

Personnel Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 21, 2023 4:00 PM
Highland Room, Needham Town Hall

Minutes

Attendance

Personnel Board

Joseph Herlihy, Vice Chair
Rita Vogel, Member
Mark Fachetti, Member
John Burns, Member

Staff

Tatiana Swanson, Director of Human Resources
Mack Schroeder, HR Management Fellow
Carys Lustig, Director of Public Works

Call to order, roll call and remote participation disclosure

Mr. Herlihy opened the Personnel Board meeting at 4:01 pm. Members introduced themselves.

Ms. Vogel, the newest member of the Board, introduced herself and described her current and prior experiences in Human Resources.

Reclassification Recommendations:

HR Operations and Benefits Administrator-

Ms. Swanson introduced a proposal to reclassify the Benefits Administrator position to HR Operations and Benefits Administrator. She explains that the position requires a more sophisticated level of skill than is described in the current job description for Benefits Administrator. Ms. Swanson mentions that the position is responsible for all of the revenues while receiving only functional oversight from the accounting department. She said that by making these processes to clean up HR's backlog more effective, it gave the Benefits Administrator an opportunity to support every other function in the Human Resources department.

Ms. Vogel asks if the person in this position makes any decisions that have a significant impact on the business.

Ms. Swanson says the position is decision-empowered because it manages people's opportunity to get healthcare.

Mr. Herlihy asks whether the job description has changed.

Ms. Swanson answers that there will be more involvement in policy development and procedure development and the person will be performing financial and accounting functions that require a higher level of discretion.

Mr. Fachetti made a motion that the Board moves to recommend approval by the Select Board for the reclassification of the Benefits Administration Grade 6 to the new title of HR Operations and Benefits Administrator classified at Grade 7. Mr. Burns seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion passed.

Assistant Director of Finance-

Ms. Lustig explains that this position has been vacant after the employee was promoted to a position within the Finance Department. She explains that as part of a Comp and Class study, it was downgraded to one grade below the Superintendent positions and that this change would be to bring it back up to a class with Superintendents. She describes how the position has the same functional responsibility as Superintendents as the person makes sure budget gets expended properly and supports all divisions with the use of technology.

She also explains why Business Manager is not an appropriate title for the position after reviewing similar position titles.

Mr. Burns asks why the decision was made to drop the title from the Comp and Class study.

Ms. Lustig says that for DPW, much of the work is outsourced, making it very hard to acknowledge the FTE count and that there wasn't a good slot to acknowledge contracted services and asset management.

Mr. Herlihy asks if they are changing the grade to help recruit for the position.

Ms. Lustig says yes, since they want the person to have authority behind their decision making that they don't currently have and that it would be helpful for this position to be in the same grade as the Superintendents who are at Grade 12.

Ms. Vogel asks whether it's an issue for a director to report to a director.

Ms. Lustig explains why this is not an issue.

Mr. Fachetti makes a motion that the Board vote to recommend approval by the Select Board of the reclassification of the Business Manager (DPW Administration), Grade 11 to the new title of Director of Public Works Administration classified at Grade 12. Ms. Vogel seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed, motion passed.

Job Title Change Proposal:

Ms. Swanson proposes the retitling of Superintendent of Highway to be retitled to Director of Streets and Transportation.

Ms. Lustig explains that it's difficult to fill the upcoming vacancy of this position with the current Superintendent retiring. She says that the reality is that the folks in other town are not doing the same high-level duties that the Superintendent of Highway currently does and that the new title would be a change that would more accurately signal what they're looking for and attract a stronger candidate pool.

Mr. Burns asks why the Department chose word "streets" for the title.

Ms. Lustig explained that they had many iterations of this conversation and realized that the word "transportation" alone and didn't capture the application element of the role.

Mr. Burns made a motion that the Board vote to recommend approval by the Select Board for the job title change from Highway Superintendent to Director of Streets and Transportation. Mr. Fachetti seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed, motion passed.

Project Updates

Ms. Swanson provides a hiring update for the Board, sharing how many positions the Town has hired for and how many employees have left the Town since the last Board meeting. She shares that the Town is currently using a recruitment consultant to help us with the new search for the Library Director.

Mr. Schroeder introduced himself to the board.

Ms. Swanson explains how the HR Department is getting more proactive in the way it recruits employees through job fairs. She says that the Town is very proud of the co-op program that is about to start with Minuteman High School.

Ms. Vogel asks why people have chosen to terminate their employment with the Town.

Ms. Swanson explains why people have transitioned out of work with the Town. She mentions retirement, location preferences, and a change of pace in career.

Ms. Vogel asks if the Town is doing retention interviews.

Ms. Swanson explains that the HR Department wants to focus on educating people about the benefits they may have with the Town but may not know they have access to.

Ms. Vogel explains that communicating open enrollment along with benefit offerings could be beneficial to help employees understand these offerings better.

Ms. Swanson explains that the Town is in the process of training and development and hiring the Assistant Director of HR. She shares that the Town will also be working with Diversity in Workplace to implement a more robust Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging strategy.

Meeting Minutes for Approval: Jul 31, 2023

Ms. Swanson asks if there are any questions about the minutes on July 31, 2023.

Mr. Herlihy motions to approve meeting minutes on July 31, 2023. Mr. Fachetti seconds the motion. All are in favor of the motion. None opposed. The motion passes.

Any other business

No other business.

Adjournment – 4:57 pm

Mr. Herlihy motions to adjourn the Personnel Board meeting. Mr. Burns seconds the motion. All are in favor of the motion. The meeting is adjourned at 4:57 pm.