

SELECT BOARD MEETING July 6, 2010

Present: Dave DeHerdt, Doug Field, Norm Russell

Meeting was called to order at 12:01 pm.

Reorganization of Town hall The first order of business was to accept a letter from Maryellen Cranston stating that she has chosen not accept reappointment as Town Administrator/ Assistant Treasurer. She stated her current appointment ended on June 30, 2010. Russell spoke of concern than the planned reorganization of responsibilities among town office employees might be seen as an attempt to get her to resign. He wanted it to be clear that he never wanted her to resign. Although her letter doesn't specifically say she has resigned, it , along with the lack of her presence at work after that date can be accepted as a resignation.

A motion was made, seconded, and voted t o accept the resignation of Maryellen Cranston with regret.

Deherdt reported that codes and passwords have been changed. Having noted that Maryellen had a lot of unfinished work, he has asked Nancy Dunne to go through it and prioritize what needs to be done. Nancy is on vacation this week.

Appointments DeHerdt announced that Dick Evans, who is a Justice of the Peace, will be present at 1:00 pm to swear in those persons available who have been appointed. Janice Purinton, Town Clerk and also Justice of the Peace, will be available on Thursday between 6 and 7 pm to administer oaths of office.

The board then turned to a discussion about repositioning persons who currently work in the town office to assure that there is a smooth transition and that all important functions of the offices are not compromised. With that in mind, Nancy Dunne, who has been working in two positions (as Assistant Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk in the Assessors' office) was asked if she was willing to assume the temporary Town Clerk position @ \$15.00/hr for 13 hrs/ week. She said she would. She will continue to work her 6 hrs/week with the Assessors.

The board agreed that the Town Administrator position will remain vacant for the time being. They will contact Nancy Intres to see if she would be interested in helping as a Temporary Assistant Town Clerk for 13 hrs/week @ \$11.00/hr. She has previously worked in town office and is familiar with the operation.

After a lengthy discussion of various staffing arrangements the following motions were made: A motion was made, seconded, and voted to appoint Nancy Dunne as Temporary Town Clerk for 13 hrs/week @ \$15.00/hr. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to appoint Nancy Intres as Temporary Assistant Town Clerk @\$11.00/hr for 13 hrs/ week, assuming she's interested.

As soon as job descriptions have been completed the positions of Town Clerk and Town Administrator will be advertized in at least one local paper (*Recorder* or *Gazette*) and posted in the Post Office. And on the town's web site.

Street light committee After a brief period to refresh themselves of a previous discussion about a committee to study the town's street light situation, the board decided to appoint several persons to such a committee. A charge for that committee will be created by the board.

A motion was made, seconded, and voted to appoint Nancy Hoff and Cindy Carney, Ricki Carroll, and Rick Chandler to a Street Light Committee. The town has a complete inventory of street lights and their locations.

Back to reorganizing the office Board members, with input from interested parties, carried on a discussion, juggling hours and proposed wages at great length. The goal was to keep all town services available, have enough staff to do this, and not increase the overall town office staffing budget. Persons in the room had suggestions about the value of using volunteers.

At this point Dick Evans arrived to administer oaths of office. Nancy Dunne, Laura Blakesley, and Faye Whitney-Lussier were on hand for this procedure.

Job descriptions and benefits The board then turned to questions about employee benefits. They had been advised by the Town Administrator that it cost the town about \$3,000 in retirement benefits for anyone working more than 20 hours per week. No one was certain of this; this needs to be understood before a posting of available positions can be made. It is thought that positions under 20 hours do not incur benefits [sick days, vacation, paid holidays, medical insurance] Someone pointed out that town employees do not contribute to Social Security; they contribute to the County Retirement Fund.

The Town Administrator's (TA) job description was then reviewed. Some surprise was noted that the existing description requires the TA to have Bachelor's degree and several years of experience. The services expected of the TA were discussed, with the board finding some that might be shifted to other positions. Quite a few would better fit under the Town Clerk's role. Under the existing policy the board sets policy; the TA actually runs the daily operation of the town, with the Select Board not necessarily being informed. This board sees the role of the TA quite differently, with the board exercising more control. It will make a number of changes in the job description to reflect this.

It seems to the board that the Town Clerk is responsible for a great deal more than the current job description would suggest. The board was not clear on several items, such as: who handles the Worker's Compensation matters. It was resolved that a lot of questions could be answered by Janice Purinton, the Buckland Town Clerk, who has been extremely helpful.

A tentative schedule for filling the positions of Town Clerk and Town Administrator was established. Notice of available positions would be published in time that applications could be received by July 27th; Interviews could be held the first week in August; with a decision possible by August 11th. Russell agreed to rewrite the job descriptions for town Clerk and Town Administrator and send them to his fellow board members for review.

A brief discussion about the interviewing process, in light of changes in the Open Meeting Law were discussed. The initial screening can be done in private meetings. Once the number is narrowed down, a second interview, which would likely be the final interview would be open to the public. The board would then make the final decision.

Police chief contract DeHerdt read portions of the contract aloud, noting that the contract can be extended for an additional 30 days. Any modification of the terms required a new agreement. A letter will be sent to Chief Cotton to let him know the board wishes to extend his contract 30 days.

A motion was made, seconded, and voted to adjourn. The time: 4:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Phelps