

Town of West Boylston Personnel Board
Minutes of Meeting
January 25, 2018

In Attendance:

Personnel Board Members: Larry Chism, Chairperson, Francesca Harris, Christine Mazeika, Laura Carney
Anita Scheipers, Town Administrator
Selectmen; John Hadley, Barur Rajeskumar
Former PEG Board Member: John Schlichte

Mr. Chism called the meeting to order at 5:58 p.m.

- I. Approval of the Minutes from the November 21, 2017 meeting. Mr. Schlichte of the PEG Board asked that the minutes be amended with some specific wording regarding the Access Coordinator and Production Assistant job descriptions discussions. The minutes were amended. Ms. Carney made a motion to approve the minutes, Ms. Harris seconded, so moved.

- II. FY 19 Proposed 2% COLA

Mr. Chism had previously sent this proposed COLA to the Personnel Board for their thoughts. There was some discussion about the 2%. Ms. Scheipers stated that the DPW Union already has 2% in their FY 19 Contract. Police and Fire Unions need to negotiate as their contracts end June 30th. Ms. Carney made a motion that the Board agrees with the proposed 2%, Ms. Harris seconded, so moved.

- III. Stipends Amendment – Personnel Bylaws

Mr. Chism began by saying that he researched area towns and did not find many references to employees receiving stipends. Orleans, MA had stipulation that if the Town Administrator assigns work outside their normal job description, they are paid a stipend. Upton, MA had a similar position.

Ms. Scheipers was looking for guidance. Specifically involving the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk. The Selectmen want to give the Town Clerk a stipend while the Town is in the process of hiring an Assistant Town Clerk. Any decision, suggestion made by the Personnel Board would be important.

The Assistant Town Clerk was given a stipend for the entire time she filled in for the Town Clerk. A period from July 18 – October 31 and then again up until the day that she was appointed the Town Clerk. This was the difference between their hourly wages; she was paid the Town Clerk's rate of pay.

Both Ms. Harris and Ms. Carney agree with the Upton, MA wording that an employee should be compensated for hours outside of the normal position or greater than the scope of your position.

Mr. Chism wanted to write a foundation based on hours and add language to refer to scope. He did not want specific language that the Town may be tied into. Something that will cover all situations.

Mr. Hadley stated that the Assistant Town Clerk was doing 2 jobs, the same situation with the PEG Board, one person doing 2 jobs.

Mr. Rajeshkumar said that the PEG Board voted and gave a stipend on its own, not through the Personnel Board.

Mr. Chism stated that she is the Town Clerk, what do we want to do? Town Clerk oversees the department; she's responsible for the work getting done, no matter what. He would like to look into the wording of this.

Mr. Rajeshkumar stated that the Town Clerk is currently doing 2 jobs. The PEG Coordinator oversees the Cable Department and only works 5 hours. The Access Coordinator is the junior role at 19.5 hours. The PEG Coordinator was given a stipend to cover the Access Coordinator role until the position is filled.

Ms. Scheipers summed it up by saying under normal situations it is a two person Town Clerk Department. The Department Head should be able to fill in. The Job Description says they have to manage their Department. If we give the person a stipend, how do we determine an appropriate amount?

Mr. Chism said that he disagrees with the language. The Board also decided that paying an Assistant really isn't a problem. The Assistant covering for a Department Head doesn't seem to be a problem.

Mr. Hadley stated that until the Assistant Town Clerk position is filled, the Town Clerk should be compensated.

Ms. Scheipers wanted to know for how long and how do you determine a value.

Mr. Rajeshkumar said that the Town shouldn't pay for 2 jobs.

Mr. Chism wanted to know how long it would be before the Assistant's position is filled. That may gauge how much of a stipend we would give. For example 1% or 2% based on the length that they have to continue covering both positions.

Ms. Scheipers said that she is meeting with the Town Clerk tomorrow to review all of the job applications, so perhaps someone will be hired by the first week of March.

Mr. Chism thought that we should look at a combination of Hours and Length of Time.

Ms. Harris thought that the wording should be written "and/or" to cover different situations.

Ms. Mazeika stated that we are not just dealing with filing positions but also with extended medical leave.

Mr. Chism brainstormed that if you are responsible for 2 jobs that may be filled in 60 days. Should the person be compensated? At 61 days are they compensated back to day one? OR 70 days compensated back to day one?

Ms. Scheipers said that stipends have been used to cover minor positions are recognized. PEG Coordinator was an example.

Mr. Chism discussed the use of the word "stipend" which to him seems limited.

Ms. Scheipers said that “out of grade pay” is also used.

Ms. Harris suggested “supplemental compensation”.

Ms. Carney suggested “out of scope”.

Mr. Chism suggested that we use “supplemental compensation” when dealing with these issues instead of “stipend”.

Mr. Hadley stated that it really doesn’t matter what the Personnel Board thinks, the Selectmen make the final decision.

Ms. Scheipers said that she is looking for recommendations from the Personnel Board.

Mr. Rajeshkumar wanted to know “why should I cover for another person if I am not compensated?”

Mr. Chism disagreed with Mr. Rajeskumar, as did Ms. Harris. Ms. Carney stated that when someone is out for a while, you pitch in and help. Ms. Mazeika agreed as well.

Ms. Scheipers said that Nancy Lucier reached out to what other communities do when the Department Head had to fill in. There were no communities that had any written bylaws about compensating a Department Head for filling in for an extended absent employee due to medical or hiring situations.

Ms. Carney also brought up that the size of the department would matter. A department of 5 or 6 people is different than a department of 1 or 2.

Mr. Chism did another quick summary:

Junior Role – no question that the junior position should be reimbursed

Senior Role – senior should cover

Ms. Harris said that perhaps we say 30 days and then pay retroactively.

Ms. Carney said that there should be special consideration for town meeting and town elections – extraordinary circumstances and a unique work load.

Ms. Scheipers said that whatever she puts forward will be voted on by the Selectmen.

There was discussion about various “unique” situations. The Tax Collector has been out for an extended time period. Who determines what is “unique”.

Mr. Rajeskumar wanted clarification regarding an open position. How long before the Department Head would be compensated?

Mr. Chism said that the moment you have someone leave, that would receive supplemental compensation. There was discussion about determining the value of this compensation.

Ms. Scheipers said that the Town Clerk position is non-exempt, she cannot receive overtime. As the Assistant Town Clerk she did receive overtime.

Ms. Carney suggested a percentage that graduates over a period. For example; 30 days, 1%; 60 days 2 – 3%. **The percentages are only for example only!**

Discussions about this included there being a maximum percentage given. That the supplemental compensation be retroactive. That there be a few different lengths of time.

Ms. Scheipers warned that we need to be careful, there is no extra money if the person has sick time and is out on sick leave. An employee may have 12 weeks accrued sick leave, can we afford the operations or do we make a difficult decision?

Mr. Chism asked for suggestions for the percentage. Mr. Rajeskumar suggested 25%; Mr. Chism said that he was thinking 5 – 10 %.

Ms. Mazeika asked percentage of whose pay? Department Head or the position that is vacant?

Mr. Chism of their current salary.

Ms. Carney thought that 30 days is short and to use 45 – 60 days. Suggestions were made as to percentages. For example a person making \$ 500 a week receiving 10% would receive \$ 50 a week or \$ 200 a month. Mr. Hadley suggestion 5% or 10% after a certain number of days. Ms. Scheipers suggested up to 30 days and then phase 2 would be 30 – 60 days.

Ms. Scheipers asked if this is the intent:

Town Clerk fills in for the Assistant Town Clerk for:

45 days = a certain % retroactive at day 46

46 – 80 days = a certain % retroactive at day 81 (or 46 – 90 days)

NO supplemental compensation for less than 45 days.

Suggestions were made:

45 days = 5%

46 – 90 days = 10%

Mr. Hadley stated that this is for the future, not immediately. Ms. Scheipers said that, no, she is looking for guidance for the present situation.

Ms. Harris asked if this is for exempt and non-Exempt. This is for Department Heads, so Exempt.

Note: at some point during the meeting Mr. Schlichte handed Ms. Mazeika his suggestion for wording to be included in the Personnel Bylaws regarding additional job requirements. That page will be given to the Personnel Board for their use.

Mr. Chism wanted to define the categories and set up an immediate next Personnel Board meeting. Items to be discussed:

1. Time line in which this would take effect.
2. Length of time/tiers
3. Rate/% and when it would max out.
4. A Stipend – Defining Parameters
5. Supplemental Compensation – Defining Parameters

Ms. Scheipers wanted the Board to provide extensive examples.

Ms. Carney said one being a vacancy and one being extended absence.

Ms. Harris asked about the Assistant Cemetery Position, was this still a stipend? Ms. Scheipers let the Board know that the Cemetery was working on becoming a Union. That is no longer an issue.

Mr. Chism stated that we need to start a discussion on what is a stipend and what is supplemental compensation.

Ms. Scheipers handed out a portion of the draft of the Town meeting Warrant. The Town Clerk's hours are changing from 31 hours a week to 40 hours a week. The Assistant Town Clerk will change from 31 hours a week to 20 hours a week. The payroll rate was adjusted as such.

At 7:30 p.m. Ms. Harris made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Carney seconded.

