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Gary Christenson, Mayor

November 13, 2025

The Honorable Malden City Council
Malden Government Center
200 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Dear Members of the Council:

I am writing to you regarding filling the open position on the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School Committee with the passing of James Holland. As City Clerk Carol Ann Desiderio indicated, the Regional Community Agreement under which the School Committee operates calls for any vacancy to be filled by the local School Committee and City Council, acting jointly. The appointment is temporary in that they shall serve until the next regular biennial election.

I considered gauging interest from members of our community but after giving this additional thought, I believe it would result in a lengthy, unwieldy and undefined process. This is a unique situation and there is simply no criteria that would guide the type of process that we may conduct for an open position on a board or commission. When combined with the temporary nature of the appointment and the importance of having Malden represented as soon as possible, Malden is better served with a more immediate appointment.

Therefore, I am recommending to the City Council and School Committee the appointment of Jeffrey Donahue to fill the open position until the next election. He is a lifelong Malden resident and former Ward 4 City Councillor but more importantly, Jeff has spent his career in the trades as a carpenter and union leader where he has been passionate about the role vocational education should play in our education system. He recently ran for the Malden School Committee where he also spoke about the importance of vocational education. Malden would be uniquely situated by having a representative who has hands-on experience in the trades, a true passion for vocational education, and local political experience. I think this background will serve us well as the Voke opens a new facility and expands enrollment.

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I would recommend that we follow the same process that Chelsea recently did in having the City Council first vote on the appointment, and subsequently, the School Committee. I would also ask that we move expeditiously with filling this vacancy. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



GARY CHRISTENSON

Mayor, City of Malden

cc: Mr. Jeffrey Donahue
Jennifer Spadafora, Vice Chair of
Malden School Committee