

**Eliot Select Board Workshop
Thursday, September 21, 2017 at 5:30 pm
At the Eliot Municipal Offices**

MINUTES

Attending: Acting Chairman Jack Murphy, Selectmen Brad Hughes, Richard Donhauser, Bob Pomerleau. Town manager Dana Lee. Members of the public Denny Lentz and Jim Tessier.

1. Open Meeting: Chairman Murphy opened the meeting at 5:30 pm
2. Roll Call: All Selectmen present except Rebecca Davis (absent with notice)
3. Public Comment: None
4. Discussion regarding Compensation Plan structure: Dana was asked to recap the new proposed changes to the compensation plan. He stated that the new plan was based on 8 pay grades and ten steps for each grade. Each step would be equal to 1.5% increase in pay and in order to move up a step, an employee has to score a 3.0 or better on their performance evaluation.

Dana noted that for any Merit Bonus, the Board had previously expressed a desire to see those awarded be required to do / perform exceptionally.

He also noted that at a prior workshop, there was a desire to change the “market survey” language to “check market salaries no less often than every five years, and more frequently, if economic conditions change.”

Bob said he had checked social security COLAs and over the last ten years, the average was 3.18% and over just the past five years, the average has been 2.64%. The group discussed liking the 1.5% base between steps and allowing flexibility to add some annual COLA adjustment as may be deemed appropriate. Brad noted that if we do that, the entire pay scale would need to be updated by the amount of the COLA. Dana concurred.

Brad pointed out that using a 1.5% step amount (vs. 2.5% in the last edition), makes all starting wages much higher. Bob pointed out that the labor market is tightening and that being highly competitive at starting wage will be good. He also noted that the new, proposed compensation system is largely structured like the 2009 plan (1.5% between steps and the Select Board applies a discretionary annual COLA).

The Board discussed Merit Bonuses, and the group felt that all regular employees should be able to do something exceptional and be put in for a one-time bonus payment, not just those outside the top market pay rate. Dana discussed the appropriate amount of said Merit Bonuses and had suggested something approximately equal to 1% of their pay. The Merit Bonus would also be the only way to gain additional compensation in any given year for an employee whose wage is above maximum market rate. Jim Tessier noted that with higher starting wages, perhaps new employees would not need / require to be brought in at Step 4, for example. The group agreed with that

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thought. Dana noted that in some cases, however, an employee with some significant experience could still be brought in at a rate other than starting wage.

5. Discussion regarding Personnel Policy concerns: Dana asked if anyone had any issues with the legal advice provided by Attorney Ann Freeman. The group generally agreed with all the proposed changes, FMLA language, etc. The group discussed the employee categories and benefits matrix. Dana pointed out the inconsistencies and unknowns. He reviewed how this might be structured for consistency. Two levels of part time were discussed, each with a fixed level of accrual largely based on a pro-rated work schedule as compared to a 40 hour per week schedule. The group discussed methods by which we would be able to prove “domestic partnership.” Dana said he had a form with questions they sign. Bob noted that Maine recognizes domestic partnerships and some may be registered as such with the State. The group favored allowing coverage of a domestic partner. Next, the group discussed nepotism and the charter provisions for requesting a waiver. The group said it was time to follow the charter and require waiver requests from any personnel in a nepotistic situation. We also discussed allowing whatever lunch people want to take, but noting it is unpaid. Also, each employee is entitled to and must take two 15-minute breaks daily (am / pm).
6. Adjourn: Brad made a motion to adjourn at 7:00 pm. This was seconded by Bob and was so voted 4 – 0.

Approved: 10/12/17

S: / Richard Donhauser, Secretary