

Personnel Board Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2013
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall 9am-11am

The meeting was convened on Wednesday, October, 2013 at 9am

Present: Tony Butterfield, Chris Hoffmann, Charles Scherpa, Rebecca Woodland and Ron Bell
Diana Stein, Select Board liaison

Others: Deborah Radway, Director of Human Resources & Human Rights and Kay Zlogar, Trust Administrator, John Musante, Town Manager

Agenda Review/Additions- None

Old Business: None

- Minutes of August meeting reviewed, amended to remove Diana Stein from list of those present. Approved unanimously, as amended.

New Business:

- *Compensation Study Update:* HR Director Deb Radway reviewed the list of the compensation consultant's proposed comparable communities for the market data component of the compensation and classification study. Mix of communities reflective of our composite makeup, including complex waste water treatment plants, multiple libraries, like income and tax rates, equalized valuation, population, operating budget, college towns, full service rural towns, AA and AAA bond rated communities. Amherst has a unique mix and drawing direct comparables is difficult. Board discussed comparables and agreed that consultant had completed a thorough analysis. No additional recommendations were added.
- Compensation Consultant has completed interviews with all department heads and selected positions throughout the non union and DPW-S groups. Consultant is on track to present draft findings to Personnel Board at November meeting.
- *Request for Interpretation of Intent Personnel Procedures Manual- Special Leave section*
Mr. Butterfield opened the discussion by recounting the 2 years the Personnel Board spent updating the Personnel Procedures Manual in 2011 and 2012. The HR Director has requested an interpretation of the Special Leaves Section to inquire of the Board's intent regarding whether special leave for the purpose of observing religious holidays is intended to be paid leave in addition to designated official town holidays. Mr. Scherpa stated that he recalled no discussion about compensated time for such leave but that comp or personal time could be used and such request for leave would not be unreasonably denied by a department head. Mr. Butterfield added that it was neither explicit nor implicitly stated, but there is no intention to have special leave paid by the town in addition to other holidays. As there are many religious holidays, individual employees may choose which to observe, but any taken in addition to official town holidays are to be unpaid or paid with the employee's own accrued leave time. There was unanimous agreement on this point. No further action was taken.
- Town Manager goals for FY15 relating to personnel management # 6, 8, 9.
At the request of the Board, Mr. Musante described his performance review process and the FY 15 goals assigned to him by the Select Board. 3 goals in particular relate to the work of the Personnel Board-
 - Goal #6 requests the Town Manager to prepare a recommended staffing plan for each department of the town- a standalone analysis and reference point for future staffing priorities that the Select Board can use as a guide in its deliberation among competing

needs. The Town Manager will have more in depth discussions with department heads during the budget process and also seek input from line staff. This goal was included in the FY13 budget but was set aside during the Human Resources staff turnover. Ms. Woodland asked what the problem was that is being addressed by this goal. Mr. Musante replied that the intent is to take a comprehensive look at overall town staffing and using a strategic approach to identifying desired staffing levels as a means to fulfill town goals and objectives vs. having the emotional issue of the moment influencing budget decisions. We are still trying to develop a format for the process. Mr. Butterfield recommended the plan be elastic and pliable so it can be revised over time.

- Goal # 8 relates to maintaining high staff morale. Mr. Musante reports pockets of low morale, requests for increased communication and a desire to make sure that employees have the equipment needed to excel at their jobs. He has begun 1:1 meetings with various departments and he welcomes comments. Ms. Woodland observed that how teams work together is really important and will positively influence morale. Mr. Butterfield commented that more frequent meetings can also be a positive. Mr. Scherpa suggested a line staff presence at the monthly department head meetings. The Board offered its support to the Town Manager as he proceeds with FY 15 goals.
- Goal #9 relates to regular Select Board updates on progress made to implement action steps of the HR audit. This will be done and progress is being made.
- Report on New hires and Exits, FY to date and last month. There has been one exit since the September meeting and no new hires. The Town is actively recruiting for Firefighter, 2 Rental Regulations bylaw staff, Electrical Inspector, Permit Administrator, Water Department Director and
- Sports Director.

Other Business: Conflict of Interest training needs to be completed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

Next Meeting: November 20, 2013