

Town of West Boylston Personnel Board

Minutes of Meeting

September 26, 2016

In Attendance:

Personnel Board Members: Larry Chism, Kelli Blank, Rich McCarthy and Christine Mazeika

Town Administrator Anita Scheipers, Cemetery Trustees; Jack McCormick, Chairperson, Dave Lindberg, Peter Rotando

Mr. Chism called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Board of Cemetery Trustees – Superintendent Job Review

Introductions were made by all. The Trustees explained that the Superintendent's work on a daily basis is not equitable with other skilled laborers within the Town, citing the DPW workers. The Superintendent sells lots, makes deposits, payroll, interfaces with grieving families, in addition to keeping the cemetery running. The current Superintendent has an excellent relationship with area funeral homes and monument companies.

The Superintendent's current salary is approximately \$ 10,000 - \$ 12,000 below a laborer that works at the DPW. He is not allowed overtime. A Saturday funeral will be between 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the Superintendent has to attend by law, to witness the burial. He is a salaried, so he is only allowed Comp Time. Presently, he is unable to take full vacation weeks due to the unexpected nature of the business and him being called back to work for a burial.

The Trustees are looking for equitable pay.

There is a part time employee who works approximately 20 hours per week; they would like to make this a permanent part time position. Inmates from Corrections Facilities do assist. Some weeks there are between 10 – 12 people, who may or may not be familiar with a weed wacker and other equipment. This past week, there were 2. The cemetery can't rely on these individuals.

The cemetery has plans to expand. This will give the Superintendent more responsibility. Mr. McCormick explained the Superintendent's added duties chart that shows the progression over the years.

The Trustees explained the Perpetual Care funds and that only the interest earned can be used. Currently the monthly interest is about \$ 150. Cost of the lots are \$ 600 which are split between Sale of Lots, \$ 200 and Perpetual Care \$ 400.

Mr. Chism asked if the current Superintendent has indicated that he may be looking for other employment.

Mr. Lindberg responded that he has a family, a daughter going into college and he may look elsewhere; however, he has pride in ownership of the cemetery.

Mr. Chism asked what can we do to help?

Mr. Lindberg and Mr. McCormick both stated that there have been previous reports about increasing his salary; however, none have ever been implemented.

Mr. Rotando explained that the Town has no better ambassador than Kevin McKee. He is a "career" Superintendent.

Ms. Blank asked how many burials are there a year. The answer was about 52.

Mr. McCormick explained that the late Aaron Goodale would step in and assist with cemetery issues so that Mr. McKee could have time off, as does Mr. McCormick now. Mr. McKee is still called back to work for burials.

Mr. McCormick explained that Mr. McKee cannot be paid out of the Revolving Funds, only out of the Town budget.

Mr. McCarthy asked if we could raise the cost? Mr. McCormick said the cost to open and close is \$ 800; which is currently a bit high compared to area towns. Mr. Lindberg referred us to the area cemetery comparison chart.

Mr. Rotando also pointed out that the cemetery truck is 14 years old and Mr. McKee repairs it himself.

Ms. Blank asked whether we are subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act. Ms. Scheipers said that we were.

The Trustees invited everyone to the Open House on Thursday, September 29th beginning at 6:30 a.m.. The Holbrook Chapel will be open to the public to view the interior. They began at 6:30 a.m. so that people could stop in before work.

Ms. Scheipers said that Mr. McKee is a jewel for the Town and that the Town is very lucky to have him. The key question is he an exempt employee? Or a non-exempt employee who is entitled to overtime? She stated that Nancy Lucier has also done comparisons with other Towns and she will get those to the Personnel Board.

Mr. Chism asked the Trustees if their comparison charts were based on similar land size? Mr. Lindberg said he has no idea.

The Trustees said that High Point Cemetery in Oakdale is a private cemetery for now, but there has been talk of including this as a Town cemetery.

The Trustees left the meeting.

II: Personnel Board Members

There was more discussion about FLSA classifications and where Mr. McKee would fit in. Ms. Blank would send us the guidelines.

Mr. Chism summed up the discussion:

1. The position has evolved
2. There are protocols on how much the Superintendent can be paid
3. There is no overtime money available, where would these funds come from

The expansion of the cemetery is inevitable which would be more work for the Superintendent. The goal here is to help Mr. McKee. Where can we find money?

Ms. Scheipers went back to Mr. McKee being an exempt employee vs. non-exempt. Is he eligible for overtime or not.

Mr. Chism is concerned with him not having any down time. Ms. Scheipers explain that the Trustees assist him.

There was more talk about the expansion and Ms. Scheipers said that she will have Ms. Lucier email us her comparison records.

Mr. Chism pointed out the additional duties and the contact he has with families.

Ms. Blank said that an expansion would mean more employees and therefore, he would be exempt. Ms. Scheipers said that expansion is down the line.

Mr. Chism asked if the Town could stand to lose someone like Mr. McKee? He said the next step would be to figure out if the position was exempt or non-exempt and to look at Ms. Lucier's comparisons.

Ms. Scheipers stated that the Selectmen are considering merging the Cemetery into the DPW but they are not quite ready to do that yet.

Mr. Chism would like to meet with the DPW before we make any decisions.

Ms. Blank stated that if the Superintendent's compensation isn't equitable with the DPW, then he would be entitled to a pay increase.

Ms. Scheipers said that we are too late for the October Town meeting to make any changes. We would be looking at the Spring Town Meeting. We could decide to change compensation at the Town Meeting and make the pay retro-active.

IV. Wage Schedule/Scale Review – PEG TV

Currently 2 women have been hired as consultants, they receive a 1099.

Access Coordinator – under 20 hours per week \$ 16. Per hour

Production Assistant – under 20 hours per week \$ 12. Per hour

According to the Town Accountant, all criteria indicates that they are Town employees. Ms. Scheipers would like to create 2 positions to make them employees. This would be done at the October Town meeting.

The PEG Board for Cable TV want to bump up the Coordinator to \$ 17 per hour and pay volunteers \$ 20 per hour. Ms. Blank questioned paying “volunteers”.

Ms. Scheipers asked whether the Personnel Board thought they should be Town employees and where would they fit on the pay scale. They work under 20 hours, so they would be un-benefited.

There was a discussion of duties.

Ms. Mazeika asked where Ms. Scheipers thought they fit in our current grade scale. Ms. Scheipers said that she couldn’t find an equivalent position. However, they meet every test to tell them that they’re employees.

The Personnel Board agreed that these two positions should become Town employees.

The consensus seemed to be that they would fit in with Step 3 positions as written in the Personnel By-laws. Suggestions were that they would be Grade 3 with the Coordinator beginning at Step 3, \$ 17.16 per hour. The Assistant beginning at Grade 3, Step 1 or Step 2; \$ 14.29 or \$ 15.70, respectively.

The decision was to speak with person in charge, Rich Simmarano. Ms. Scheipers explained that there is a place for this on the Warrant for the October Town Meeting. We would need to meet with Mr. Simmarano next week in order to have the information in time for the Warrant. We will meet next week.

There was discussion about the number of years the individuals have been in these positions, Ms. Scheipers will find out. Ms. Mazeika said that perhaps the number of years will determine whether the Assistant would begin at Step 1 or Step 2.

V. New Business

The only new business was to correct two items in the minutes of the September 7, 2016 meeting.

With no other new business Mr. Chism made a motion to end the meeting at 8:28 p.m. It was seconded.