**Town Manager Update**

*December 16, 2025*

I’m sure you’ll join me in congratulating Chief Deanna Strout for being recently elected to the executive board of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

As you know from the earlier appointment, I am sorry to report that Town Collector Melissa Davis has resigned effective this coming Wednesday, December 18. We are posting for a new Town Collector.

I am planning to present an FY26 budget substantially higher for two reasons: first, I am proposing an Assistant Town Manager position to handle Human Resources and Procurement, including project management, as well as providing general support and back-up. Second, I am including some money for the end of FY 26, that is, in a year and a half, for an overlap with a potential future Town Manger.

Representative Pignatelli sent the Town the gift of a U.S. flag which has been flown over the State House in appreciation of Dalton’s support over the years.

I have signed the contract with architect Brian Humes for the police station feasibility project, so that project is moving forward. I believe he will be an excellent partner for the Town.

Our NPDES permit required us to do some drainage improvements near the Town Garage. I got a Community Compact grant to do that and have sent what I believe is the final version of a contract to the engineers who won the bid.

Dalton, among other towns, filed for legislation in 2021 allowing the Town to leave the Civil Service system. Recent state legislation allowed towns to leave Civil Service, but only those who filed between January 4, 2023 and July 31, 2024. I have asked Rep. Davis and Sen. Mark to find out why the scope was so narrow, and to consider additional legislation to apply the same decision to Dalton.

Finally, I understand that in the past, on Christmas Eve and New Years’ Eve, Town Hall has closed about 3 p.m., with the time counted as paid time off. For the last three years, those holidays have not been preceded by a working day, so the issue has not come up during my time here, but since it now has, I intend to honor the custom.