

Town of



Amherst Massachusetts

PERSONNEL BOARD

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Meeting Minutes
Town of Amherst Personnel Board 9 am Wednesday, June 15, 2017
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Present: Tony Butterfield, Catharine Porter, Ron Bell, Charles Scherpa, Chris Hoffmann, Others: Connie Kruger, Select Board liaison, Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Deborah Radway, Joanne Misiaszek, Amherst non-union employees Claire McGinnis, Sharon Sharry, Sonia Aldrich, Theresa Fleurent and Cheri Boucher and SEIU members Jen Gannett, Steven McCarthy, Tina Swift, Bob Thun, Lori Turati, Jen Reynolds, Theresa Sarna Bouthillette, Tom Sarna and Cindy Cary.

Agenda

- Agenda Review/Additions None

Old Business:

- Review and approve minutes of May 2017 meeting, vote 4-0 in favor.

New Business:

- Library Technician Classification:

The \$11 minimum wage has recreated compression in hourly wages between shelvers and technicians at the Library. Ms. Sharry reviewed comparable community wages with data supplied by other Library Directors. At her request, the Library Trustees reviewed and approved a request to the Personnel Board to create a classification for Library Technician and to ask that it be placed on the Salary Schedule for Hourly Part Time Employees at Level 4.

Mr. Scherpa made a motion to create a position of Library Technician and to place it on the Salary Schedule for Hourly Part Time Employees at Level 4. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

Mr. Butterfield mentioned that the \$15/hour minimum wage is coming down the pike.

- Discussion on policy for charging time during emergencies or weather related events
Theresa Fleurent presented a history of emails from executive officials authorizing use of sick leave for employees apprehensive about traveling during hazardous weather. She said employees do not want to lose a benefit they have had for 30 years. It has not been abused and is rarely used but to take it away would be wearing on morale. Cheri Boucher said it should be left alone and dealt with at the Department Level. She has over 1000 hours of accrued sick time and never used it during a weather event but might want to someday rather than risk having an accident. Lori Turati said if she is stressed about driving from

Shutesbury, she wants to be able to call out sick. Jen Reynolds says that the weekend staff should be able to use sick time because town offices are never closed by Town Manager on weekends.

Town Manager Paul Bockelman accepted criticism of needing to make the call about closing town offices earlier than he had been doing. He reiterated that if town hall is closing, employees would not be charged with time off. He suggested that if employees want to make decisions regarding their own safety they should do so but be prepared to charge the time off to vacation or personal time, because they are not sick. Mr. Butterfield distributed a memo from the Treasurer Collector echoing the Town Manager's thoughts and reinforcing the decision that an employee makes about whether to travel to work based on their personal circumstances (home location, condition of vehicle, etc.).

Mr. Scherpa said it is not fair to yank a practice that has been in place, but he agrees with the Town Manager. Mr. Hoffmann says this is the time to formalize a practice and put it into policy- maybe it can be called something other than sick leave. Mr. Butterfield said the Personnel Board is the place to get clarity on what kinds of accrued time are acceptable to be charged and to create a policy the board can endorse that is well thought out and consistent. Connie agreed. He did not intend to unilaterally change existing policy. Do we have any data on how much sick leave was charged for hazardous weather days in the past? Answer: No. Suggest that we track it next year so that we have data. In the meantime, ask PPM review team to review its wording and talk to department heads.

- New hires and exits report- Reviewed. There were 2 new hires (1 police, one IT) and one retirement (Fire).
- Next Meeting Scheduled: August 30, with Personnel Procedures Manual Review Team to review the Manual from the Leaves and Benefits section on.
- Farewell and **Thanks** to Ron Bell for his many years of service and contributions to the Personnel Board.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50am.

Deborah Radway

Notetaker