to follow NFPA standards, including but not limited to NFPA 1500 (health and safety mandates for physical testing); and,

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<sup>[1]</sup> Please note that because, as Fire Chief, you are the Appointing Authority for the Town of Ware's Fire Department, the Town has provided you and your counsel a full unredacted copy of the Administrative Investigative Report and other personnel records of Fire Department personnel that are germane to the issues for which you have been provided Notice. However, at the hearing only redacted versions will be used. This is primarily to protect the findings of the Investigator with respect to another employee in the Department (your son) and the personnel information of other employees in the Department (your son and wife) to the extent that this matter implicates any legitimate privacy interests they may have. Although you have requested an open meeting, please be advised that this meeting is about whether you have engaged in misconduct. The Appointing Authority, you as an agent of the Town continue to have a responsibility to be mindful of their privacy interests as employees.

- Failure to ensure that equipment and facility were properly maintained and/or to place Town on notice of maintenance needs, including but not limited to: (a) fire safety equipment such as SCBA air fill station, air compressor, air packs and air bottles, hose testing and ladder testing; (b) building issues including water damage at front entrance and from boiler overflowing, a/c unit failure due to lack of service, and failure to ensure proper maintenance of elevator.

See Exhibit A, Transcript of Thomas Coulombe Interview and Exhibit B.

- Insubordination. Specifically, the failure to abide by the requirements of your paid administrative leave by going to the Fire Station without permission after being placed on leave. See Exhibit A, Transcript of Thomas Coulombe Interview and Exhibit C; and,
- Conduct unbecoming to a Fire Chief, including but not limited to lack of truthfulness and candor to the public and during a workplace investigation and violation of the obligations set forth in the *Code of Ethics/Canons of Fire Ethics Policy* for same, including but not limited to:
  - Your reporting to the press that you did not threaten litigation against the Town when, in fact, you had done so through your Attorney; and,
  - Your false reporting during the workplace investigation that the morning after you were placed on a paid administrative leave that you went to the Fire Department with the Police Chief to arrange for the pickup of your things and that Selectman Kruckas impermissibly confronted you, including your allegation that "Selectman Kr[u]cka had his meltdown, and started yelling at us about being there, and it turned into a shit show, and we never did a...We both just left."

See Exhibit A, Transcript of Thomas Coulombe Interview and Exhibit D.

- Violations of the *Fire Department's Code of Ethics/Canons of Fire Ethics* and prohibitions on nepotism outlined in M.G.L c. 268, the conflict of interest laws, by failing to ensure proper procedural protocols consistent with State Ethics Commission advisories were in place regarding the day to day active supervision of your son and wife, who are both subordinate members of the Department, and failing to hold them to the same standards as others in the Department. On this last matter the Board may also discuss whether your continued role as Fire Chief presents an untenable conflict of interests that impacts your ability to continue in that role.

See Exhibit E.

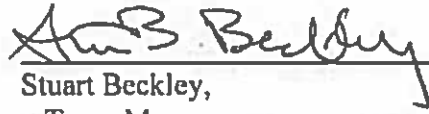
Exhibit F contains additional relevant law and Fire Department policies.

The hearing on this matter will be held by the Board of Selectmen at Ware High School Auditorium, 237 West Street, Ware, MA on November 4, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. You have a right to be present for the meeting and for any deliberations that involve you. You will also have a right to answer, personally or by counsel, any of the charges which have been made against you.

Also enclosed are copies of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 31, Sections 41 through 45, as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 31, Section 41, as well as information relative to that meeting.

Please also be advised that following confirmation from your Attorney, Jack Collins, to the Town's Labor Counsel, Layla Taylor, scheduling the date for this hearing, that you wrote to me, Stuart Beckley, requesting that this meeting be held in open session. While we have scheduled a venue to accommodate this request as is your right, should you decide you would like to have this meeting in executive session at any time you may do so. If it is held in executive session, please note that in addition to the rights set forth above you also have the right to cause an independent record to be created of said executive session by audio-recording or transcription, at your own expense. In open session, please know that an independent record will be created by video-recording as per the Town's practice.

Sincerely,

  
Stuart Beckley,  
Town Manager

Enclosures: Exhibits A through F  
M.G.L. c. 31, §§ 41-45

cc: Layla G. Taylor, Esq., Town's Labor Counsel  
Jack Collins, Attorney for Fire Chief Coulombe.  
Town of Ware Board of Selectmen





## **Board of Selectmen**

**Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street**

**Regular Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Opened by Chairman Whitney.**

**Present: Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman John E. Carroll, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Town Manager Stuart B. Beckley, Clerk Mary L. Midura.**

### **Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair**

It was noted that the Veterans' Day Parade will be on Monday, November 11, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

### **Consent Agenda**

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes of October 15, 2019**
- **Special Event Permit: Holiday Flair, Friday, November 29**
- **Special Event Permit: Ware Tree & Wreath Festival, Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8**

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

### **Scheduled Appearances**

- **7:05 p.m. Public Hearing: Street Acceptance of Wildflower Drive and Briar Circle**

Attorney Ryan O'Hara, Bacon Wilson, PC, representing Berkshire Bank, was present. The Board discussed the history of these streets and it was noted that town counsel should be contacted to review.

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to continue to a further date. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **7:10 p.m. Regional Animal Control Facility Information**

Eric Weiss, Chief of Palmer Police John Janulewicz, and ACO Sydney Plante were present to ask the Board for support at Town Meeting. Selectman Opalinski questioned full operational costs.

- **Review November 18, 2019 Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles with Moderator and Finance Committee**

Mr. Beckley noted that Moderator Kathleen Coulombe was required to work tonight. Finance Committee members Denis Ouimette, Devin Peterson, Lynn Nenni were present. All warrant articles were reviewed.

### **Old Business**

- **Winter Parking Lot Rules December 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020**

Chief Crevier was present. The new rules will help the police to clarify what is and is not allowed in the parking lots on Pleasant Street and Parker Street. The fee will become an annual fee; previously the fee was only for parking during the winter parking ban.

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to approve the Winter Parking Lot Rules, \$30 annual fee, with a \$10 discount for Veterans; Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Right of First Refusal, Chapter Land, 313 Palmer Road**  
Bill Moryl, owner, and John Motta, Dynamic Energy were present.

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to approve the Waiver of Right of First Refusal. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Right of First Refusal, Chapter Land, Greenwich Road**

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to approve the Waiver of Right of First Refusal. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Update: Water Treatment Plant**  
Interim DPW Director Gilbert St. George-Sorel was present. Mr. Beckley noted the project is behind schedule and the USDA financing is not complete. Attorney Wojcik is reviewing proof that the Town owns the property. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Beckley met with a USDA representative. Mr. St. George-Sorel noted the flushing of water took six weeks and has improved the water flow.

#### **New Business**

- **Appointment of Police Officers**

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to approve the appointment of Grant Murtaugh and Dan Harper as new police officers. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Selectman Talbot).**

- **Application for Appointment to Council on Aging: Cheryl Haigh**

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to approve the appointment of Cheryl Haigh to Council on Aging, Term to Expire June 30, 2022. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Approval of New Appointment to Ware Cultural Council: Carol Brundige, Term December 1, 2019 – November 30, 2022**

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the appointment of Carol Brundige to Ware Cultural Council, Term to Expire November 30, 2022. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Approval of Reappointment to Ware Cultural Council: Elena Palladino, Term December 1, 2019 – November 30, 2022**

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the reappointment of Elena Palladino to Ware Cultural Council, Term to Expire November 30, 2022. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Vote to Send Letter of Default for STA Agreement Obligations: G & G Medical Products, LLC**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to Send Letter of Default for STA Agreement Obligations to G & G Medical Products, LLC. Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Vote to Accept Disclosure Letter of Police Chief**

Selectman Kruckas made the motion to Accept Disclosure Letter of Police Chief Crevier. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Selectman Talbot).

- **Board of Selectmen 2020 Meeting Dates**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to accept the Board of Selectmen 2020 Meeting Dates, excepting March 3 and September 1, 2020. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Set Public Hearing for 7:05 p.m. Tuesday, November 19, 2019 for Application for License to Store Flammables: ReEnergy Holdings, LLC, 198 East Street**

Selectman Opalinski made the motion to set the Public Hearing for 7:05 p.m. Tuesday, November 19, 2019 for Application for License to Store Flammables: ReEnergy Holdings, LLC, 198 East Street. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.

- **Acknowledgement of Open Meeting Law Complaints**

Selectman Carroll made the motion to acknowledge the Open Meeting Law Complaints and send the complaints to labor counsel. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Selectman Talbot).

#### **Comments and Concerns of Citizens**

Resident Cathy Cascio questioned the issues discussed at the November 4, 2019 hearing. She noted the importance of what is good for the town.

Resident Kim Mongeau noted a guy wire at 76 Pulaski Street, and water flowing into the road at 59 Pulaski Street.

Selectman Opalinski questioned the use of a kennel in Ware; Mr. Beckley noted that a State Inspector must review conditions of the kennel.

Mr. Beckley thanked Palmer Police Chief Janulewicz and Lt. Burns for conducting police candidate interviews.

#### **Town Manager Report**

November 11 – Veterans Day Parade, 12:45 p.m.

November 18 – Special Town Meeting, 6:30

November 19 – Tax Classification hearing

Main Street – Bids are due to Mass DOT this week.

Properties – Under the direction of the Building Inspector and Treasurer, the house at 65 West Street was secured and cleaned up. The hurdle at 73 West Main Street is the demolition cost. The Building Inspector and I are applying for the Attorney General grant program for the work.

The Tax Collection department has been very productive and successful with property owners in making payments on past due accounts. Please see the attached memo for an explanation of their success.

The conversion and installation of the LED streetlights is complete with a small punch list of repairs and replacements. Thank you to Mr. Sydla for working with the installation team. The Town will post a procedure on line for notification of streetlights that are out or damaged. The Town has started looking at next year's Green Communities projects that may include lights at the schools, Boilers for DPW, and weatherization for several town buildings.

The Historical Commission, Planning Director and Building Inspector have selected an architect to work on the Town Hall Study. This will be approved by Massachusetts Historical and work will begin soon. The final study will be completed in mid-February which will allow time to apply for a grant to implement recommendations.

The Planning Department, Parks, and DPW looked at best methods to improve the southern rail trail section, working with the Massachusetts Recreational Trails grant. This project will proceed once the State has signed the contract.

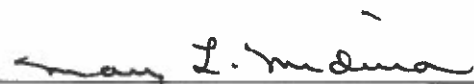
The Dog Park construction is underway on Pleasant Street.

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to Adjourn Regular Session at 9:10 p.m. to go into Executive Session: M.G.L. c30A, Section 21 (a) #1 To Discuss the Reputation, Character, Physical Condition or Mental Health, Rather Than Professional Competence, of An Individual, or to Discuss the Discipline or Dismissal of, or Complaints or Charges Brought Against, a Public Officer, Employee, Staff Member or Individual. The Individual to Be Discussed in Such Executive Session Shall Be Notified in Writing by the Public Body at Least 48 Hours Prior to the Proposed Executive Session; Provided, However, That Notification May Be Waived Upon Written Agreement of the Parties. RE: Police Officer Rogowski, NOT TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION.**

**Selectman Kruckas seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Selectman Talbot).**

Selectman John E. Carroll	Yes✓
Selectman Keith J. Kruckas	Yes✓
Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski	Yes✓
Selectman Nancy J. Talbot	Abstention✓
Selectman Alan G. Whitney	Yes✓

Attest:



Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to  
Town Manager



## **Board of Selectmen**

**Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street**

**Regular Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Opened by Chairman Whitney.**

**Present: Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman John E. Carroll, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Town Manager Stuart B. Beckley, Clerk Mary L. Midura.**

**Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair**

Selectman Opalinski requested operational costs for the Animal Shelter in the town meeting packet.

**Consent Agenda - none**

### **Scheduled Appearances**

- **7:01 p.m., Public Hearing: ReEnergy Holdings, LLC – Application for License to Store Flammables or Combustible Liquids, 3,000 Gallons Diesel in Above Ground Storage Tank (AST)**

Chris Lowe was present for the hearing. He purchased Tri-County in August. This request is for diesel. Selectman Talbot questioned the request for 3,000 gallons. Mr. Lowe explained that Acting Fire Chief Wloch recommended to go higher than typical 2,000 gallons. Selectman Whitney questioned the proximity to the river; Mr. Lowe noted over 1,000 feet. Selectman Carroll questioned the manhole on the property; Mr. Lowe noted the manhole is existing on the property and empties into a retention basin with an overfill alarm.

**Selectman Kruckas made the motion to approve the application for ReEnergy Holdings, LLC for a License to Store Flammables. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

### **New Business**

- **Consideration of Wood Policy**

The Board discussed the policy and set a fee of \$50 for approximately two cords delivered in town only to residents or employees.

**Selectman Kruckas made the motion to approve the policy with the above changes. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

### **Comments and Concerns of Citizens**

Resident Cathy Cascio questioned if the hearing was still open regarding the Fire Chief; Chairman Whitney confirmed that the hearing is still open.

- **7:13 p.m., Tax Classification Hearing**

Assessors Ted Balicki, Devin Peterson and Gerry Fountain were present. The Assessors reviewed the submitted information and recommended a tax rate factor of 1. Selectman Carroll stated his opinion that a split rate of 1.05 made more sense. Chairman Whitney noted the importance of attracting new business. Selectman Carroll noted the veterans' and disabled tax breaks and the Senior Citizen/Veteran Tax Work Off Program.

**Selectman Kruckas made the motion to approve the Tax Rate Factor of 1. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

- **Complete Streets Policy : Becky Basch, PVPC**

Rebekah DeCourcey, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Becky Basch, PVPC, presented the Complete Streets Policy. The Planning Board voted to recommend the policy on October 16, 2019. Becky Basch explained that implementation of this policy will be tier 1 to open the town up to \$400,000 of funding. Ms. DeCourcey noted that public forums will be held for any projects. Upon discussion of the policy, including bike lanes, Main Street, sidewalks, priority of need, the Board requested that "The Board of Selectmen shall approve the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan" be added on page 2 under Core Commitment, second paragraph.

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to table to December 3, 2019. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

#### **Town Manager Report**

November 28-29 Thanksgiving, Town offices closed

November 29 Ware Flair, Parade, Santa

December 2 – Special Town Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Main Street – Low bid by Ludlow construction at just over \$2 million. Mass DOT has initiated paperwork. Should begin March – May.

December 1 – Winter Parking ban goes into effect. Permits are available for overnight parking.

Roads – Babcock Tavern Road has a leveling course and will have a base course added. The improvement is significant. The paving season is running out, so Palmer Paving may not be able to get to Westbrook and Longview this season. May have to wait until Spring 2020.

Bylaws – the bylaws are in the hands of General Code, the company that does the revisions. The Committee must wait for the company to present the new codification for review. Selectman Talbot noted that the bylaws must go to Town Meeting in the Spring, especially to vote to delete outdated bylaws.

QVCDC – Grants – Meeting in Worcester on November 20 as we are a finalist for Health Foundations grant (private grant).

Selectman Kruckas questioned progress on new department head employee reviews; Mr. Beckley noted he has completed four.

Tom Barnes, representing Conservation Commission, stated that impoundment of the beavers shows the water below the hut entrance and there is no longer a threat.

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to Adjourn Regular Session at 8:01 p.m. to go into Executive Session: M.G.L. c30A, Section 21 (a) #2 Negotiations – Department of Public Works**

**Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 5 Yes, 0 No.**

<b>Selectman John E. Carroll</b>	<b>Yes✓</b>
<b>Selectman Keith J. Kruckas</b>	<b>Yes✓</b>
<b>Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski</b>	<b>Yes✓</b>
<b>Selectman Nancy J. Talbot</b>	<b>Yes✓</b>
<b>Selectman Alan G. Whitney</b>	<b>Yes✓</b>

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

  
**Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to  
Town Manager**

**Board of Selectmen  
Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street  
Regular Meeting Minutes – November 26, 2019  
6:30 p.m.**

**Continued from November 4, 2019: Due Process Hearing and Deliberation for Contemplated Action of Discipline, Up to Termination: Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe, Per M.G.L. Chapter 31, Section 41.**

**Present: Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman John E. Carroll, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Town Manager Stuart Beckley, Town Labor Attorney Layla Taylor**

**Absent/Recused: Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot.**

**Chairman Whitney read the ground rules of the hearing and the Notice of Hearing. Chairman Whitney asked each Selectman for their positions on the issue.**

Selectman John Carroll stated he had some questions; Attorney Taylor noted there were no questions and answers tonight. Selectman Carroll noted his 26 years of civil service and stated the Chief must be aware of age to be attained for the civil service test. He noted he was bothered by the lack of respect to the Board and to the Acting Fire Chief. He noted this was not the character of a chief.

Selectman Keith Kruckas stated the November 4 hearing was a “circus act”, with accusations and “something to hide”, bullies than liars, evidence to support, defamation and slander, and noted an altercation with witnesses and police report, a clear pattern. He noted he ran (for Selectman) on accountability. Chairman Whitney noted his concern regarding ethics, and he believes it “inconceivable” that the Chief did not know the birth date. He noted that the Chief failed to follow his responsibility. He noted insubordination in the defense of the “fire station, fire department” and that the Chief challenged the Board to “do your worst” and caused litigation with false reports to the press.

Selectman Carroll noted that an honest person aids an investigation, while a guilty person would hinder and deflect. He noted a pattern regarding the grant and the station. Selectman Kruckas noted the struggle to get information. Chairman Whitney noted a demotion to Lieutenant. Selectman Carroll noted to add a 30-day suspension.

**Selectman Carroll made the motion to Suspend Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe for Thirty (30 Days), and to Demote Fire Chief Thomas Coulombe to Lieutenant, effective November 3, 2019. Chairman Whitney seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 2 Yes, 1 No (Selectman Kruckas).**

Attorney Taylor noted a letter must be sent to HRD with explanation of all impacts.

**Selectman Kruckas made the motion to Adjourn the Meeting at 6:44 p.m. Selectman Carroll seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No.**

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to  
Town Manager





## **Board of Selectmen**

**Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street**

**Regular Meeting Minutes – November 29, 2019, Friday, 8:00 a.m.**

**Present: Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman John E. Carroll, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas, Town Manager Stuart B. Beckley.**

**Absent/Recused: Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Clerk Mary L. Midura**

Chairman read the following statement: It was brought to the attention of the Board that members of the public did not understand that as a disciplinary suspension meant to be punitive under MGL c 31 s 41 it was intended to be unpaid and the start date of the suspension and demotion was confusing because Mr. Carroll misspoke and accidentally said November 3 instead of December 3. The purpose is not to change the vote but to answer these questions and correct the misstated date because staffing impacts public safety and clarification appears to be needed to ensure staffing levels are maintained as expected for the month of December. Because these questions raised a staffing concern involving public safety employees that would impact December staffing if the Board's intent was not carried out, because a quorum is needed to make this clarification and the other two Board members have recused themselves from this matter, and because Mr. Carroll has been scheduled to be out of state for a work related matter the entirety of December, 48 hours' notice was not possible and this was posted as an emergency motion.

**Chairman Whitney made the motion: Move to clarify the Motion made relative to the Fire Chief's discipline on November 26, 2019, that consistent with a disciplinary suspension under MGL c 31 s 41 l, this is a 30 day calendar day unpaid suspension and a demotion to Lieutenant, with the demotion and 30 day calendar day suspension commencing on December 3, 2019. The reference to November 3, 2019 instead of December 3, 2019 was an inadvertent error. The Chief's return to work date following the 30 day suspension will be January 2, 2020.**

**Selectman Carroll seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 2 Yes, 1 No (Selectman Kruckas).**

Chairman Whitney noted that the Chief is to stay away from the fire station. Selectman Kruckas stated there should be no retaliation. Chairman Whitney noted that was correct.

Resident Kim Mongeau asked if the Chief was notified of the meeting; Mr. Beckley stated yes. (Attached).

**Selectman Whitney made the motion to Adjourn at 8:04 a.m. Selectman Carroll seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No.**

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary L. Midura", is written over a horizontal line.

**Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to  
Town Manager, via videotape 11/29/2019**



## TOWN OF WARE, MASSACHUSETTS

Town Manager  
126 Main Street  
Ware, MA 01082  
Tel. 413-967-9648

November 29, 2019

### FEDERAL EXPRESS AND REGULAR MAIL

Or

VIA MAIL & E-MAIL: [warefdx1@comcast.net](mailto:warefdx1@comcast.net)

. Thomas Coulombe,  
Fire Chief  
116 Church Street  
Ware, MA 01082

Re: Notice of Appointing Authority's Decision

Dear Chief Coulombe:

A hearing was held on November 4, 2019 and November 26, 2019 concerning a notice of contemplated discipline that was delivered to you on October 30, 2019. The hearing was held in open session per your request. Your attorney attended the first day of hearing and you chose not to have your attorney attend the second day of hearing as the purpose was for deliberation and decision making. Two members of the Board of Selectmen, Nancy Talbot and Tracy Opalinski, recused themselves from the proceeding.

Based on the evidence, the Board concluded that just cause exists to impose a 30-day suspension and demotion from your position of Fire Chief to Lieutenant. The suspension, which is unpaid, and the demotion will commence on December 3, 2019. This means that you will be on an unpaid suspension for 30-days commencing on December 3, 2019 and expected to return to your position of Lieutenant on January 2, 2020.

While the Board did withdraw the charges that you failed to ensure that the proper maintenance of the elevator and failed to put the Town on notice of the need to follow the NFPA standards, including but not limited to NFPA 1500, it did not withdraw the other charges set forth in the October 30, 2019 letter.

After deliberation, it found that the following conduct as described in the previous correspondence (See the Town's October 30, 2019 Notice letter and its attachments to you) violated the reasonable rules of the Town/Fire Department and expectations of the Board of Selectmen, including but not limited to the following:

1. Failure to comply with the Fire Department's Code of Ethics/Canons of Fire Ethics Policy and the expectations of the Town as explained and outlined in the attached Exhibit A Administrative Investigation of Fire Lieutenant Brian Coulombe and Chief Thomas Coulombe.
2. Failure to attend to your job duties as Fire Chief, including but not limited to the following:
  - Failure to ensure that equipment and facility were properly maintained and/or to place Town on notice of maintenance needs, including but not limited to: (a) fire safety equipment such as SCBA air fill station, air compressor, air packs and air bottles, hose testing and ladder testing; and (b) building issues including water damage at front entrance and from boiler overflowing, and a/c unit failure due to lack of service.
3. Insubordination. Specifically, the failure to abide by the requirements of your paid administrative leave by going to the Fire Station without permission after being placed on leave.
4. Conduct unbecoming to a Fire Chief, including but not limited to lack of truthfulness and candor to the public and during a workplace investigation and violation of the obligations set forth in the Code of Ethics/Canons of Fire Ethics Policy for same, including but not limited to:
  - Your reporting to the press that you did not threaten litigation against the Town when, in fact, you had done so through your Attorney; and,
  - Your false reporting during the workplace investigation that the morning after you were placed on a paid administrative leave that you went to the Fire Department with the Police Chief to arrange for the pickup of your things and that Selectman Kruckas impermissibly confronted you, including your allegation that "Selectman Kr[u]cka had his meltdown, and started yelling at us about being there, and it turned into a shit show, and we never did a... We both just left."
5. Violations of the Fire Department's Code of Ethics/Canons of Fire Ethics and prohibitions on nepotism outlined in M.G.L c. 268, the conflict of interest laws, by failing to ensure proper procedural protocols consistent with State Ethics Commission advisories were in place regarding the day-to-day active supervision of your son and wife, who are both subordinate members of the Department, and failing to hold them to the same standards as others in the Department. The Board finds that your continued role as Fire Chief presents an untenable conflict of interests that impacts your ability to continue in that role.

After careful consideration, the Board concluded that this conduct, whether taken together or alone, evidences a lack of leadership that is required by the Fire Chief and cannot be salvaged and that there is just cause for the 30-day unpaid suspension and demotion.

We also noted in the deliberation portion of the hearing on November 26, 2019 that your conduct at the November 4, 2019 hearing was disrespectful of the Board and the Deputy Chief/Acting Chief (a member of the team that you are in charge of leading) and is further evidence of disrespectful and insubordinate tone and attitude. While you had every right to challenge the contemplated actions of the Board of Selectmen on the basis of bias or other reasons, publicly referring to your subordinates with offensive terminology such as "drama queen" and stating that you've been insubordinate in the past "because you can't fix stupid" are just further examples of the unbecoming and insubordinate conduct that has persisted under your leadership of the Fire Department.

The Town Manager will be filing required forms with the HRD. He will also be in contact with the Union regarding any impact discussions that needs to occur and to assist in the transition to your new role when you return on January 2, 2020.

Please be advised that you have the right to appeal this decision under the Civil Service laws in accordance with MGL C. 31, Sections 41 through 45, enclosed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alan Whitney", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alan Whitney, Chairman  
Ware Board of Selectmen

Enclosure: MGL ch. 31,  
Sections 41  
through 45

cc: Jack Collins, Esq.  
Labor Counsel  
Stuart Beckley  
Board of Selectmen



## **Board of Selectmen**

**Ware Town Hall, Meeting Room, 126 Main Street**

**Regular Meeting Minutes – Monday, December 23, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Present: Selectman Alan G. Whitney, Selectman Nancy J. Talbot, Selectman Tracy R. Opalinski, Town Manager Stuart Beckley, Clerk Mary L. Midura**

**Absent: Selectman John E. Carroll, Selectman Keith J. Kruckas**

### **Meeting Opened**

**Opening Remarks, Announcements, and Agenda review by Chair**

Selectman Opalinski thanked citizens who came to Town Meeting.

### **Consent Agenda**

- **Retroactive Approval of Special Event Permit: Don't Give Up, Saturday, December 7, 2019**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).

### **Scheduled Appearances**

#### **Old Business**

- **Complete Streets Policy – Table to January 7, 2020**

Selectman Talbot made the motion to Table to January 7, 2020. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).

#### **New Business**

- **Approval of 2020 License Renewals**

Clerk Mary Midura presented the 2020 Licenses for Renewal. She stated the following: the Town presently has 10 all alcohol and 4 wine & malt restaurant licenses, and 3 all alcohol and 3 wine & malt package store licenses (total 20). Our quota, based on population per the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC), would allow a total of 14 all alcohol restaurant, 5 wine & malt restaurant, and 7 wine & malt package store licenses (total 26). Licensees must provide documentation including the signed ABCC renewal form (must be signed in the month of November), proof of liquor liability insurance, workers' compensation insurance, and name, address, phone contact, email, etc. All restaurants must be inspected annually by the Building and Fire Departments. I do not give the liquor licensees their licenses until I have the completed certificate of inspection. As of November 27, all liquor licensees have returned proper documentation for renewal. The total revenue to be received from all license renewals, including other licenses and car dealer licenses, will be approximately \$24,095.

Selectman Talbot made the motion to Approve Renewal of the 2020 Liquor Licenses, Common Victualler, Entertainment, Automatic Amusement Devices and Lodging Licenses, as listed. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to Not Approve Renewal of 2020 Common Victualer License #21: Ware Café & Catering – Closed for Business December 2019. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

Clerk Mary Midura explained that one zoning complaint re: Gillespie Car Care 1 was received by the Building Inspector in October, and the complaint was answered. The complaint addressed the question of allowed vehicles on the front lawn of the licensed premise. The owner of Gillespie Car Care 1 has also requested clarification of allowed license use. Upon discussion, the Board instructed the clerk to research the septic system placement and legal allowance of cars on the front lawn per zoning (Residential Business). Mr. Beckley noted that the Building Inspector can assist with this information.

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to Approve Renewal of 2020 Class II Car Dealer License #2: Gillespie Car Care 1, conditionally to January 7, 2020, per further information. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

**Complaint re: RT's Welding:** Clerk Mary Midura noted that the letter of complaint and thumb drives with videos submitted were provided to all Selectmen. Residents Bob and Anne Krasnecky noted noise complaints and questioned that the fence was down. The licensee stated that the fence has fallen several times due to wind and weather. Chairman Whitney questioned if the complaints were cause to disqualify the licenses? Clerk Mary Midura stated she saw no reason to disqualify the business licenses.

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to Approve Renewal of the 2020 Class I, II and III Car Dealer Licenses, as listed. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

- **Recommendations on Plowing and Sanding Unfinished Subdivision Roads – Winter 2019/2020**  
Mr. Beckley presented the recommendations. Mr. St. George-Sorel noted that all information is the same as previous years.

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the Recommendations on Plowing and Sanding Unfinished Subdivision Roads for Winter 2019/2020. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

- **Request for Safety Survey: High Street**  
Resident Andrew Choquette submitted a letter of request and explained safety and roadway issues. Resident Kim Mongeau also verbally requested that a safety survey be done for Pulaski Street. The requests will be made to the Safety Officer.

- **Acceptance of 20 Wildflower Drive**  
Mr. Beckley noted that the lot is open space and title and deed search are complete.

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to approve the acceptance of 20 Wildflower Drive. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

- **Commendation of Police Officer Randy Topor**  
Chairman Whitney read the commendation for Officer Topor's years of service from 1985-2019. Police Chief Crevier noted Officer Topor was court officer for many years, and he reached Badge #2.

- **Commendation of Acting Fire Chief Ed Wloch**

Chairman Whitney read the commendation for Acting Fire Chief Wloch's years of service from 1990-2019.

- **Appointment of Acting Fire Chief**

Mr. Beckley made a strong recommendation to appoint Lieutenant Christopher Gagnon as Acting Fire Chief. He noted that Lieutenant Gagnon is well-supported by the department and will bring stability to the department.

**Selectman Opalinski made the motion to approve the Appointment of Acting Fire Chief Christopher Gagnon. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

Acting Fire Chief Gagnon commended the staff of the Fire Department for their commitment on a day-to-day basis. He stated he was humbled and honored to be appointed.

- **Acceptance of Resignation: Cindy Wloch, Council on Aging**

**Selectman Talbot made the motion to Accept the Resignation, with regrets, from Council on Aging of Cindy Wloch. Selectman Opalinski seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).**

- **Receipt of Open Meeting Law Complaint**

Chairman Whitney acknowledged the Open Meeting Law Complaint.

#### **Comments and Concerns of Citizens**

Resident Kim Mongeau noted that a previous complaint of water on Pulaski Street has now caused ice. Mr. Beckley noted that residents should call him or police and send photos.

Ms. Mongeau questioned the civil service process. Mr. Beckley noted that civil service will require an exam or assessment center to choose a new Fire Chief. The exam is scheduled for March 2020 and March 2021.

Jim Russell, resident and MassLive reporter, questioned who the acting deputy fire chief would be; Mr. Beckley noted that the Fire Chief chooses the deputy fire chief.

Jim Russell questioned the purpose of Executive Session tonight; Chairman Whitney noted there would be no Executive Session tonight.

#### **Town Manager Report**

**Planning.** The Planning Board has held several sessions on proposed changes to the solar zoning bylaw. They will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, January 16 at 7 p.m. There are currently three solar projects before the Planning Board for review.

Regarding the appeal/suit on the solar project on Monson Turnpike Road, the Town prevailed: On Dec. 12, 2019, Justice Piper of the Massachusetts Land Court in Boston denied the plaintiff PLH's Motion for Summary Judgment and, instead, ordered that judgment shall enter in favor of the defendant Town of Ware. In so doing, Justice Piper held that the Town of Ware Zoning Bylaw is valid and lawful, and does not violate M.G.L. c. 40A, § 3 (the statutory protection for the use of land as a solar energy facility) because of its requirement that large ground-mounted solar facilities must apply to the Planning Board for a special permit. Final judgment will likely enter in early January 2020, effectively bringing the Land Court case to a close. The plaintiff PLH will then have thirty (30) days to appeal this decision to the Massachusetts Appeals Court. We do not yet know whether PLH will do so.

**Personnel:** Andrew Choquette, assistant in the Building Department, and Kristen Fredette, assistant in the DPW, have given their notices. Per the bargaining unit contract, internal applicants are being sought before external posting. The department heads and I will review the job descriptions and hours needed for each position.

Daniel Losert has been hired as a Water Operator. He arrives with licenses.

Brandon Haley has passed the grade 4 operator's exam at the Wastewater Treatment plant. This license will allow him to participate in weekend monitoring.

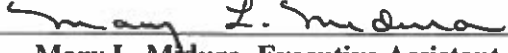
The Architectural Study of Town Hall is under way with the report being due at the end of February.

The Quaboag Connector has received grants for various purposes (planning, operations and vehicles) totaling \$390,000. Breakdown is \$180,000 Health Foundation Grant, \$50,000 Baystate Grant, \$40,000 Mass DOT grant for vehicles, and \$120,000 Mass DOT grant for operations. This is due to a strong regional and state partnership.

Snow update: The few storms to date have been heavy and messy with clean-up required afterward. The Town has spent approximately 20% (\$40,000) of its snow and ice budget to date.

I will be out of the office on Thursday, December 26.

Selectman Opalinski made the motion to Adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:39 p.m. Selectman Talbot seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 2 Absent (Selectman Carroll, Selectman Kruckas).

Attest:   
Mary L. Midura, Executive Assistant to  
Town Manager



TOWN OF WARE

SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION

(To be posted or made available at event)

Return to: Board of Selectmen, Town of Ware, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082

**APPLICATION PACKET MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT.**

Event Name: 2020 Rosary Rally Event Producer: America Needs Fatima

Primary Contact Information:

Primary Contact Name: Deborah Horn

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Profit Organization / Event: Yes ☒ No ☐

Day Phone: 413-687-7845

Cell Phone: 413-687-7845

E-mail: d.horn7591@yahoo.com

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Information:

Event Address / Location: Veterans Memorial Park SATURDAY

Starting Date: 10/10/20 Time: 11:30 AM Ending Date: 10/10/20 Time: 1:00 PM

Total attendance expected: About 50 Rain plan: Rain or shine

List any streets to be closed for special event: None

Will food be prepared and/or sold at the event: No

Summary of Event - Please describe the special features of the event within the box below.

There will be a hand held banner displayed with the words "Pray The Rosary" and a picture of Our Lady of Fatima on the banner as well. Those gathered for the event will begin reciting prayers from our Prayer Program handouts. These prayers will include the recitation of the Rosary. It will conclude with a final prayer.



APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL SERVICE OF  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
MGL CHAPTER 138, SECTION 14  
TOWN OF WARE

Name: Workshop13 Application Date: 01/02/2020

Contact Phone: 413-277-6072 Email: info@workshop13.org

Effective Date(s) of License: January 17, 2020 FRIDAY

Hours of Service (In conformity with MGL): 6:30 pm – 10:30 pm

Event (describe activities): Open Mic

Anticipated Attendance: 90

Sponsoring Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

For Profit: Beer & Wine (only) Non Profit: All Alcoholic \_\_\_\_\_ Beer & Wine X

Address (include Street & Number): 13 Church St. Ware, MA

Names of All Servers (bartenders) for this event Lisa DiMarzio & Pat Goudreau

Estimated Number of Attendees 90

Crowd Control Manager Roc Goudreau

I have received, and agree to abide by, all regulations of the Board of Selectmen. Furthermore, pursuant to MGL Chapter 52C, Section 49A, I hereby Certify under penalties of perjury that I, to the best of my knowledge and belief, have filed all state tax returns and all state taxes required under law.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # or Federal I.D.#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Inspection**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Inspection**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: 1/2/2020

Insurance Certificate: 7/9/2020

Application Fee: \$30

Action Taken: Approved Denied

Date: 1-2-20

Police Chief Review and Action

Shawn Crevier  
Shawn Crevier, Police Chief

2020-1



APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL SERVICE OF  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
MGL CHAPTER 138, SECTION 14  
TOWN OF WARE

Name: Workshop13 Application Date: 01/02/2020  
Contact Phone: 413-277-6072 Email: info@workshop13.org  
Effective Date(s) of License: February 15, 2020 SATURDAY  
Hours of Service (In conformity with MGL): 6:30 pm – 10:30 pm  
Event (describe activities): Concert with Charlie Lask  
Anticipated Attendance: 90  
Sponsoring Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
For Profit: Beer & Wine (only) Non Profit: All Alcoholic \_\_\_\_\_ Beer & Wine X  
Address (include Street & Number): 13 Church St. Ware, MA  
Names of All Servers (bartenders) for this event Pat Goudreau  
Estimated Number of Attendees 90  
Crowd Control Manager Roc Goudreau  
I have received, and agree to abide by, all regulations of the Board of Selectmen. Furthermore, pursuant to MGL Chapter 52C, Section 49A, I hereby  
Certify under penalties of perjury that I, to the best of my knowledge and belief, have filed all state tax returns and all state taxes required under law.  
Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security # or Federal I.D.#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Inspection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Inspection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: 1/2/2020

Insurance Certificate: 7/9/2020

Application Fee: \$30

Action Taken: Approved Denied

Date: 1-2-20

Police Chief Review and Action

Shawn Crevier

Shawn Crevier, Police Chief

2020-2



APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL SERVICE OF  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
MGL CHAPTER 138, SECTION 14  
TOWN OF WARE

Name: Workshop13 Application Date: 01/02/2020

Contact Phone: 413-277-6072 Email: info@workshop13.org

Effective Date(s) of License: February 21, 2020 FRIDAY

Hours of Service (In conformity with MGL): 6:30 pm – 10:30 pm

Event (describe activities): Open Mic

Anticipated Attendance: 90

Sponsoring Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

For Profit: Beer & Wine (only) Non Profit: All Alcoholic \_\_\_\_\_ Beer & Wine X

Address (include Street & Number): 13 Church St. Ware, MA

Names of All Servers (bartenders) for this event Pat Goudreau

Estimated Number of Attendees 90

Crowd Control Manager Roc Goudreau

I have received, and agree to abide by, all regulations of the Board of Selectmen. Furthermore, pursuant to MGL Chapter 52C, Section 49A, I hereby Certify under penalties of perjury that I, to the best of my knowledge and belief, have filed all state tax returns and all state taxes required under law.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # or Federal I.D.#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Inspection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Inspection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: 1/2/2020

Insurance Certificate: 7/9/2020

Application Fee: \$30

Action Taken: Approved Denied Date: 1-2-20

Police Chief Review and Action

Shawn Crevier

Shawn Crevier, Police Chief

2020-3



APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL SERVICE OF  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
MGL CHAPTER 138, SECTION 14  
TOWN OF WARE

Name: Workshop13 Application Date: 01/02/2020  
Contact Phone: 413-277-6072 Email: info@workshop13.org  
Effective Date(s) of License: February 23, 2020 SUNDAY  
Hours of Service (In conformity with MGL): 6:30 pm - 10:30 pm  
Event (describe activities): Ware Community Jazz Band concert  
Anticipated Attendance: 65  
Sponsoring Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
For Profit: Beer & Wine (only) Non Profit: All Alcoholic \_\_\_\_\_ Beer & Wine X  
Address (include Street & Number): 13 Church St. Ware, MA  
Names of All Servers (bartenders) for this event Marie Lauderdale  
Estimated Number of Attendees 65  
Crowd Control Manager Roc Goudreau

I have received, and agree to abide by, all regulations of the Board of Selectmen. Furthermore, pursuant to MGL Chapter 52C, Section 49A, I hereby Certify under penalties of perjury that I, to the best of my knowledge and belief, have filed all state tax returns and all state taxes required under law.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social Security # or Federal I.D.#: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Inspection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Inspection**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: 1/2/2020

Insurance Certificate: 7/9/2020

Application Fee: \$30

Action Taken: Approved Denied Date: 1-2-20

Police Chief Review and Action

Shawn Crevier

Shawn Crevier, Police Chief

2020-4



## Town of Ware Complete Streets Policy

Planning Board vote to recommend: October 16, 2019

Board of Selectmen vote to adopt: January 7, 2020

### I. Vision and Intent

Under this Complete Streets Policy, the Town of Ware shall develop and provide an integrated transportation network that contributes to the safety, health, economic vitality and quality of life of all residents of Ware, especially the most vulnerable.

Non-automobile modes of transportation including bicycling, walking, and public transportation shall be included in the planning and development of all transportation projects in Ware. Motor vehicles will continue to serve personal needs, commerce, and emergency response with reduced pollution and traffic congestion. People of all ages, abilities and circumstances will be able to use a diversity of transportation modes for commuting, shopping, going to school, and recreating, and they will be able to meet their transportation needs safely, conveniently, reliably, affordably and efficiently.

The intent of the Complete Streets Policy is to create an equitable, balanced, and effective transportation system where every transportation user can travel safely and comfortably, and where sustainable transportation options are available to everyone. This integrated transportation system will support healthy and thriving residents, neighborhoods, businesses and cultural life. It will reduce congestion by providing safe travel choices which encourage non- motorized transportation options, and will increase the overall capacity of the transportation network by decreasing consumer transportation costs and carbon footprint.

### II. Core Commitment

The Town of Ware recognizes that all users of the streets deserve a safe and convenient environment as legitimate users of the streets. These users include but are not limited to pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles, transit buses and vans and the people who use them, and users of wheelchairs and other power driven mobility devices.

Ware agrees that projects of all phases including planning, new construction, reconstruction, or maintenance, are potential opportunities to apply the Complete Streets design principals. The town will extend the design, construction, maintenance and operations of the streets to the extent possible to provide a street network of facilities for people of all ages and abilities. Ware's Department of Public Works Highway Division will refer to planning documents including the Ware Bike and Pedestrian Network Plan or Complete Streets Prioritization Plan where applicable; or will use best judgement regarding the feasibility of applying Complete Streets principles for routine roadway maintenance, such as repaving and restriping.

Complete Streets design recommendations shall be incorporated into all publicly and privately funded projects when deemed practical. Infrastructure and street design projects that need approval from the Town of Ware as well as state and federally funded projects include but are not limited to Chapter 90 funding, City improvement grants, State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Grants, MassWorks Infrastructure Program, Community Development Block Grants, Capital funding and other state and federal funds for street and infrastructure design shall all comply with Ware's Complete Streets Policy. Private and related street design shall also comply with Ware's Complete Streets principles. The Complete Streets principles can also extend to state owned highways within Ware's boundaries to include design, construction and maintenance of said roads, when deemed practical and with the approval of the decision makers including the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager. The Board of Selectman shall approve the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan.

#### Exceptions:

Ware's Complete Streets Committee includes: the Town Manager or designee, Public Works Director or designee, Director of Planning and Community Development, Director of Public Health, Public Safety official, Council on Aging Director, Superintendent of Schools or designee, and Parks Manager or designee. This Committee may exclude projects from review, where documentation and data indicate that any of the following apply;

- Roadways where specific users are prohibited by law, such as interstate freeways or pedestrian malls. An effort will be made, in these cases, for accommodations elsewhere.
- Where cost or impacts of accommodation is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use or probable future use.
- The existing right-of-way or adjacent land is constrained in a manner that inhibits the addition of transit, bicycle, or pedestrian movements. In this case, the Town shall consider alternatives such as lane reduction, lane narrowing, on-street parking relocation, shoulders, signage, traffic calming or enforcement.

- Other town policies, regulations, or requirements that contradict or preclude the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy.

### III. Best Practices

Ware's Complete Streets Policy focuses on the development of a connected, combined network that serves all road users. Complete Streets will be integrated into policies, planning, and design for all types of public and private projects that included new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair and maintenance of the transportation network within the Town of Ware.

Implementation of the Complete Streets Policy will be carried out with cooperation from all Town of Ware Departments, private developers, and state, regional, and federal agencies to the greatest extent possible. Ware understands that Complete Streets may be reached through single elements within a particular project or through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over a period of time. The latest design guidance, standards, and recommendations available will be used in the implementation of Complete Streets, including the most up to date versions of:

- American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets (latest edition)
- [The Mass DOT Project Development and Design Guide](#) (2006 or most recent)
- [The Mass DOT Municipal Resource Guide for Bikeability](#) (2019)
- [The Mass DOT Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability](#) (2018)
- [The Small Town and Rural Multimodal Network Guide](#) (FHWA 2016)
- [Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's Healthy Design Toolkit](#)
- [The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MUTCD\)](#)
- [The Architectural Access Board \(AAB\) 521CMR Rules and Regulations](#)
- Documents and Plans created for the Town of Ware, including but not limited to:
  - 2016 Ware Master Plan
  - Ware Bike and Pedestrian Network Plan (when final – in development Fall 2019)
  - Design documents for Main Street Reconstruction
  - Ware Open Space and Recreation Plan
  - Ware's Pavement Management Plan



Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a context sensitive manner in which project implementation is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and social setting. The context sensitive approach to process and design includes a range of goals by considering stakeholder and community values on a level plane with the project need. It includes goals related to livability with greater participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus. The overall goal of this approach is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

#### IV. Implementation

Ware shall make the Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, shall approach every transportation project and program as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all users, and shall work with other departments, agencies and jurisdictions to achieve the Complete Streets goals.

The Complete Streets Policy shall be carried out by the Complete Streets committee to cooperatively implement the Complete Streets initiative. The committee shall elect a chair, vice chair and clerk to organize and run meetings. Major responsibilities of the Complete Streets Committee will be to:

1. Maintain a comprehensive inventory of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that will be used to prioritize projects to eliminate gaps in the sidewalk, pathway and bicycle network, and to promote safe and comfortable routes for utilization of public transit.
2. Make recommendations for revisions to all appropriate zoning and subdivision codes, ordinances, procedures, rules, regulations, guidelines, programs and templates to integrate Complete Streets principles in all street projects.
3. Recommend regular changes for insuring the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy and where necessary, alter existing practices that may act as impediments to implementation.
4. Request feedback from and inform the public to insure that the community perspectives are considered and enacted, as appropriate.
5. Work to integrate Complete Streets principles into all new planning documents, as deemed practical, (master plans, open space, and recreation plans) laws, rules, regulations, programs and templates.

The Town will utilize inter-department coordination to promote the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within the public way.

Ware will train pertinent Town staff and decision makers on Complete Streets principles and best practices for implementing policy through workshops or other appropriate means.

Ware will evaluate projects, as appropriate, within the Capital Improvement Plan to encourage implementation of this policy and will seek out other appropriate sources of funding and grants for the implementation of the Complete Streets policies.

## **V. Performance Measures**

The Complete Streets Committee will develop performance measures to periodically assess the rate, success, and effectiveness of the Complete Streets policy. The group will determine the frequency of assessment and utilize the appropriate standards for analyzing the success of this policy. Some metrics may include:

- Number of new bicycle facilities
- Linear feet of new pedestrian accommodation
- Number of retrofitted facilities or amenities
- Number of intersection improvements made to Improve Level of Service (LOS) and safety for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Rate of children walking or bicycling to school
- Number of trips by mode (bicycle, pedestrian, public transit)

This policy encourages the evaluation and regular reporting of progress on the implementation and maintenance of Complete Streets. The Committee will consider providing an annual report to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen on transportation projects undertaken within the prior year and planned within the coming year and the extent to which these projects meet the objectives of this policy.

NUMBER

2

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF WARE  
USED CAR DEALER'S LICENSE -- CLASS II  
FOR THE SALE OF SECOND-HAND MOTOR VEHICLES**

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 140, Section 58, Class II and  
Section 59\* of the General Laws with amendments thereto

**GILLESPIE CAR CARE 1**

Daniel Hersey/Brian Gillespie

is hereby licensed to buy and sell second-hand motor vehicles at 319 Palmer Road,  
WARE on premises described as follows:

THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT: 319 PALMER ROAD:

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MAP 9 – LOT 138

January 7, 2020

Signed.....

\*For use at 319 Palmer Road, Ware, MA ONLY

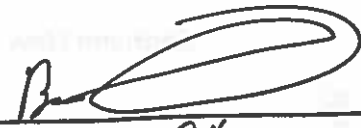
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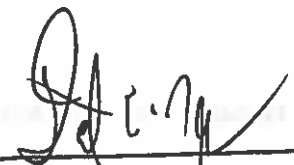
***THIS LICENSE EXPIRES JANUARY 1, 2021***

**THIS LICENSE MUST BE POSTED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE UPON THE PREMISES.**

12-23-19

I Brian Gillespie And Daniel Hersey  
Both own Gillespie Car Care, 319 Palmer  
Road, Wake, MA 01082 (413) 284-7657  
Wish to Remove From our used car  
class 2 Lic that we can park  
on the front lawn. All cars  
will be kept behind the building

x   
Brian Gillespie

x   
Daniel Hersey

Board of Selectmen  
126 Main St  
Ware, Ma 01082

Dear Board Members,

The parking situation on High Street has been a consistent problem for many residents on the street for a number of years. Some of the concerns include difficulty turning onto the street from North or Church Streets, exiting driveways due to parked cars blocking or obstructing the end of driveways, and travel down the street in larger passenger vehicles when cars are parked on both sides of the road.

Although a winter parking ban does alleviate some of the issues in the evening, during the day when the ban is not in place and plow berms are present it is often impossible to exit driveways near the corners if a car is parked on the side of the road.

As a resident of High Street and with these concerns in mind, I am requesting that a safety survey be conducted by the Safety Officer to look into the dangerous parking conditions on High Street. These same conditions exist on many of the residential streets between North Street and Church Street, and can lead to unnecessary accidents with parked cars.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Choquette', with a stylized, cursive script.

Andrew Choquette  
73 North Street  
Ware, Ma 01082

## Midura, Mary

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**From:** Crevier, Shawn  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 2, 2020 1:05 PM  
**To:** Midura, Mary  
**Subject:** RE: Safety Survey Requests

Officer Talbot will get his report to you by end of day tomorrow. But basically he will recommend parking on one side of the street to help rectify the problem.

**From:** Midura, Mary <mmidura@townofware.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 26, 2019 1:55 PM  
**To:** Crevier, Shawn <CrsH@townofware.com>; Czapla, Lu-Ann <Czal@townofware.com>; John Cacela <jcacela@townofware.com>  
**Subject:** Safety Survey Requests

At the December 23, 2019 Board of Selectmen meeting, the attached safety survey request was discussed. Also, a resident requested a safety survey of Pulaski Street. The Board of Selectmen voted to request these safety surveys of High Street and Pulaski Street. Please submit your report by January 2, 2020 for the Board of Selectmen meeting agenda of January 7, 2020. If possible, please ask the safety officer to attend the meeting on January 7, 2020. Thanks very much!

Mary L. Midura  
Executive Assistant to  
Ware Town Manager  
413-967-9648 ext. 101

Office Hours: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Monday – Friday

*Live Simply...Give generously*

To: Chief Crevier

From: Safety Officer Christopher Talbot

In regards to the parking situation on High St. After careful review of the matter I believe these problems can be relieved and or minimized by mandating parking on one side of the street only. I would recommend parking on the North side of High, Cottage, Prospect, School, and Walnut Streets.

Respectfully Submitted,



Safety Officer Christopher Talbot

## Midura, Mary

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**From:** Crevier, Shawn  
**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 1:01 PM  
**To:** Midura, Mary  
**Subject:** RE: parking issues

Copy, don't see any issues with Pulaski St., I have seen large trash trucks and oil trucks turning down Webb and Buckley court. I know in the winter it get tight, but I Can't remember any company calling and reporting that they can not get access to those streets.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Midura, Mary <mmidura@townofware.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 12:45 PM  
**To:** Crevier, Shawn <CrSH@townofware.com>  
**Subject:** RE: parking issues

Kim Mongeau spoke up during the agenda item about High Street, and she stated that the same kind of problems occur on Pulaski Street as noted in the letter about High Street. The Selectmen then asked for a safety survey for High and for Pulaski.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Crevier, Shawn <CrSH@townofware.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 12:39 PM  
**To:** Midura, Mary <mmidura@townofware.com>  
**Subject:** RE: parking issues

Sorry we didn't see in the attachment letter but did see in your email,, do you know what exactly the issue is on Pulaski St.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Midura, Mary <mmidura@townofware.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 12:32 PM  
**To:** Crevier, Shawn <CrSH@townofware.com>  
**Subject:** RE: parking issues

My email from 12/26 also noted a request for a safety survey for Pulaski Street.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Crevier, Shawn <CrSH@townofware.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 12:29 PM  
**To:** Midura, Mary <mmidura@townofware.com>  
**Subject:** parking issues

-----Original Message-----

**From:** warepolice@townofware.com <warepolice@townofware.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 10:36 AM  
**To:** Crevier, Shawn <CrSH@townofware.com>



## Ware Regionalization Study

### Introduction

The Town of Ware hired the services of The Management Solution, Inc. (TMS) to conduct a preliminary feasibility study of regionalizing with a neighboring school district. This report is in response to several questions put forth in a guidance document from the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS), *Steps to Regionalization – Steps A-F*, which provides the framework outlined in the TMS Proposal.

In order to answer the questions in the MARS guidance document, Dr. Judy Houle, SFO, Vice President of Entrepreneurship, and Michael DeBarge, Associate Consultant for Business Services and Special Projects, conducted a review of pertinent documents and interviewed Ware Public Schools administrators in order to better understand the district's programs and facilities. Town Manager, Stuart Beckley, was also interviewed in order to better understand the genesis of the study and to provide the Board of Selectmen with information in order to inform next steps.

This report is divided into six sections, corresponding to the sections of the MARS guidance document. There are some limitations in this work as there has not yet been a partner clearly identified by Ware to engage in this initial stage. Many of the questions that require answers will not be able to be fully answered without a definitive partner in the process. The research done on this project and the extent to which answers can be generated will be outlined in each of the sections below:

Section A: Begin Discussions and Contact DESE

Section B: Identify Incentives to Regionalize

Section C: Determine Type of Region

Section D: Utilized Self-Assessment Tool for Measuring District Capacity

Section E: Determine Advantages to Regionalization

Section F: Determine Challenges to Regionalization

TMS holds no position regarding whether it is either a positive or a negative for a community to be part of a regional school district or not. In each case there are both opportunities and challenges to a formalized relationship of this kind. For towns considering joining or starting a

region there are significant challenges as well as a number of potential benefits. Each town has its own context that must be considered when making this decision. Any advantages or challenges addressed in this report will be drawn solely from the data collected and do not constitute any formal recommendation on whether or not the Town of Ware should or should not pursue regionalizing with another district.

#### **Section A: Begin Discussions and Contact DESE**

The Board of Selectmen engaged in a conversation with the School Committee in 2018. The Ware and Warren Boards of Selectmen held a joint meeting in September 2018 to gauge interest in the possibility of Ware joining the Quaboag Regional School District, which currently includes the towns of Warren and West Brookfield. At that meeting, according to a report posted to MassLive on September 13, 2018, both boards expressed some interest in exploring the possibility of merging:

<https://www.masslive.com/news/2018/09/ware-warren-selectmen-express.html>.

Inquiries were made of three other neighboring districts: Belchertown, Palmer, and Quabbin Regional. None of these districts were interested in pursuing a merger with Ware. An article posted to MassLive on June 27, 2018, the Belchertown School Committee did receive and briefly discuss a letter of inquiry from the Ware Selectmen, indicating that they were not interested in a merger with Ware:

<https://www.masslive.com/news/2018/06/belchertown-school-committee-w.html>. The other districts were queried by phone and did not express interest in a merger.

The TMS team charged with this task, Dr. Judith Houle, SFO, and Mr. Michael DeBarge, contacted the School Governance unit at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to alert them that the town was engaging in this preliminary work. When asked if a specific partner had been identified, the team noted that this was a preliminary study and a definitive partner had not yet been named. The DESE representatives on the call stated that it would be difficult to determine the compatibility of the two districts and define the work ahead without that step.

Given that caveat, the School Governance team did state that there are other ways to partner with area districts. The first is a regionalization of the districts wishing to enter into that agreement. The second is through a cooperative agreement, where two or more districts might be able to share some services without fully regionalizing. The School Governance team noted that there may be some efficiencies and cost savings to be had in either scenario. There would also be some challenges that would need to be addressed in either case. Should the town choose to move forward, Christine Lynch, the head of the School Governance Unit at the Department stated that they are willing to offer assistance.

### Questions to Consider

The MARS guidance document suggests that the initial stages assess five areas of the district's services: academics, quality of programs and services, technology, physical plant, and fiscal issues. The TMS team gathered relevant documents and met with Michael Brown, Director of Information Services and Tech Support, Christopher Dymon, Director of Buildings and Grounds, and Jan Yardley, Director of Accountability, to gather information for this section of the report.

#### 1. Academics

The academic program is a cooperative effort between the Superintendent of Schools, Director of Accountability and Curriculum, Director of Special Education, and principals and assistant principals of Ware's three schools. While there is no written curriculum cycle, all content areas are reviewed on a bi-annual basis. Teachers work with administrators to crosswalk their core programs and additional curriculum resources to ensure that the materials used with students are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The written curriculum documents are currently shared internally. The goal for the 2019-2020 school year is to review all of the documents, finalize the drafts, and then publish them to the district's web site.

The district recently purchased a new Literacy textbook series for grades K-6 from McGraw-Hill Education, titled *Wonders*, selected after the latest curriculum review. Teachers are now in year 2 of its implementation, under a 5-year agreement with the publisher. This textbook series serves as the foundation of the instructional delivery of the English Language Arts curriculum in those grades.

When considering textbook series, which are a key component of any subject area, the partner districts will want to merge products used to ensure that there is consistency among schools within the new entity. The adoption of a textbook series is easily a six-figure expense to any one district, which includes all hard copy materials. Most textbook publishers also offer online components to the series, which require site licenses. Those fees are already part of the annual budget for most school districts, so the likelihood is that the costs would remain the same or might be slightly higher or lower, depending on the publisher. Consumable supplies (workbooks, etc.) are also part of an annual cost. Depending on the textbooks used, the cost differential would likely be minimal for consumables.

In addition to the core content areas of English-Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, all Ware students have the opportunity to participate in courses in the visual and performing arts, as well as physical education and health. Financial constraints



in prior years led to some interrupted services in these areas in Ware, particularly the arts. The Superintendent and School Committee have worked together to find the resources necessary to ensure that the arts are an integral part of the total educational program across the district and these programs are now flourishing. Students at Ware Junior Senior High School are able to take Spanish courses in order to fulfill a foreign language requirement, as well.

The Ware Public Schools have leveraged the power of The Virtual High School, Inc. (VHS) to allow high school students the ability to enhance their education through this online platform. For students wishing to take courses that would not have enough enrollment to support a teacher, this option allows them the opportunity to engage in a wide range of courses. Credit recovery options are available for students who may need some extra coursework to meet requirements. There are options for the study of foreign languages not available at the high school level (French, German, Italian, Latin, and Russian). Expanded offerings in all other disciplines as well as Advanced Placement level courses are available to students who wish to pursue options not available in their brick and mortar environment. Given that many colleges and universities now offer online options as part of their overall coursework, the ability for high school students to have access to online education is helpful to preparing students for college work. The integrity of this program and access to it would also need to be a consideration in any discussion with a potential partner district.

## 2. Quality of Programs and Services

Each year, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education publishes an accountability report for every school and district in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Recent changes in the state's assessment system (MCAS) and changes in the Department's criteria for student and school success have changed the rating system. One of the main purposes of MCAS is to assess the quality of the core academic areas in Massachusetts' public schools. In 2018, the district was noted as making partial progress toward targets for student learning growth, as measured by the MCAS assessments. In 2019, the district was rated as making substantial progress toward those targets. It is clear that recent focus by the district on improving student learning have yielded gains. In addition to these overall academic gains, a focus on increasing student readiness for college and career at the secondary level has resulted in the addition of new opportunities, as outlined below.

At the high school level, several new programs have been implemented in order to give students more options as they look toward readiness for college and career. The first of these programs, designed to introduce students to options in the field of emergency

services, includes two electives. The descriptions of these programs were gathered through document and web site review, as well as information from school administration.

One of these options, *Criminal Justice*, is an introduction to the inner workings of the three significant law functions within the United States: Law Enforcement, Courts, and Corrections. Students interact with members of law enforcement, corrections, and the court system as a means for learning from their professional experiences.

In addition to the Criminal Justice Program, Ware Juniors and Seniors can take *Introduction to Fire Fighting and Emergency Medical Services*. Students who choose this course are instructed utilizing the same information taught at the Massachusetts Fire Academy. They learn the roles and responsibilities Firefighters and EMTs play in their community. In partnership with the Ware Fire Department (WFD), students travel to the WFD training facilities to learn about firefighting tools, practice search and rescue, and some basic skills necessary as prerequisites to becoming an Emergency Medical Technician. Ware has recently been recognized by the State Fire Marshal's office as a pioneer in this area and a model they would like to replicate in other districts.

In the fall of 2019, Ware High School implemented a Certified Nursing Assistant Program with a \$20,000.00 grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As part of the implementation plan, the district sought and was awarded an additional mini-grant from The Baystate Mary Lane and Baystate Wing Hospital Community Benefit Advisory Council. This grant program is designed to benefit local community-based nonprofit organizations who are helping address unmet health and social needs in the Quaboag Hills Region of Hampshire, Hampden and Worcester County. Grant funds were awarded to the Ware High School Certified Nursing (CNA) Training Program held in collaboration with Holyoke Community College. The funds from the state and Baystate helped to support set up of the CNA program that began in September. The curriculum offers 260 hours of classroom instruction and 48 hours of clinical training for Ware High School students as an elective. The program, which includes career pathway advising and job placement services, also provides the students with Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aide certification, CPR/First Aid, and Healthcare Interactive for basic or advanced dementia care.

Grade 12 students may also enroll in community college courses for dual credit at both the high school and college level. This gives students an opportunity to experience the rigor of college-level content either online at school or on the campus of an area college.

The district has also embarked on an initiative to increase opportunities for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) offerings across the district.



The Ware Middle School was recently awarded a grant to bring Steampunkinetics, teamwork, and creative problem-solving workshops to students in the district. ModVic is excited to be working with the Ware Public Schools on efforts to bring the themes of resiliency and artistic “recycling” to local classrooms. Funding from the Mass Cultural Council – STARS Residency FY20 will be earmarked for selected students from Ware Middle School to participate in the artist-in-residence program with ModVic.

Students in grades 7 and 8 at Ware Junior Senior High School now have the opportunity to study computer science and computational thinking as part of their overall program of studies. A computer science teacher was hired, effective with the 2019-20 school year, to offer these classes to the students. High school students have the opportunity to build on these skills with electives in the areas of computer programming, coding, and principles of engineering. The principles of engineering course are also designed to prepare students for career pathways in the areas of manufacturing and construction.

These recent expansions to the course offerings and opportunities allow students to apply their learning to real-world contexts. The variety of offerings give students the chance to sample college and career pathways, while they pursue their passions. The unique offerings provided by the Ware Public Schools, particularly in the areas of emergency services and health sciences, are not commonly found in other districts and are indicative of the direction into deeper learning that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is promoting since the appointment of its new Commissioner, Jeffrey Riley.

These offerings could be considered advantageous by a partner district, particularly at the high school level. If students from another geographic location wished to participate, there would need to be a consideration for transportation to Ware High School for all or part of those students’ school day.

### 3. Technology

In recent years, the Ware Public Schools have made significant efforts to expand the availability and use of technology for instructional purposes. These efforts have primarily manifested through exposing teachers to new technology they can, in turn, make available in the classroom, and strongly emphasizing computer and technology safety to staff and students. The district Technology Plan available on the Ware Schools website provides insight into the technology goals and progress made in achieving them.

Wi-Fi access for devices in the Ware Schools is in its final stages. The current focus is on ensuring cell phones and other mobile devices have access to the wireless network.

Continued effort is also being applied to upgrading and maintaining firewalls to ensure safe access and use of the schools' technology resources and compliance with Federal laws for the protection of minors on the Internet. Other developments have included hiring increasing the number of computer and engineering teachers in the district, indicating the district's focus on improving technology instruction for students.

The district's technology goals are primarily focused on increasing accessibility for interested people, whether staff or students. This may not result in 1:1 district technology. Different instructional methods result in varying levels of interest in using technology in the classroom for both teachers and students. The IT staff continues to make use of its available resources, including limited personnel, to service the district's technology needs. The campus location allows for the IT staff to easily move to schools and classrooms where they are needed, and the district maintains its own underground fiber network that ensures greater control and adaptability to new technology needs.

The establishment of a regional school district would pose technology related challenges, as well as potential advantages. Ware has, in addition to its own underground fiber network, unified phone and key card lock systems that are district wide. A new regional district may not be able to take full advantage of the fiber network, and both the phone and key card lock systems would need to be expanded to include the whole district, or Ware would need to adopt the systems of their partner district, which would have to be factored into the cost considerations of a merger. The IT staff would also be unable to access other buildings in the regional district with the same ease as those on the Ware campus, which could result in overextending the IT department and necessitating that new positions be added to this department, which would most likely come from a partner district. However, there would need to be consideration of whether or not a combined IT staff would be sufficient to meet the need of an expanded regional district. Of crucial concern is ensuring that the technology goals established by the Ware Public Schools align with those of potential partners in creating a regional district.

As noted above, key issues to consider in this process are the merging of two networks. There would be two ways of doing this. First is establishing a Wide Area Network (WAN), which would involve the installation of fiber optic wiring between the two districts. Depending on the partner district, a feasibility study would be necessary to determine if and how this could be done. There would be a capital outlay cost that would be borne by the partners as well as routine maintenance that would need to be resourced in both personnel and money. The second method for merging the networks would be to ensure that all district-level applications are cloud-hosted on remote servers, which would not require wiring but would include ongoing costs for hosting these applications.



A merging of systems between the two districts would also be required. For example, reporting requirements by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education mean that each school district in the Commonwealth submit student and staff data by way of an upload from a Student Information System (SIS) to the Department. These data are reported quarterly and annually by district and then broken down by schools within that district. If the partner district and the Ware Public Schools do not have the same SIS, then there would be a need to determine which system the new district would use. If either or both districts' systems were hosted on a local server, there would be the need to host that system on a remote server. This would involve licensing fees that would be an annual recurring cost. Even if the districts were to utilize a WAN, the need to cloud host student data for reporting purposes would be an additional cost.

Another area for consideration is financial accounting systems. Due to key functions such as payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and tracking expenditures, as well as reporting requirements, both districts would need to merge into a single system. Regardless of whether or not the districts were connected by a WAN, this would also require a cloud-hosted solution or a single district-wide server so the transactions and data reporting from both entities can be reported as one.

The third and most important consideration are the systems used by teachers and students for instruction. Currently, the Ware Public Schools use Microsoft Office and its Teams platform for this purpose. The other products that many schools use are Google and Google Classroom. Depending on the partner district, that would also be a potential additional cost to merge them to a common platform. This would be particularly important for Ware students who may attend school in another town or students from another town in the new district attending Ware schools.

#### 4. Physical Plant

The Ware Public Schools are comprised of three academic buildings. Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School serves grades Pre-K through grade 3, Ware Middle School houses grade 4 through grade 6, and Ware Junior/ Senior High School contains grades 7 through 12. The three buildings are located on the same campus, providing easy access for district personnel to all three buildings.

The Ware Public Schools also have several large renovation projects that require immediate and near future attention. First, the boilers at the elementary school are being replaced. The current boilers are originals, making them around 50 years old. The project is estimated to cost around \$1 million. The age of the current boilers makes this project's timely completion imperative. Second, the exterior doors and windows of Ware Middle



Schools are scheduled to be replaced in the spring of 2020. The doors are about 60 years old, and their replacement is necessary in order to meet safety requirements. There are two other major projects that need to be completed in the near future, which are refurbishing the outside track and repaving the parking lots and driveways. These are all necessary renovations that cannot be postponed, and therefore must be considered in the decision-making process as to whether or not Ware should merge with another partner.

Due to the necessary major renovations scheduled to begin presently and in the near future, the MSBA requires districts to consider regionalizing with a neighboring community as a cost saving method. Closing a building in need of major renovations would cut expenses considerably, but with each academic building in Ware at full capacity, a neighboring community would have to be able to absorb an entire building's worth of students and staff to make that possible. While the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has made providing funds for districts interested in regionalizing a priority, it is unclear whether enough funds would be made available to enable a potential regional district to expand an existing school to accommodate Ware's students and staff or for Ware's school buildings to accommodate students from a neighboring district. A more comprehensive facilities study with a clearly identified partner would need to be conducted to make this determination.

The other cost saving potential for facilities is the ability to close a building. Maintaining an academic building is a major expense for any school district. Utilities alone are a considerable proportion of a district's facilities' budget. Recurring and expected expenses associated with the building's heat, water, sewer, pest control, power/electricity, and general maintenance are also joined with unexpected costs such as damage, vandalism, or unexpected but necessary repairs. Regionalizing a school district presents the opportunity for one or more of the districts to close a building as services are consolidated in the most efficient manner possible. A key question is whether a newly combined regional school district could close a building based on current and future capacities.

Despite facing a slight enrollment decline between 2015-2019 (see Table 1 below), all three of Ware's academic buildings are at full capacity. The enrollment decline would either have to continue at its current rate for several years to begin to open space or the rate of decline would need to increase considerably. At present, this is not an option for Ware Schools unless a new regional district has enough space to absorb an entire building's worth of staff and students. Quaboag Regional School District, as of now the only district which has expressed interest in beginning discussions to form a regional district, would therefore need to have enough space in its buildings to house an entire building's worth of Ware students.

Quaboag has three academic buildings for the entire regional district: an elementary school in each Warren and West Brookfield, and a combined Middle/ High School. The total district student population is 1,303 as of the 2018-2019 school year. The total enrollment rose to around 1,400 students in each 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 before dropping off to its current level. The enrollment trend is less clear in Quaboag than in Ware, but without a more detailed analysis of the potential partner, it is difficult to determine whether the declining enrollment in each district would allow for a building closure in the next few years. As of the time of this report, it appears unlikely that a building could be closed in either Ware or Quaboag in the event the two regionalize.

**Table 1: District Enrollment - Ware**

Academic Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of students enrolled in WPS	1,241	1,269	1,226	1,213	1,189	1134
Percent change from previous year		2.3%	-3.4%	-1.1%	-2.0%	-4.6%

\*Data sourced from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website and Ware Public Schools.

#### 5. Fiscal issues

The fiscal impacts on a combined district, both short- and long-term, are ones that will need to be considered, moving forward. Major considerations are transportation, human resources, computer networks, and facilities. Computer networks and facilities have been addressed in earlier sections of this report, so this section will address the transportation, human resources, and school choice areas. For the purposes of this study, the Quaboag Regional School District has been used as a comparison, as this district is the only one expressing interest in pursuing regionalization with Ware at the current time.

Transportation: This is an area that can prove to have the most financial savings for a regional district. The annual state budget provides for reimbursement of transportation for regional school districts, recognizing the additional miles that are required to bus students across towns within a single entity. State law defines that reimbursement as applicable to students who live one and a half miles or more from the school of attendance. Students who are transported less than that distance are not able to be counted in the reimbursement rate. If a shuttle is required to get a student from one school to another, that shuttle is fully reimbursable, even if the distance traveled on one or the other vehicle is less than 1½ miles (Massachusetts General Law c. 71, §16C).

The amount of the reimbursement by the Commonwealth varies from year-to-year. The maximum amount is 80% of the transportation cost. However, the law states that this is "subject to appropriation," so it is not a guaranteed rate from year-to-year. It is difficult to quantify a potential savings to the Town of Ware at this point in time.

Looking at the Quaboag Regional School District budget for FY20, the total transportation budget is \$1,584,547.00. According to the budget document reviewed for this report. The anticipated regional transportation reimbursement for FY20 is \$712,421.00 or 45% of the total cost of transportation, which would be indicative of the fact that not all students live at or beyond 1½ miles from their school of attendance. The FY20 transportation budget for Ware is \$1,605,077.00. What percentage of this amount would be reimbursable would be contingent on how many students would reside at or outside of the 1½ mile radius from the school of attendance. Any lengthening of routes due to transporting students to towns within a merged district would also need to be considered as likely increases to overall transportation costs yet could be eligible for additional reimbursement.

**Human Resources:** The business of education is extremely labor-intensive. School districts require administrators to oversee all operations and drive curriculum and instruction improvements. Classrooms need teachers, students with special needs require specially licensed teachers to meet their needs, and support staff are needed to assist in this work. Students are fed 1-2 times daily, requiring staff to run food service operations. Nursing staff are necessary to ensure the health and well-being of all students. Custodial and maintenance staff are required to ensure that buildings are clean, safe, and properly maintained. Both at the state and national levels, it is estimated that these costs comprise approximately 67% percent of the overall budget for any school district. When looking at the prospect of regionalization through a fiscal lens, this analysis is critical to determine what savings and/or additional costs would be borne by a regional system.

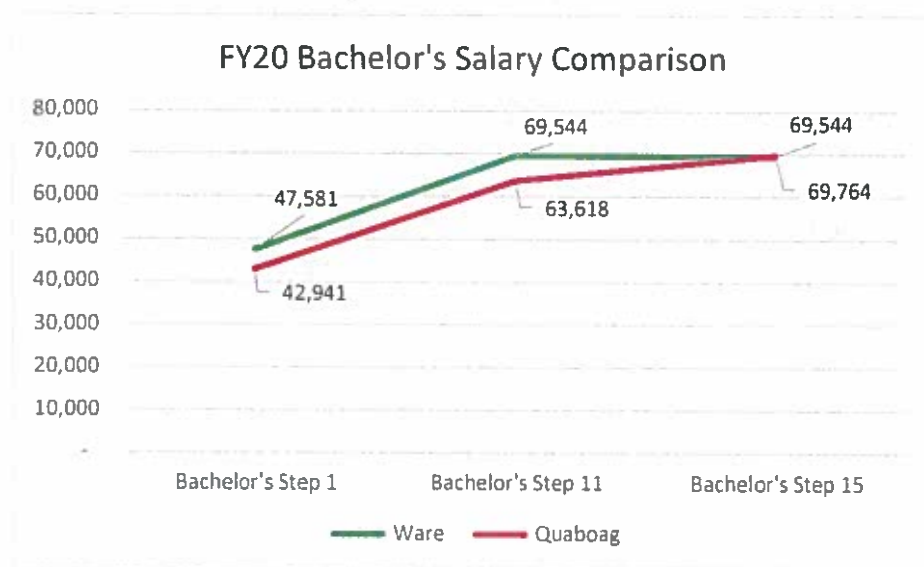
Salaries are the largest portion of this consideration, alongside benefits offered to employees. For the purposes of this exercise, an analysis of the teachers' salary scales for Ware and Quaboag Regional was conducted, as teachers make up the largest employee group in any school district. Both districts have a similar step/lane structure, with financial incentives for both experience and education built in. The lanes are commensurate with degree earned and extra credits beyond the degree as follows:

- Bachelor's Degree
- Bachelor's +15 Credit Hours
- Master's Degree
- Master's +15 Credit Hours
- Master's +30 Credit Hours
- Master's +45 Credit Hours (or PhD).

It should be noted that teachers must have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree to enter the profession with an initial license. In order to maintain licensure, they are required to get a Master's Degree within 5 years of employment. In order to retain their licenses, they must continually update their training and expertise through professional workshops and/or additional coursework.

Depending on education, Ware teachers can be on an 11-step, 12-step, or 13-step scale, commensurate with their experience. Quaboag teachers have a 15-step scale for experience at all educational levels. The figures below compare the FY20 salary scales for both districts at the beginning of the scale, the appropriate top of the Ware scale by educational level with a comparison at the same level for Quaboag, and the top step for Quaboag at all levels.

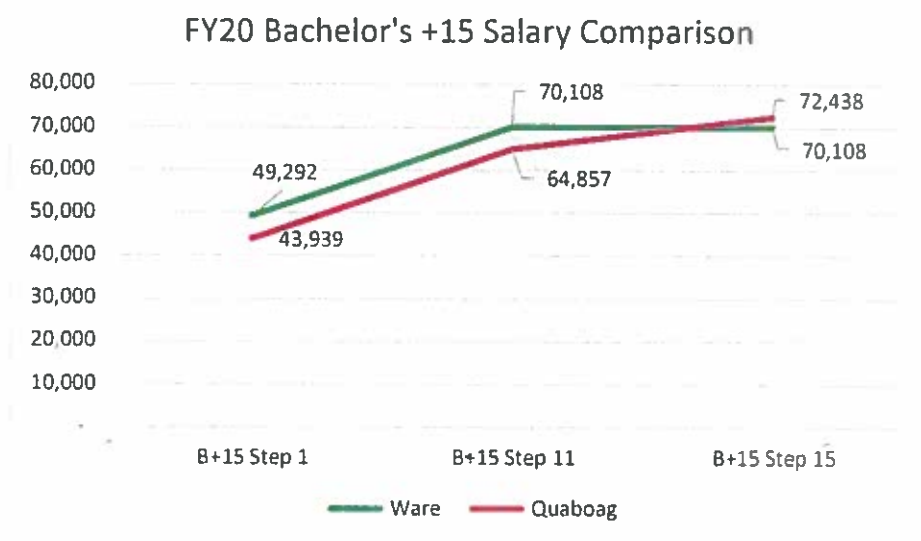
**Figure 1: FY20 Bachelor's Salary Comparison**



**Note:** The Ware salary scale at the Bachelor's level peaks at Step 11. Quaboag continues on to Step 15 (each step is equivalent to a year's experience).

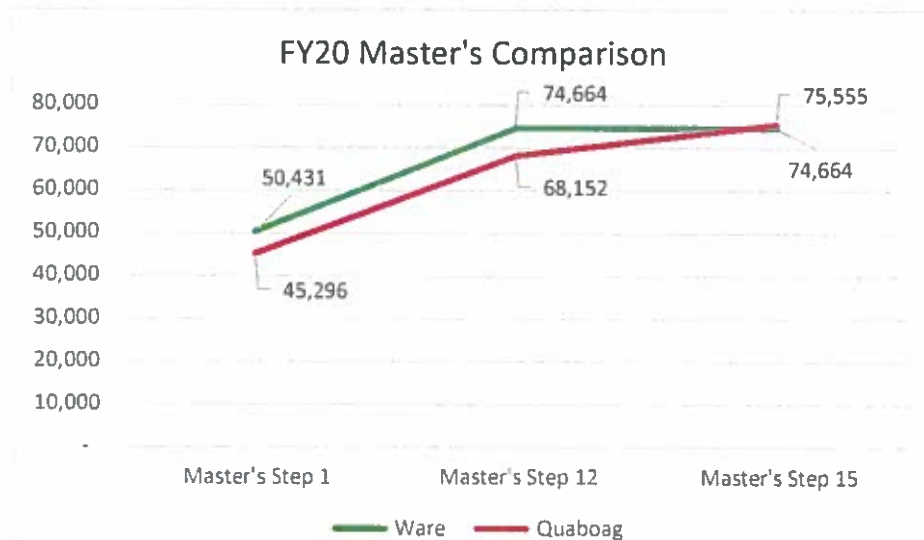


**Figure 2: FY20 Bachelor's +15 Extra Credit Hours Comparison**



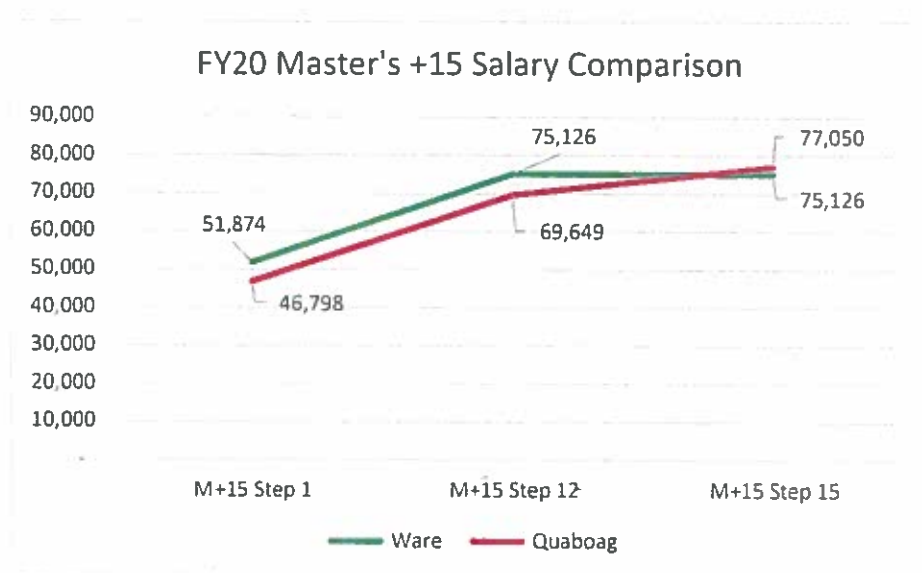
Note: The Ware salary scale at the Bachelor's +15 level peaks at Step 11. Quaboag continues on to Step 15.

**Figure 3: FY20 Master's Degree Comparison**



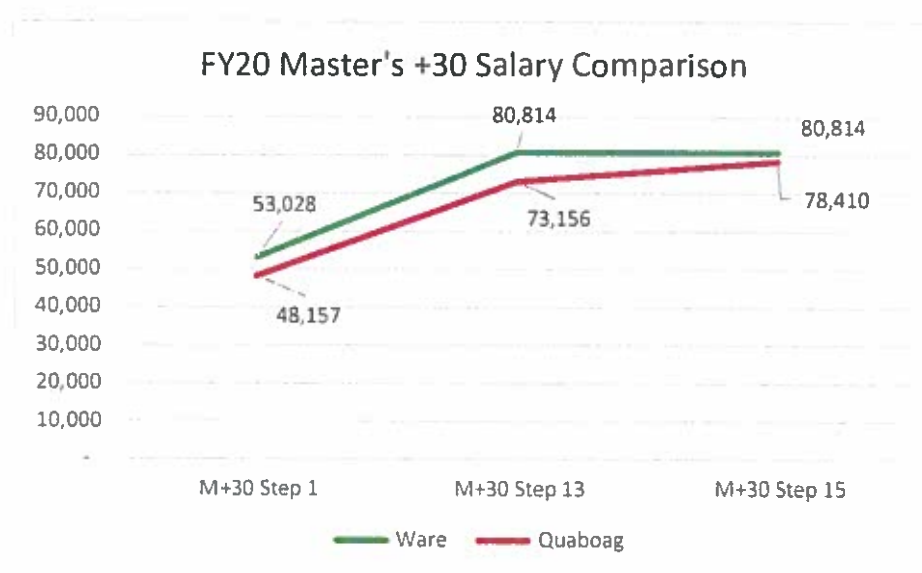
Note: The Ware salary scale at the Master's level peaks at Step 12. Quaboag continues on to Step 15.

**Figure 4: FY20 Master's +15 Extra Credit Hours Comparison**



**Note:** The Ware salary scale at the Master's +15 level peaks at Step 12. Quaboag continues on to Step 15.

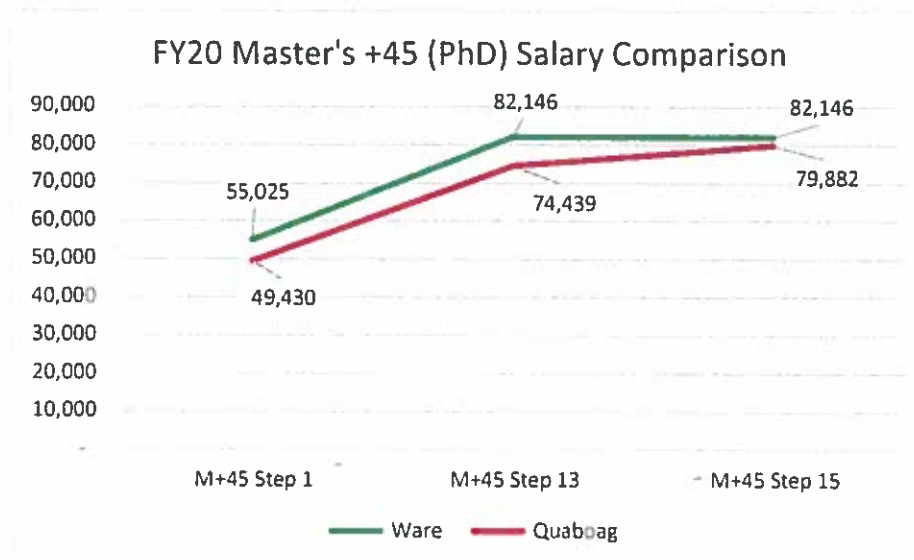
**Figure 5: FY20 Master's +30 Credit Hours Comparison**



**Note:** The Ware salary scale at the Master's +30 level peaks at Step 13. Quaboag continues on to Step 15.



**Figure 6: FY20 Master's +45 (PhD) Comparison**



**Note:** The Ware salary scale at the Master's +45 level peaks at Step 13. Quaboag continues on to Step 15.

A full comparison of these salary scales is contained in Appendix A of this report. The real cost of the disparities in the two salary scales is beyond the scope of this report. These costs would be determined by the number of teachers (and employees within any classification) in each district and the impact on the total cost of those salaries on the overall budget of a newly merged district. If Ware and Quaboag were to enter into an agreement to pursue regionalization, a more thorough analysis of these salaries, in addition to all other salaries, would need to be conducted.

This raises another issue for consideration, that of salaries and benefits for the employees of a newly merged district. Any employee groups covered by collective bargaining would require negotiating new contracts that ensure the integrity of the compensation and benefits packages for all. Massachusetts General Law c. 71, §42B requires that each teacher be paid no less than s/he is making in their current position. Based on the differences in any two collective bargaining agreements, this will require one of the two entities to increase their labor costs accordingly, which would increase labor costs borne by the entire regional district. These costs are unknown at this time and will not be able to be fully known if or until these negotiations were to proceed.

For the purposes of this analysis, benefits include any non-salary compensation as well as health insurance. As mentioned previously, due to the role of collective bargaining in

determining compensation, an exact or even approximate figure for a regional district's costs in this area is difficult to determine without a definitive partner. Non-salary compensation includes longevity, stipends, and other forms of extra duty pay awarded to qualified/ participating staff members. These forms of compensation are contractually determined via collective bargaining, so the cost of bringing the disparities between Ware and its potential partner are unknown. A comparison of a few common varieties of extra duty pay in Table 2 demonstrates how contract negotiations can result in specific arrangements for compensation. These specific conditions can significantly impact the total costs for a district, and without a definitive partner with whom costs can be compared, it is not possible to estimate the total costs at this time.

**Table 2: Extra Duty Pay Comparison**

Extra Duty Type	Ware	Quaboag
Department Chair	2 teachers: \$1537 5 teachers: \$2422 *Average increase of \$295 per additional teacher	≤ 5 teachers: \$3400 \$250 for each additional teacher over 5 Ex. 6 teachers: \$3650
Longevity	12-15 years: \$250 16-20 years: \$500 21-25 years: \$875 26-29 years: \$1050 29+ years: \$1250	14-18 years: \$700 19-23 years: \$900 42+ years: \$1100
Teaching Mentor	1 mentee: \$600 2 mentees: \$850	\$1500

Insurance benefits are also difficult to compare between districts. Insurance rates are dictated by the pool of people who pay into the policy, as well as what contract negotiations determine to be the employee and employer shares of insurance costs. As



such, this is another area where the lack of concrete negotiations complicates the ability to present specific figures on costs. The increased number of staff in the new regional district might increase overall costs for insurance, particularly if the employer/employee share of the costs would require one or the other entity to increase the employer share. The likelihood of the lowest employer contribution rate being agreed to by staff is dependent upon what is decided in negotiations as applied to pay and benefits, and relevant labor law restrictions and requirements. The table below compares some of the insurance rates and benefits that Ware and Quaboag offer its employees. The comparison illustrates the need for the partners to create uniform rates and benefits across the new regional district, and the additional expenses that will come along with that.

**Table 3: Insurance Rates Comparison**

District	Plans Offered	Monthly Premium (Individual/ family)	Employee Contribution (21 pays) (Individual/ Family)	Employee Contribution (26 pays) (Individual/ Family)
Ware	HMO Blue NE;  Blue Care PPO	\$679.84/ \$1699.49; \$717.35/ \$1708.09	\$77.70/ \$194.23; \$102.48/ \$256.87	\$62.75/ \$156.88; \$82.77/ \$207.47
Quaboag	HMO Blue NE;  Preferred Blue PPO	\$804.26/ \$2109.61; \$995.19/ \$2610.54	\$201.07/ \$527.40; \$248.80/ \$652.64	\$92.80/ \$243.42; \$115.85/ \$303.88

\*Data sourced from respective districts' summary of benefits packets.

**District and School-Level Administration:** A common area for examination of the potential savings in a regionalization proposal is district- and school-level administration. At the district level, the positions are charged with overall operations of the district. These include policy and regulations to ensure student and staff safety, finances, human resources oversight, buildings and grounds maintenance and upkeep, food service operations, technology and related systems, curriculum, instruction, and building-specific functions in all of these areas. While a merged district might mean that these functions can be merged in some areas, the expansion of the number of schools, students, and staff

members might result in the increase in the number of administrators, and the staff to support them, necessary to run district operations. This will need careful examination should Ware choose to move forward with more concrete actions.

**School Choice:** An area where there is likely potential for savings in the event Ware does pursue regionalization is in school choice. State law requires that any school district which receives students who live outside of the town in which they attend school shall receive tuition from the school that the student would otherwise attend. As a result, a district can either receive or expend significant amounts of money solely on the basis of how many students choose to “choice-in” or “choice-out” of that district. Table 4 illustrates the districts that the most Ware students “choice-in” to and the financial impact to the town.

Quaboag Regional School District receives the third highest level of Ware resident students, resulting in Ware Schools paying almost \$150,000, as of FY19. If Ware were to join Quaboag, these students would no longer be leaving the district. It is also possible that other students who are leaving Ware might choose to stay in-district due to course or service offerings that the regional district could provide. However, the largest destination for Ware residents, Quabbin Regional School District, receives approximately \$450,000 from Ware in school choice payments, and this would be unlikely to decrease significantly as a result of regionalizing. Due to the many factors that go into a family’s decision to send their child to a specific school district, it is difficult to predict with certainty how much would be saved through regionalizing. The most conservative approximation would suggest that most if not all of the students who choice into Quaboag would remain in Quaboag should Ware join, resulting in approximately \$150,000 in savings to the town. On the flip side, any students who choice into Ware from a partner district would also now become part of the in-district student enrollment. As a result, the district would lose their School Choice reimbursement for these students and the towns would need to apply at least some of these savings to the lost revenue on the school side in order to maintain educational programming for these students. (See page 19 for Table 4.)

**Table 4: School Choice by Receiving District**

District Receiving	2018 FTE	2018 Tuition	2019 FTE	2019 Tuition
Quabbin	74.5	\$450,193	80.3	\$459,354
Belchertown	45	\$260,219	36	\$198,155
Quaboag	24.2	\$124,849	29.1	\$149,180
Amherst	4	\$30,822	3	\$23,580
North Brookfield	3.2	\$18,858	4	\$24,230
Palmer	2	\$10,000	2	\$10,000
Amherst-Pelham	2	\$11,897	4	\$22,555
<b>Total all districts</b>	<b>174.75</b>	<b>\$1,017,030</b>	<b>188.9</b>	<b>\$1,089,058</b>

## **Section B: Identify Incentives to Regionalize**

In discussions had at a variety of levels and an examination of source documents available to the TMS team, the incentives to regionalize seem to be primarily financial in nature. The purpose of this initial study was to determine if there are cost savings to be had by regionalizing with another school district and, if so, how much.

Funding for public school education has been an issue for many years in Massachusetts. The last real reform of the funding formula at the state level was enacted in 1992. After years of advocacy by educational groups across the Commonwealth, the Legislature has taken up this cause in earnest resulting in passage of the Student Opportunity Act of 2019. The full impact of the next round of reform to the state funding formula is not fully known as of the writing of this report, however, a 7-year phase-in period of increasing the state's contribution to the funding of public education is the result of this legislation.

The increase in mandates from the Federal Education Department and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has placed demands on public schools at an alarming rate. High-stakes accountability systems that include statewide testing that is migrating to fully online assessments have required districts to add technology resources in rapid succession. Curriculum revisions and initiatives driven by growth in the technology sector have added to this increased load. Schools are now dealing with a multitude of learning and societal issues that have caused them to add to their behavioral health staff, increased the need for additional special education resources, add to building security, and institute new health requirements including healthy options in school breakfast and lunch programs. Many of these initiatives have not come with necessary funding to institute them and schools are being asked to do more with fewer resources.

Local towns in Western Massachusetts in particular have found themselves trying to do more with limited resources as much of Massachusetts' economic growth has been focused geographically east of Route 495. As a result, towns are looking to find ways to economize and Ware is no exception.

The question remains before the town as to whether or not enough savings can be realized to make regionalization advantageous to the town. This study has begun to identify areas in which there may be cost savings. However, there are other areas in which there may be increases in costs to one or both partners in this endeavor. Whether or not the savings will outweigh the costs cannot be fully determined at this time.

### **Section C: Determine Type of Region**

If the town decides to pursue this option, there are several ways in which to go. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education outlines two different models of regionalization that would be applicable in this situation. Additionally, per the Office of School Governance at the Department, an option to share services without fully merging is a possibility.

**Model #1: Two or More Towns form Regional District:** Two or more towns join to form a new regional school district. Regionalization can occur at the elementary school level, the secondary school level or an entire district, Pre-K through 12. If Ware were to find another partner interested in regionalizing, there would need to be decisions made as to what levels would regionalize: elementary, secondary, or full district.

**Model #2: Current Region Enlarges to include new Town(s):** An existing regional school district enlarges to include one or more new towns not currently in the region. At the current time, the Ware selectboard has approached the town of Warren, which is one of the two towns in the Quaboag Regional School District. Were this path to be pursued, then Ware would become part of the Quaboag Regional School District.

Before any forward movement can take place, if the town so chooses, a determination of who would be a partner would then resolve the question of which of these models would make the best sense. Once a definitive partner is identified, then the town could begin to take the steps necessary to join an existing regional district or create a new one with another stand-alone district.

At the point of determining which type of model to pursue that is approved by all towns concerned, either a current regional agreement would need to be amended or a new regional agreement would need to be written. This agreement would define the district, the terms under which the towns involved would come together, the make-up of a new or expanded School Committee to oversee the district, and a revamping of the financial structure from a stand-alone model to a regional model. This is a lengthy process, which would take place over the course of 2-3 years before being finalized. Once the initial stages are set in motion, determining the scope of academic programming and support services, merging technology and academic delivery systems, and collective bargaining of all contracts would need to take place before the final merger becomes complete.

Another option that can be pursued without full-on regionalization is the sharing of services between two districts. Economies of scale can take place without necessarily entering into a total overhaul of the current district. Agreements that allow for the sharing of appropriate

services can be crafted. Another approach is joint bidding of services in order to realize savings. In the past, the Ware Public Schools have taken advantage of joint bidding for transportation and other services that have resulted in cost savings.

#### **Section D: Utilized Self-Assessment Tool for Measuring District Capacity**

The Special Commission On School District Collaboration & Regionalization released its report to the State Legislature in August 2011. The framework for this preliminary study is based on aspects of regionalization that they recommend be pursued by interested partners in the early stages of this discussion.

They also suggest that the potential partners engage in a self-assessment process that delves into these topics in depth. The purpose is to determine compatibility between districts. Since its publication, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has begun to sunset its District Analysis Review Tool (DART), upon which many of the questions in the survey were built. The Department has replaced this tool with a new tool, Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR), which yields much of the same information. Much of what is available to districts is housed in the district's online security portal at the Department, as it is tied to student-specific information, which was not available to the TMS Team for reasons of student privacy.

A look at the publicly available information on RADAR, both Ware and Quaboag share many of the same demographic issues, such as:

- declining enrollments,
- similar achievement levels on state assessments,
- similar staffing levels per 100 students, and
- similar spending levels above Net School Spending (Ware = 106%, Quaboag = 103%).

A difference discovered in the data is in the per pupil spending in each of the districts. As of 2019, Ware's per pupil amount is \$14,648 and Quaboag's per pupil amount is \$13,772, a difference of \$876 per student. When comparing special education percentages, Ware has 20% of its student population identified as students with disabilities and Quaboag has 17.2% of its population identified as students with disabilities. These differences could account for some of the differences in costs. Other factors could also be driving these numbers, such as the disparities in salaries noted above or the regional transportation reimbursement. Whether or not Ware could reap some benefits of merging with Quaboag or any other district, driving down their per pupil expenditures, is unknown at the moment in time.

If the town decides to move forward with regionalization and selects a partner with whom to work, it would be appropriate for both entities to complete the self-assessment tool with the



updated resources available to them. A copy of the Self-Assessment Tool for Measuring District Capacity is contained in Appendix B of this report and would be a logical next step should the town decide to move forward.

#### **Section E: Determine Advantages to Regionalization**

As noted in the introduction to this study, TMS holds no opinion as to whether or not the Ware Public Schools should join another regional district or merge with another town to form a new one. However, there are potential advantages to this process.

First is the expansion of educational opportunities for all students in a combined district. Ware's recent focus on emergency responder and Certified Nursing Assistant programs for high school students are unique initiatives and may be curricular options that a partner district might find attractive. Depending on the partner district, there may be programs that Ware does not offer but Ware's students might be interested in accessing. This aspect of regionalizing should be considered when talking to potential partners.

Second is potential cost savings. The greatest amount of savings would be in the areas of transportation and school choice. Depending on the number of eligible students who could qualify for a transportation reimbursement, coupled with how Ware would be assessed for its share of a regional budget, would drive how much would actually be saved. School choice savings would be driven by which district would be the partner, thereby eliminating school choice from that district, and how advantageous Ware families might decide it would be to stay in district rather than choice out. This is a double-edged sword of sorts. As noted above, there could be a loss of school choice reimbursement from students who choice into Ware and that would require a means to make up for lost revenue received for these students.

The other area that could result in cost savings is in central services to the district. Assessing the administrative resource needs for a newly merged district will be a crucial next step in determining what the staffing levels should be in order to make that determination. This is difficult to assess at this time without a definitive partner at the table.

#### **Section F: Determine Challenges to Regionalization**

The challenges to regionalization have been noted throughout this report. The purpose of this section is to highlight those challenges in a single place as well as lay out other challenges that Ware would face in this process.

#### 1. Merging Academic Programs

As noted above, different districts use different instructional materials to provide an education that is aligned with state curriculum standards and to improve student achievement and growth. For the sake of consistency across a newly merged district, there would need to be a common set of materials. Depending on the partner and the materials used, there would need to be some negotiations around what materials would be used, causing the new district to expend significant amounts of dollars to ensure that the education of all students is grounded in a common set of instructional materials.

#### 2. Merging Technology Networks and Systems

An examination of whether or not a WAN could be established, along with potentially moving from locally hosted to cloud-based server hosting of programs will be a necessary first step. The two districts would also need to assess systems for maintaining key functions like student and staff data and financial accounting/payroll to see if there are common platforms being used or if an investment in new platforms would need to be made to unify the district and its functions. On the academic side, there would need to be a merging of technology used to support instruction, which could result in additional costs at the outset. Should Ware decide to move in this direction with a definitive partner, an assessment of these key functions within the realm of technology would need to be conducted to see what would be involved in moving forward.

#### 3. Employee-associated Costs

In the examples used outlined above, there is a high likelihood that there could potentially be additional costs as all contracts would need to be renegotiated. These negotiations cannot, by law, result in any loss of salary for employees, so new contracts would have to ensure equity for all in a new district. Additional benefits costs would also need to be considered where applicable.

#### 4. Willingness of the Community

The final and potentially greatest challenge to regionalization is the willingness of the community to merge with another district. A new district would mean a change of identity for the Ware Public Schools in some form. One thing that we discovered in the process of collecting the data in this report is a great sense of pride that exists in Ware regarding its schools. From athletics to academics, Ware's identity as a stand-alone district is strong. There would be a loss of this identity in some respects, whether Ware chooses to join another already established regional district or merges with another single town to create



a new regional district entity. A series of conversations with community stakeholders would be necessary to assess whether or not there is a willingness to make this move and if the will of the community is sufficient to outweigh any potential savings or additional costs.

#### **Next Steps:**

Recommended next steps in this process, should the Ware Selectboard choose to move forward, will be to expand the conversations to be had at all levels of the community. The Finance and School Committees are necessary entities with which the Selectboard needs to discuss this issue so that all can weigh the advantages and disadvantages of a potential merger with another district. Should there be consensus to move forward, a search for a potential partner or partners would be a next step. This will then allow for this initial analysis to be conducted in greater depth, using the Capacity Assessment Tool in Appendix B and expanding on the data that were gathered relative to the topics discussed in this report.

Most importantly, the broader community must be engaged in this process. Community surveys can yield some information, but a series of focus group interviews with various stakeholder groups in the town will ensure that town officials are clearly hearing the voice of the community with regard to this important decision.

Massachusetts General Law c.71, §14 dictates the process required by districts who choose to take the next step of regionalization through the establishment of a Regional Planning Committee. A warrant needs to be placed on a Town Meeting agenda to vote to establish this committee, which is then appointed by the Town Moderator. The charge of this Committee is to fully examine, with a clearly identified partner, the possibility and processes needed to regionalize. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education clearly establishes the duties of this committee, as noted below.

It should be understood that the vote authorizes the formation of a committee to **study** regionalization. It does not authorize the formation of the region. This initial vote provides a process by which the town can gather pertinent information and report back its findings about forming a region or modifying an existing one. The vote by the electorate to authorize regionalization will only take place after all of the issues have been examined. To prepare for the upcoming Town Meeting votes, your group will need to share the information you learned during your data gathering and initial discussions with the community.

The information should include:

- Enrollment Data - enrollment for the past five years and at least five years going forward
- Physical Plant Issues (MSBA funding tie-ins)
- Instructional Issues
- Fiscal Issues
- Advantages & Challenges to forming/joining a regional school district
- Other information important to your community

If the vote is "No," the process comes to an end unless and until a subsequent vote is taken. If the vote is "Yes," you may move on to Step 2 (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, no date, *Regionalization-Phase I*, guidance document, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/regional/>).

At the heart of this process, the essential question is what is best for the children in Ware and how can the town best ensure that they receive the highest quality education possible. While every town and school district strive to be fiscally prudent in what they do, the outcomes for students must be kept at the forefront. The gravity of any decision to merge or remain a single entity will have long-range consequences, so the recommendation is to move slowly and carefully, while ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice through which consensus can be reached.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Judy Houle, SFO  
Vice President of Entrepreneurship

Michael DeBarge,  
Associate Consultant for  
Business Management Services  
and Special Projects

**Appendix A**  
**Teacher Salary Comparison: Ware Public Schools/Quaboag Regional School District**

**Table 1: Bachelor's Degree and Bachelor's +15 Credit Hours**

<b>FY20 STEP:</b>	<b>WPS</b>	<b>QRSD</b>
B-1	\$ 47,581	\$ 42,941
B-2	\$ 49,427	\$ 44,024
B-3	\$ 51,153	\$ 46,202
B-4	\$ 52,868	\$ 48,379
B-5	\$ 54,878	\$ 50,555
B-6	\$ 56,739	\$ 52,733
B-7	\$ 58,455	\$ 54,910
B-8	\$ 61,037	\$ 57,086
B-9	\$ 63,622	\$ 59,265
B-10	\$ 66,209	\$ 61,442
B-11	\$ 69,544	\$ 63,618
B-12	N/A	\$ 65,795
B-13	N/A	\$ 66,618
B-14	N/A	\$ 67,451
B-15	N/A	\$ 69,764
B+15-1	\$ 49,292	\$ 43,939
B+15-2	\$ 50,577	\$ 45,190
B+15-3	\$ 52,309	\$ 47,376
B+15-4	\$ 54,017	\$ 49,561
B+15-5	\$ 56,026	\$ 51,747
B+15-6	\$ 57,888	\$ 53,931
B+15-7	\$ 59,901	\$ 56,116
B+15-8	\$ 62,182	\$ 58,302
B+15-9	\$ 64,490	\$ 60,487
B+15-10	\$ 66,792	\$ 62,672
B+15-11	\$ 70,108	\$ 64,857
B+15-12	N/A	\$ 67,042
B+15-13	N/A	\$ 69,226
B+15-14	N/A	\$ 70,092
B+15-15	N/A	\$ 72,438



**Table 2: Master's Degree and Master's +15 Credit Hours**

<b>FY20 STEP:</b>	<b>WPS</b>	<b>QRSD</b>
M-1	\$ 50,431	\$ 45,296
M-2	\$ 52,014	\$ 46,663
M-3	\$ 53,737	\$ 48,811
M-4	\$ 55,734	\$ 50,961
M-5	\$ 57,457	\$ 53,110
M-6	\$ 59,606	\$ 55,260
M-7	\$ 61,328	\$ 57,408
M-8	\$ 63,620	\$ 59,557
M-9	\$ 66,197	\$ 61,706
M-10	\$ 68,772	\$ 63,853
M-11	\$ 71,343	\$ 66,002
M-12	\$ 74,664	\$ 68,152
M-13	N/A	\$ 70,301
M-14	N/A	\$ 72,450
M-15	N/A	\$ 75,555
M+15-1	\$ 51,874	\$ 46,798
M+15-2	\$ 53,171	\$ 48,161
M+15-3	\$ 55,178	\$ 50,309
M+15-4	\$ 56,885	\$ 52,459
M+15-5	\$ 58,605	\$ 54,608
M+15-6	\$ 60,748	\$ 56,756
M+15-7	\$ 62,468	\$ 58,905
M+15-8	\$ 65,051	\$ 61,054
M+15-9	\$ 67,342	\$ 63,203
M+15-10	\$ 69,644	\$ 65,351
M+15-11	\$ 71,960	\$ 67,501
M+15-12	\$ 75,126	\$ 69,649
M+15-13	N/A	\$ 71,797
M+15-14	N/A	\$ 73,946
M+15-15	N/A	\$ 77,050



**Table 3: Master's +30 Credit Hours and Master's +45 Credit Hours**

<b>FY20 STEP:</b>	<b>WPS</b>	<b>QRSD</b>
M+30-1	\$ 53,028	\$ 48,157
M+30-2	\$ 54,878	\$ 49,524
M+30-3	\$ 56,600	\$ 51,673
M+30-4	\$ 58,317	\$ 53,820
M+30-5	\$ 60,329	\$ 55,969
M+30-6	\$ 62,182	\$ 58,118
M+30-7	\$ 63,903	\$ 60,266
M+30-8	\$ 66,490	\$ 62,414
M+30-9	\$ 68,774	\$ 64,563
M+30-10	\$ 71,340	\$ 66,711
M+30-11	\$ 73,298	\$ 68,859
M+30-12	\$ 76,579	\$ 71,008
M+30-13	\$ 80,814	\$ 73,156
M+30-14	N/A	\$ 75,305
M+30-15	N/A	\$ 78,410
M+45-1	\$ 55,025	\$ 49,430
M+45-2	\$ 56,410	\$ 50,802
M+45-3	\$ 58,029	\$ 52,950
M+45-4	\$ 60,038	\$ 55,099
M+45-5	\$ 61,755	\$ 57,248
M+45-6	\$ 63,617	\$ 59,397
M+45-7	\$ 65,624	\$ 61,546
M+45-8	\$ 67,923	\$ 63,695
M+45-9	\$ 70,495	\$ 65,843
M+45-10	\$ 72,785	\$ 67,992
M+45-11	\$ 75,088	\$ 70,141
M+45-12	\$ 77,966	\$ 72,289
M+45-13	\$ 82,146	\$ 74,439
M+45-14	N/A	\$ 76,588
M+45-15	N/A	\$ 79,882



## Appendix B: Capacity Assessment Tool (From Special Commission Report, 2011)

Instructions: Using the suggested data identified in the column labeled "Data Source", check the appropriate box ("yes" or "no") based on whether or not the corresponding statement applies to the district. Refer to Table 1 on page 18 for additional guidance on accessing and using the data to complete the assessment.

1. Current & Projected Enrollments	YES	NO	Data Source
a. Current enrollment is below the median enrollment for districts of the same group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-12 District</li> <li>• Elementary District</li> <li>• Secondary District</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
b. Enrollments have declined over the past several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
c. The number of students leaving through choice, charter or tuition agreement has increased over the past several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESE Finance
d. The district relies on incoming choice or tuition students to support programs and budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESE Finance
2. Financial Trends	YES	NO	Data Source
a. The district has operated on a budget that is at or below level funded or level services for several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
b. School budgets and/or regional assessments to member towns have increased, while programs/services remain the same or have decreased over the past several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
c. The district has instituted or increased fees for programs/services within the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
d. Teacher salaries are not commensurate with those in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESE Finance
e. Administrative costs per pupil have increased or are higher than such costs in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
f. Operations and maintenance costs per pupil have increased or are higher than such costs in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
g. In-district transportation costs per pupil have increased or are higher than such costs in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
h. Out-of-district transportation costs (per out-of-district pupil) have increased or are higher than such costs in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
i. Professional development spending per teacher has decreased or is lower than such spending in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance



3. Instructional Capacity (by school and district)	YES	NO	Data Source
a. Class size has increased in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
b. Class size is higher than in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
c. Student/teacher ratio has increased in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
d. Student/teacher ratio is higher than said ratio in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
e. The teacher turnover rate has increased or is greater than the turnover rate in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
4. Curricular & Program Offerings	YES	NO	Data Source
a. The number and variety of course offerings are fewer than in like districts (e.g. the number and variety of foreign language courses, AP courses, electives, vocational programs, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
b. Course offerings have been reduced or eliminated in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
c. Special programs and service offerings (art, music) have been reduced or eliminated in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
d. Extracurricular offerings have been reduced or eliminated in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
e. Early childhood offerings have been reduced or eliminated in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
f. Out-of-district special education placements have increased in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
g. Special education costs have increased or are higher than such costs in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESE Finance
h. Transportation services have been reduced in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
5. Performance Indicators	YES	NO	Data Source
a. Percentage of students scoring at or above proficient on the MCAS has declined or remained stagnant over the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
b. Student SAT, PSAT and/or ACT scores have declined in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
c. Status of high school graduates (college, careers) has declined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
d. District has received a warning or has been placed on probation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
e. Dropout rate has increased in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
f. Dropout rate is higher than in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART



**Helping schools succeed**

g. Four-year or five-year cohort graduation rates have declined in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
h. Four-year or five-year cohort graduation rates are lower than in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
i. Attendance rate has decreased in the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
j. Attendance rate is lower than in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
<b>6. Capital Facilities</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
a. One or more district schools received a—below average utilization rating in the most recent MSBA Needs Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MSBA
b. One or more district schools received a—building conditions rating of 3 or 4 in the most recent MSBA Needs Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MSBA
c. One or more district schools received a—general environment rating of 3 or 4 in the most recent MSBA Needs Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MSBA
d. The district recently attempted to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) for MSBA funding that was defeated at the local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
<b>7. Administrative Capacity</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
a. The number of district and/or school administrative positions has decreased over the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART Finance
b. District administrators are responsible for more functions than administrators in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MARS
c. The district does not have enough administrators to effectively address instructional and achievement issues for students, particularly students with specific and differentiated needs (e.g. English language learners, students receiving special education services, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MARS
d. The district does not have enough administrators to effectively recruit and maintain a high-quality educator workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MARS
e. The district does not have enough administrators to create and maintain effective lines of two-way communication with parents and family members and other community stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MARS
f. A greater number of district administrators are responsible for operational versus instructional issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MARS/Local
g. The administrative turnover rate has increased or is higher than the rates in similar districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DART
h. District Administrators report to more than 1 school committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local





i. The current structure of the central office and configuration of administrators do not support optimal efficiency and effectiveness with regard to the district's ability to execute its core functions, including: 1) communication among administrators and also among administrators, principals, teachers, and staff members; 2) the collection and continuous analysis of multiple types of data; and 3) the management of instructional, human, fiscal, and other resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
<b>8. Collaboration</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
a. The district has not explored the possibility of providing joint academic and extracurricular programs with other districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
b. The district does not participate in cooperative purchasing programs with other districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
c. The district does not partner with other districts or utilize an educational collaborative to offer professional development programs for its staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
d. The district does not belong to an educational collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
e. The district does not participate in a collaborative or cooperative transportation service program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
f. The district does not partner with other districts or utilize an educational collaborative to provide special education programs and services for its students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
g. District leaders and/or administrators do not meet with colleagues on a regular basis to discuss common challenges and implement common solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
h. District staff members do not participate in and/or belong to statewide professional associations (e.g. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association, Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators Association, Massachusetts Teachers Association, American Federation of Teachers – Massachusetts, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
<b>9. Community Indicators</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
a. One or more communities within the district have a negative Municipal Revenue Growth Factor (MRGF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DOR
b. Property values within the district have decreased over the past several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DOR
c. The bond rating of one or more communities within the district has decreased within the last several years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local
d. Communities within the district have a higher unemployment rate than the rates in like districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	EOLWD*

\*Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development



TOWN OF WARE, MASSACHUSETTS  
**OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK**

126 MAIN STREET, STE. F, WARE, MASSACHUSETTS 01082

NANCY J. TALBOT  
*TOWN CLERK*

January 3, 2020

Board of Selectmen  
126 Main St.  
Ware, MA 01082

Dear Members:

I am in receipt of the resignation of the following individual from the Bylaw Review Committee:

Francis W. Cote

A copy of his resignation letter is attached. There was no expiration of his term when he was appointed.

Mr. Cote was elected as a member of the Charter Commission in 2005 and served also previously as a member of the Police Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy J. Talbot", is written over the printed name.

Nancy J. Talbot  
Town Clerk

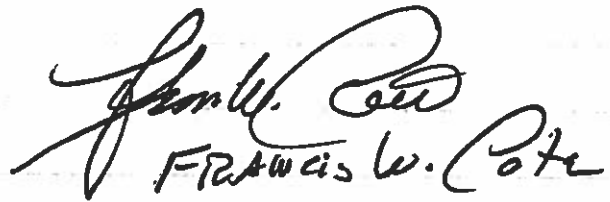
cc: 2019 Resignation File

t/

DEC 23, 2019

To: NANCY TALBOT  
TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF WARE.

EFFECTIVE JAN 1, 2020 I WILL RESIGN FROM THE  
BY-LAW REVIEW COMM. THIS RESIGNATION IS  
FOR PERSONAL REASONS

  
FRANCIS W. COTE

CC TOWN MANAGER

