

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MINUTES OF
September 3, 2020
Buzzards Bay Water District 15 Wallace Ave. Buzzards Bay, MA 02532

Present:

Wendy Chapman, Chairperson
Robert Ethier, Co-Chair Commissioner
Joe Carrara, Commissioner
Judith Flynn, Commissioner
Galon "Skip" Barlow - Commissioner
Steven Souza – Superintendent
Louise Warren- Billing Clerk
Corey Keesling

Excused Absence: Barry Woods, Administrative Support

Meeting was held outdoors at the office at 15 Wallace Ave and recorded by Steven Souza, Superintendent

The meeting was called to order by Wendy Chapman, Chairperson, at 4:02 pm

1. Review of the top candidates selected by the Prescreening Committee for the job vacancy of Treasurer/Clerk, for the purpose of possible elimination. Vote to interview top 5 qualified applicants as selected by Prescreening committee. Vote to extend candidates if top 5 qualified applicants are not available for hire or for other reasons determined by the Board of Water Commissioners: A packet of 8 applications (attached) was distributed to all Water Commissioners. 2 applicants withdrew. Applicant # 8 (Michael S. Demos) has not responded as to whether he is still interested in the job. The Chairperson gave all Water Commissioners the necessary time to review the applications before deliberations. When all Water Commissioners were completed with reviewing the applications, the Chairperson asked for comments and/or concerns regarding the persons to be interviewed. Commissioner Barlow reiterated that none of the 8 applicants have been interviewed and that this process is to determine whether to proceed forward with such interviews. The Chairperson stated that this was correct, and it has been confirmed that all applicants except for applicant #8, is still interested in the position. Commissioner Ethier mentioned that applicant # 6 (Oluwafisayo Ogunkoya) applied for a part-time position in his office in Wareham. The Chairperson mentioned that applicant #1 (Tawnya Menesale) has experience with the VADAR System which is a strong positive due to it being municipal software, which is what the Water Department uses. Commissioner Ethier mentioned that this is a big help because of its complex nature and he had to let somebody go in the past due to that person's lack of understanding of the system. The Chairperson asked if there was any other comments or concerns. The Chairperson then entertained a motion to move forward to schedule the applicants. Commissioner Flynn said that she feels that we have some good qualified applicants and should proceed forward. Subsequently,

Commissioner Flynn made a motion that commissioners accept the recommendations of the 8 qualified applicants from the prescreening committee for interviews for the treasurer/clerk job. Commissioner Barlow seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous yes vote of all commissioners.

2. Confirmatory vote of mutual releases: The Chairperson explained that a confirmation roll call vote was necessary to confirm that the mutual release agreement between Jennifer Kelson and the Buzzards Bay Water District was signed by the commissioners with a roll call. Commissioner Barlow asked what this agreement was? The Chairperson said that this is a common housekeeping article that is signed by municipalities when someone leaves a position to protect all parties for legality purposes. Commissioner Barlow had not seen this agreement. The Chairperson said that it was made available on the previous Friday when warrants were signed. The Chairperson apologized to Commissioner Barlow because she thought he had seen the agreement and had the opportunity to sign it. The Chairperson then asked each Water Commissioner who signed the document (attached) to indicate through a roll call confirmation of their signature. Roll Call: Robert Ethier - yes; Joseph Carrara - yes, Wendy Chapman - yes.

3. Formulate list of questions for interview process: The Chairperson passed out numerous sample questions to all Water Commissioners as a guideline to follow and encouraged any questions that were not listed. The Chairperson also said that Commissioners should try to limit the number of questions to 10. The Superintendent was asked if he would like any questions asked whereas, he works closely with the treasurer/clerk. The commissioners reviewed and discussed a multitude of questions. The final questions are listed below:

1. Tell us about yourself to include your background that qualifies you for this job and your current responsibilities and duties.
2. If selected, when will you be available to start working at the Buzzards Bay Water District.
3. Where do you see yourself in five years and are you willing to travel when necessary for various conferences and training to achieve this goal.
4. Why should we hire you and what inspired you to apply for this job. In particular, because we are a small District.
5. Do you have any specific comments or questions for the Board.
6. How do you cope with stressful situations and working under pressure. Subsequently, how do you interact with others in accomplishing the overall goals and objectives.
7. What are your strengths and weaknesses.
8. What management style suits you the best. Do you feel comfortable working independently and being involved in the total team concept and taking any necessary actions to carry out the mission of the Buzzards Bay Water District.

Upon final discussions, the commissioners felt that 8 questions were sufficient. Commissioner Flynn made a motion to accept the 8 questions as presented.

Commissioner Chapman seconded the motion. Unanimous yes vote of all commissioners.

4. Selection of the meeting date/time for interviews: Before dates and times for interviews can be set up, the commissioners need to decide approximately how long each interview will take. Commissioner Barlow felt that 40 minutes per individual would be sufficient. To interview 8 applicants would take more than 1 night. Commissioner Ethier felt that 20 minutes per individual would be sufficient. The commissioners after further discussion decided to go with scheduling interviews for 30 minutes for each applicant. The decision to change from 20 to 30 minutes was to give commissioners time to discuss and/or make preparations for the next candidate. The applicant's will be scheduled starting at 5 PM. There will be 4 interviews on Wednesday, September 9, and 4 interviews on Thursday, September 10, 2020. The applicants will be allowed to pick open slots according to the rating given them after reviewing their qualifications and experience as indicated on their applications. The commissioners discussed the best place to interview the candidates based on current Covid-19 restrictions. Due to limited space inside the Buzzards Bay Water District and the garage and the fact that the interviews will be in open session, it was decided to hold the interviews outdoors at the district office. The applicants will be informed to park and wait in their vehicles in the last spaces to the rear of the parking lot where there will be designated cones. Subsequently, they will be asked not to show up for the interview until close to their scheduled time at their discretion. A Commissioner or designated person will summon the applicant when it is their time to be interviewed. This can be done in person or if the applicant has a cell phone, they can be called. The Chairperson will make an announcement prior to the interviews, that the public will not be allowed to ask questions or interfere with the interview process. The commissioners examined and discussed a range of possibilities to include what is in the best interests of public safety and that most interviews are now being accomplished over the phone during the pandemic. There will be no other agenda items outside of the interviews. After final discussion, Commissioner Flynn made a motion to do interviews on September 9 and 10th, starting at 5 PM; 5:30 PM; 6 PM; and 6:30 PM. Seconded by Commissioner Carrara. Unanimous yes vote by all commissioners.

5. Superintendents Report: Superintendent Souza discussed the (attached) monthly bulleted report regarding the District activities since the last Board meeting. The items were: 1. Service line break on Buzzards Bay Drive. 2. Service line repair on Plaza Lane. 3. Leak detection ongoing in South Plymouth. 4. Working on online banking. 5. Working with engineer on permit. Commissioner Flynn asked about the engineer/consultant for the permit. The same engineer does the work for the North Sagamore and Bourne water districts. During previous minutes there was discussion regarding the communications with the town versus the water district. Commissioner Flynn asked how much of the previous communications with the town are in writing. Superintendent Souza recently received a packet from the town (past, present and future) to proceed with the permit. This information has been sent to the engineer in order to calculate the projections and apply to DEP. It was mentioned that Mr. Woods was not pleased with the articles that misrepresented the water district in the newspaper. The Chairperson

mentioned that Superintendent Souza was at the sewer commissioners meeting and did inform them of the requirements that were necessary to proceed for additional allocations. Commissioner Flynn stated that we should always keep a paper trail and a file on communications with the town and/or other committees and boards so that we have a reference for backup purposes. The district does have emails, minutes, memorandums, etc., That should all be filed in one folder. The Chairperson also has emails from the previous Town Administrator and current Selectmen Peter Meier stating that the district was on the town routing slip for the past two years when in fact we were not. Mr. Chapman was acknowledged. Mr. Chapman stated that he personally contacted Commissioner Potter for the minutes of the latest Sewer Commissioner meeting. The purpose behind this was because of the total misinformation that was provided to the Bourne Enterprise which misled the public and caused confusion regarding the truth of the current water situation. Commissioner Potter was made aware that the comments in the paper regarding that the water district was trying to send a message and that nobody would be denied water permits was inaccurate. This is a serious situation and the water district cannot give out permits based on "what ifs," and that the town has ignored this problem for too long without cooperating with the water district. The subsequent news article stirred up responses from some of the public. However, because only part of the story was given without the reporter checking out the information with the water district, further inaccuracies were reported. There have been reports over the last two years which started when the splash pad was being built downtown regarding water problems. Mr. Woods gave out packets of information during the last meeting. They clearly show that the town continually ignored the water district and substantiated that the water district went way beyond the reports cited. The water district put in a new well and went to other extra various methods in addition to what was recommended in order to improve service to the town. Mr. Chapman explained to Commissioner Potter that there were inaccuracies in the Sewer Commissioner minutes. First of all, Superintendent Souza was listed at the Sewer Commissioner meeting. Although Superintendent Souza informed the Sewer Commissioners of the information that was needed, the minutes reflected that Superintendent Souza wasn't even at the meeting or had spoken. Consequently, the minutes reflected that the Sewer Commissioners were still waiting on the water district to come to a meeting. It was also pointed out to Commissioner Potter, that Ryan Correia, contractor, misled the Sewer Commissioners regarding what he considered the water district giving him a (Grace Allocation Water Permit). During a Buzzards Bay Water District meeting in which Mr. Correia; Commissioner Potter; the Town Administrator and others attended, Superintendent Souza mentioned that due to the length of time possibly a year or more it would take once the information is received from the town to get an additional pumping allowance from DEP, it may be possible if feasible that DEP would grant the Buzzards Bay Water District additional pumping capabilities to keep afloat while the permit was in process. Superintendent Souza did not know if this was possible. Mr. Correia stated at the Sewer Commissioners meeting which was not in the minutes but was on Bourne TV channel, the above aforementioned misleading information regarding giving him a Grace allocation water permit. It was also mentioned about taking water or allocating water from the Buzzards Bay splash pad or putting in a well at the site. Mr. Chapman clearly mentioned that the town would be clearly have a problem with taking

water away from the splash pad where it has been such a controversial topic. Additionally, it's all well and good to say put in a well for the splashpad, but that requires approval and a substantial amount of money. But again, chances are Mr. Correia will sell out when his business is done and won't be around to have to pick up the pieces of a broken system. Superintendent Souza agreed that any water from the Buzzards Bay splash pad or well would not be sufficient enough to justify the permits that are required to go forward with the current projects. Finally, Mr. Chapman stated that the Sewer Commissioners granted Mr. Correia's permit fully knowing the circumstances. In particular, where the two Sewer Commissioners and the Town Administrator was at the water district meeting. Subsequent to Mr. Chapman's emails to Sewer Commissioner Potter, their last meeting minutes were postponed for approval. Mr. Chapman stated that he followed through with this as a public citizen to get it on record to protect the water district. Commissioner Flynn mentioned her approval and that having a paper trail is necessary.

6. Any business not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours: The Chairperson asked if there was any business not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours that needed to be discussed. There was no discussion.

7. Adjourn: There was a motion made by Commissioner Flynn to adjourn the meeting at 4:37pm. Seconded by Commissioner Carrara. Unanimous yes vote by all commissioners.

**Recorded by:
Stephen Souza**