

Town of Pownal
Select Board Minutes
Monday, April 4, 2022 6:30 PM

I. Call to Order-In Person Meeting by Chair Morris at 6:27 pm

Members Present: Jon Morris, Andy O'Brien, Heidi Cushman Curry
Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

Tom Hall spoke with regard to the Ordinance Review Committee and being down to 3 members. If the committee is still needed, they are willing to do work moving forward. Mr. Hall inquired whether he should contact Ben at North Star Planning for direction. Selectperson O'Brien stated Ben is working on ordinances. Once work is completed the Ordinance Review Committee can review and see if any edits need to be made. Mr. Hall noted the first 2 years the committee was working on simplifying the definitions. It has never been completed. Should the committee wait? Chair Morris stated we don't know where they are in the process. The committee could look at the definitions. NorthStar will write ordinances legally and the Ordinance Review Committee will review. The more the Ordinance Review Committee refines the less work for North Star. Chair Morris said our land use ordinances are different and there are bills in the works we will need to help with. One bill would redo our zoning laws. Mr. Hall stated it's hard to get volunteers if the committee isn't doing anything. Mr. Hall will email the other members of the committee and will get something going. Chair Morris asked Mr. Hall to copy him on the email as he is the liaison. Selectperson Curry wants to make sure to communicate to North Star so work is not duplicated.

IV. Payroll Journal

a. General Journal #284 in the amount of \$15,374.46.

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve Payroll General Journal #284 in the amount of \$15,374.46. Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 3; No 0

V. New Business

a. Interim Road Commissioner

Selectperson O'Brien stated with the absence of a Road Commissioner we need to install an interim while we do a search. Selectperson O'Brien motioned to appoint Matthew Nielsen as Interim Road Commissioner for an undetermined amount of time. Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: Selectperson Curry asked what are the expectations, what are his new duties and how managed? Selectperson O'Brien stated answering the public, directing crew, coding bills and other correspondence and working with the Town Administrator. Chair Morris has had a conversation with Mr. Nielsen and would like to shelter him from administration work. The learning curve will be steep. He would really like the focus to be on roads. Selectperson Curry stated she asked not from lack of confidence in his abilities but wanted to have clear

expectations. Chair Morris suggests Selectperson O'Brien and Town Administrator Chase put together an Interim Road Commissioner job description. Matt Nielsen commented the crew does a lot of stuff with billing and coding but there is a lot to learn. The Board has confidence and will give our expectations.

Vote: Yes 3; No 0

Chair Morris stated to Mr. Nielsen: We want you to be Interim Road Commissioner. We will give you a job description and pay you the salary the prior Road Commissioner was earning. Do you accept? Matt Nielsen accepts.

b. Job Descriptions

The Town Administrator printed off Pownal and Yarmouth's job descriptions. Selectperson O'Brien read through and compared them. He feels the Yarmouth description simplifies and breaks things down better. Selectperson Curry states in ours we have prepare department budget, keeps service records etc. This should be added. She asked if we have covered the necessary skills and abilities. Selectperson Curry and O'Brien felt the essential responsibilities are more inclusive in Yarmouth's job description and we can we cut and paste into Pownal's format. Chair Morris wants to make sure we do not remove responsibilities that pertain to Pownal. He asked if we feel comfortable with our format and cutting and pasting other necessary items. It was asked how are we classifying the job? How does Yarmouth classify? Selectperson O'Brien stated they are salary. Chair Morris commented we need to be close to Durham's salary. We want to give reassurance that they will not get less money on salary. That was original argument. He asked are we reacting to history? Selectperson Curry stated it should be an exempt position. Chair Morris asked the 2 crew members in attendance what their thoughts were. There could be some winters when you make less. Matthew Nielsen agrees with Selectperson Curry that the position should be salary. He feels the Road Commissioner should be the one checking the roads and he is the one that calls the crew in to work. He noted in the summer the hours are less. Jason Best, Jr. agrees with Mr. Nielsen. He asked if there would be something with a set number of hours per year and anything beyond would be straight pay or overtime. Chair Morris is not inclined to use the last Road Commissioner's hours. He does suggest there is latitude in comp time. There would be a threshold. He suggests we use the DOT guidelines. Selectperson Curry would want to see what those guidelines look like. There is an understanding with a salaried position you accept additional responsibilities and are being compensated for that. But she does not want anyone working in unsafe conditions. Hours can be addressed on an as needed basis.

Chair Morris would like to have a memo so it is understood. Selectperson Curry agrees and stated it could be as simple as using the DOT guidelines. Chair Morris wants clear expectations about attending meetings, use of town vehicles etc. It should be written down. We have been burned by having a "gentleman's" agreement. Selectperson O'Brien feels during the winter if the Road Commissioner is handy, he has no problem with him/her going home with a town vehicle if within Pownal. Chair Morris asked about salary range. Selectperson O'Brien feels between \$60,000 and \$65,000 depending on experience. The Town Administrator stated Durham's is \$70,000 for this upcoming year just approved at their town meeting. Chair Morris stated they have 1/3 more road distance. \$65,000 may be a good place to start. Selectperson Curry looked at the MMA salary provided and agrees with Selectperson O'Brien on salary range. We should post on MMA, the town website, share to the list serves and look into the cost for Indeed.com. Chair Morris asked if we should post in The Times Record? The Town Administrator will check on the costs to post in the paper and online. If we get the job posted in the next day or two, we can accept applications until April 22. Chair Morris asked if there is any

wisdom in posting the potential for another position? Selectperson Curry asked what position? Selectperson O'Brien stated advertising for an anticipated opening. Selectperson Curry states we should advertise for just the current opening. Selectperson Curry asked if we should line up relief drivers? Selectperson O'Brien asked the crew in attendance if they have any ideas for relief drivers. Mr. Nielsen said he can check around. Selectperson O'Brien said word of mouth can work. Mr. Nielsen suggested as someone who works for the town and is a resident, we should look for people that are in close proximity. It was difficult these last few years. Chair Morris stated it is illegal to have residency requirement but we can weigh applicants based on proximity.

c. Roadwatch Display, Personal Items & MMEHT Post-Employment Benefits

Selectperson O'Brien stated there are a couple of personal items left at the shop from the former Road Commissioner and a piece of equipment belonging to the town that needs to be returned. He suggested we reach out to the Town Attorney for guidance on moving forward. Selectperson Curry will contact the Town Attorney for direction on moving forward with these items.

The Town Administrator stated that Maine Municipal Health Trust had reached out regarding the termination of employment forms and asked if the town wanted to change the reason for leaving employment to allow the former employee to continue benefits at a lower cost with no expiration date. The Board all agreed not to change the reason for leaving employment on the form. She will notify MMHET the next day to proceed with the submitted form.

VI. Adjournment

Chair Morris motioned to adjourn the meeting. Selectperson O'Brien seconded.

Discussion: None


Vote: Yes 3; No 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.


Respectfully Submitted,
Becky Taylor-Chase
Town Administrator



Jon Morris



Andy O'Brien



Heidi Cushman Curry

