

Personnel Board Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2017 First Floor Meeting, Town Hall

The meeting was convened at 9:00am.

Present: Tony Butterfield, Ron Bell, Charlie Scherpa, Chris Hoffmann

Excused: Catharine Porter

Others: Joanne Misiaszek, Human Resources Manager, Connie Kruger, Select Board, Deborah Radway, Director Human Resources and Human Rights, Co Interim Finance Directors Claire McGinnis and Sonia Aldrich, Principal Assessor David Burgess

Absent: none

Agenda Review/Additions – add update on Personnel Procedures Manual.

Old Business:

- Minutes of November, 2016 approved with spelling corrections, unanimously.

New Business:

1. Request for Policy Clarification- Butterfield/Burgess

- Personnel Procedures Manual is silent on topic of what happens when employees who are on vacation become sick.
- Mr. Burgess was sick prior to vacation, subsequently went on vacation to Europe, got sick again, and lost two days of vacation due to illness. Mr. Burgess made a decision to proceed with vacation, understood his medical condition, but believes that if an employee becomes ill while on vacation there ought to be some recourse to convert that vacation time to sick leave and not lose vacation time. He has requested that the Personnel Board review its policy.
- McGinnis- Town is very generous with its benefits. Scheduled vacation time is just that. Vacations often don't live up to expectations for all sorts of reasons but the fact of the matter is the employee is not at work, and that person's supervisor has had to make plans for covering that person's work for scheduled time off. Aldrich-trying to address this on a case by case basis is opening Pandora's Box and a management nightmare. There is no past practice of converting vacation time to sick leave. I'm not in favor.
- Mr. Scherpa: Make a motion to accept a request from Charles Scherpa to convert 2 days of vacation leave to sick leave for David Burgess.
- Second by Ron Bell
- More discussion- Mr. Butterfield - this is a bigger issue that the Personnel Procedures Manual review team and then the Personnel Board should take up within the context of the review of our personnel manual. I would like the group to get back to us as soon as possible.
- Radway- Mr. Burgess asked that the policy to be reviewed, he did not ask for the days off. Mr. Burgess has also asked for clarification of two other issues: sick leave taken during snow days and if scheduled vacation can be cancelled prior to it being taken. There are also implications for use of family sick leave if a family member gets sick while the employee is on vacation. All of these should be discussed and clarified together in context.
- Close off discussion- Vote taken 3 votes yes, 1 vote no. Motion passes.

2. Preliminary Discussion of FY 18 non-union cost of living increase

- In the absence of Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Ms. Radway laid out the current landscape of settled Amherst collective bargaining agreements for FY 17 and FY 18. SEIU and Fire settled at 2%, with fire also getting a fixed dollar amount EMT stipend. Both DPW unions and the Police Supervisors settled with a new wage matrix with 3% steps and 3% added to the top step. Non-union staff received a 2% cost of living increase on July 1, 2016. Non-union step increases are each 2.5%.

Union step increases vary from 3% (DPW's, Police Supervisors to 5.2% (Fire and Patrol). Mr. Scherpa said that we should try to make non-union steps match the 3% union steps within budget constraints. 60% of non-union staff are step eligible. There are funds set aside annually in the Town budget as a salary reserve. The Town Manager traditionally makes a recommendation to the Personnel Board in March and the Personnel Board votes a recommendation to the Select Board in April or May. Ms. Radway handed out a draft COLA history chart.

- Mr. Scherpa reminded his colleagues that the Board agreed to revisit the FY 17 COLA if the town's unions received more. (Notetaker comment: The May 18, 2016 minutes reflect the following "*Members reiterated their desire to have the non-union staff COLAs mirror that given to collective bargaining units*").
 - The Board asked Ms. Radway and the Co-Interim Finance Directors to look at options for steps and COLA for FY 17 and 18 and to report back at the February meeting.
3. New Hires and Exit Reports: Ms. Misiaszek reviewed the report noting two DPW exits, and three hires (two in Planning and Community Development and one in DPW).
 4. Personnel Policy Procedures Manual Review Team Update—Ms. Radway reported that the team comprised of Nate Malloy (Planning), Mike Olkin and Brianna Sunryd (IT) Jen LaFountain (Collector), Theresa Fleurent (Accounting), Linda Wentworth (Library) and Joanne Misiaszek and Deb Radway (HR) continue to meet weekly for an hour. Progress is deliberate and thorough. Notes are being made of suggested changes. The group intends to meet with the non-union staff prior to presenting its report to the Personnel Board. There is no timeframe for completion.
 5. Meeting Schedule: Next meetings set for February 22nd and March 15th. The annual meeting with non-union staff was set for March 16th at 11am. Mr. Scherpa will not be present for February 22nd.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15am

Deborah Radway

Notetaker