



Joan McNamara <jmcnamara@natickma.org>

New Town Administrator

Donna McKenzie <dr.donnamckenzie@gmail.com>

Sun, Jun 13, 2021 at 10:44 PM

To: Selectmen <selectboard@natickma.org>

Dear Select Board,

Thank you for your due diligence and rigorous screening of the four finalists for town administrator. I have confidence in your ability to choose the best person for this time. As a member of the school committee, I am confident our district will work with your choice.

My two favorites are Adam Chapdelaine and Austin Faison who both have good experience as town managers. I really appreciated Adam's response that he would not be giving up power by becoming a town administrator reminding us that unlike the town manager system, it is the town administrator who presents their budget to Town Meeting. He struck me as a person who would assert the authority of their character and experience. When asked about dealing with bullies, he said he would not yell and that he lost his temper very infrequently. He seemed to be a person who would be unafraid of conflict and would see conflict as a means to growth. I appreciated how he looked all of you in the eyes and even greeted me as an observer. Clearly the schools are important to him. He would be leaving a district with stronger schools than Natick .

I really liked Austin and found him to be honest and transparent. I liked the way he saw himself as not knowing everything and open to growth and change. His philosophy of management which seems to focus on empowering his staff is a leadership style I support. He has worked with the best of schools in Brookline and schools in Winthrop that need much help. I liked how he began his municipal career by cutting grass in a city cemetery. He is very affable and seems able to get along with a broad range of people which would be a welcome skill. If you determine all things as being "equal" between these two candidates, having a person of color in this position would be a huge asset for our community.

I don't envy you the choice you have to make and I appreciated your interviews and skill in drawing out the candidates' perspectives.

Thank you for all your hard work and all that you do for our town.
Donna (McKenzie)

Sent from my iPhone