

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

MINUTES OF

July 29, 2020

Buzzards Bay Water District 15 Wallace Ave. Buzzards Bay, MA 02532

MINUTES

Present:

Wendy Chapman, Chairperson
Joe Carrara, Commissioner
Judith Flynn, Commissioner
Galon "Skip" Barlow - Commissioner
Jennifer Kelson- Treasurer
Steven Souza – Superintendent
Barry Woods, Admin. Support
Louise Warren- Billing Clerk
Stanley Andrews – Resident

Meeting was held outdoors at the office at 15 Wallace Ave and recorded by Jennifer Kelson, Treasurer. The meeting was called to order by Wendy Chapman, Chairperson, at 4:00 pm.

Receipt of Resignation Letter of the Clerk/Treasurer, Jennifer Kelson, vote to accept and declare the position vacant. Discussion and vote on earned time on books.

Wendy asked to take a vote to accept the resignation letter of Jennifer Kelson. Skip Barlow made a **MOTION** to accept the resignation letter. Judith Flynn seconded that motion and all in favor.

Wendy asked Jennifer to discuss her earned time on the books and what she would need to get paid out on. Jennifer explained that she currently has 165.5 hours of accrued vacation/pt time. She stated that she will be taking a week's vacation the week of August 10th. She also explained that she would take other vacation days sporadically throughout August depending on training schedule. Wendy asked what would be the dollar value that we would be buying you out at? Jennifer explained that if she uses 80 hours of vacation between now and September, she will have a balance of 85.5 hours of vacation time to cash out at a pay rate of \$43.28 per hour. That would be a cash out payment of \$3,700.44.

Skip asked if Jenn has the intent on cashing out 85.5 hours. Jenn stated that it depends on how much vacation time she takes in August. Skip questioned how she came up with a balance of 85.5 hours, and Jenn explained that she came up with that scenario based on taking 40 hours off the week of 8/10 and taking 8 hours of week off until the day she leaves. Jenn stated that this just a gueestimate.

Joseph Carrara made a **MOTION** to authorize a check to be cut for Jennifer's accrued vacation time on the books. Skip Barlow seconded that motion, and all in favor.

Discussion and vote on filling the vacant position of Clerk/Treasurer on an interim basis

Wendy explained that she has someone in mind that could help in the interim. Jennifer proceeded to distribute Vivian Stowe's resume to the Board. Wendy explained that Vivian could assist on basic tasks after Jennifer leaves and before the position is filled by a permanent hire. Wendy said Vivian would not be working 40 hours a week and is only doing this to fill in. She is not looking for a permanent position. Wendy stated that Jenn will be showing her the books and the basics to get us thru. Wendy also asked the board if we don't get someone permanent by the time Jennifer leaves, would Jenn be able to consult a night or two a week to help. Skip said he would not have a problem with that. Skip said that having someone in the interim is a smart idea. Joe said that he is against hiring the interim person as a full-time position. Joe stated that Jennifer could help the interim person if needed.

Skip made a **MOTION** to hire Vivian Stowe as an interim employee to get us thru the time it takes to hire a full-time position. Joe seconded that motion, and all in favor.

Wendy said that they needed to decide what to pay the interim.

Wendy asked what is the amount of the first pay step? Jennifer explained that the first step is \$35.72. Judy suggested \$25 per hour for the interim person. Wendy emphasized that she will not be full time. Judy asked if she would be paid cash (1099) or on the payroll? Wendy said that we would ask her what she prefers.

Judy made a **MOTION** to pay the interim worker, Vivian Stowe, \$25 per hour. Skip seconded that motion, and all in favor.

Discuss and vote on the procedures to be used in filling the full time position of Clerk/Treasurer.

Judy asked what the procedure was the last time they filled the position. Joe explained that they publicized it in the paper and went thru the stack of applications. Jenn suggested that in addition to the paper, we should advertise on the Mass Collectors and Treasurer's website. She stated that she isn't sure if they would be able to find applicants with municipal experience by only advertising in the paper. Joe asked about commuter distance. Wendy stated that we need to cast a wide net including New Bedford Standard Times. Judy suggested using Indeed. Wendy asked what Indeed costs. Jenn said it might be free. Judy said people do not use the paper anymore. Jenn suggested we use Cape Cod Times, New Bedford Standard Times, The Enterprise, Indeed, and the MCTA website. Skip and Judy both said that we shouldn't post in the Enterprise because no one looks at it.

Wendy asked if everyone knows Jenn's job description. Judy said they all had a copy of it on their desk. Jenn said that she also created a draft of the job ad for paper.

Wendy said that they needed to decide how many people will be doing the interviewing. Judy said she thought they should all interview. Wendy answered that it would have to be an open meeting. Skip replied that is fine. Judy said that they should all be able to look at the resumes as they come in. Wendy said that Jenn should be able to prescreen. Wendy said that we could get a lot of applicants that have no experience. Skip said it should be a full board review. Skip said there is an interview process and application review process. There can be no deviation in questions that are asked. Wendy asked if he thought that the full board should be involved. Skip said yes. He said it is only fair to the

applicants. Skip said that the whole board should review all the applicants in an open meeting.

Joe said we are swatting a fly with an elephant, and that he likes Skip's idea. Wendy stated that she is used to HR prescreening and pulling out the non-qualified applicants. It would cut down all those not qualified and save time. Skip said it is better this way (all participating in screening).

Wendy said that the first time she advertised, she had 200 applicants. If it is a public meeting, the public would be able to participate. Skip said the process should be out in the public.

Stanley Andrews, resident, said he has been thru this process a few times. He said interview questions have to be the same for all applicants. He said that interviews do need to be an open process. Every applicant will be asked the same question. During the interview process the same person asks the same question of every applicant.

Wendy provided a copy of the open meeting law about preliminary screenings of applicants. The law states that you can have an open meeting or in an executive session with less than a majority of the board. Wendy said that an open meeting prescreening of applicants may be embarrassing to applicants if their application is eliminated in front of everyone.

Judy asked why the board couldn't do a screening in an executive session. Jenn and Wendy explained that a prescreening can only be done in an executive session with less than the quorum of the parent body. Wendy said we have 2 choices, to do a prescreening with a partial board in an executive session or have an open meeting with the whole board. Joe stated he felt it should be the whole board.

Stanley Andrews made a suggestion, that if you do hold prescreening in an open session, you could give the applications a number instead of reading off someone's name in public. This would help avoid any embarrassment. Wendy asked what will happen if the applicant asks what number they are? She said she thought that you would have to tell them their number then it wouldn't be anonymous.

Wendy again asked the board how they wanted to proceed. Skip stated that we should just accept the resignation and post the position. Wendy asked if he wanted to postpone the other motion regarding the application and interview process. Wendy asked the board what the deadline should be for applicants?

Stanley said that he understood what Wendy was trying to do. He said you should be able to tell applicants that this is the process we are following, that all applications are due by this date, all reviews are done by this date, etc. That should be in the advertisement. Skip said that the chair should develop some sort of schedule and bring it back to the board. Wendy replied to Skip that we do not have time, Jenn is going to be leaving. Skip stated that Wendy should work with the interim to develop a process. Skip said it is hard to pull this information out of the air. Jenn interjected and stated that Wendy is trying to ask the boards opinion on what they feel an adequate timeline would be.

Judith Flynn made a **MOTION** to advertise the position for three weeks. Joe Carrara seconded that motion and all in favor.

Judy stated that the board will need a week to review the applications.

Wendy explained how she believes that the district needs to have an audit when Jenn leaves and another audit when the interim person leaves. She explained that is how the town does it. This is how you ensure there is continuity in the books. Judy stated that we are in the process of having our annual audit now. Judy asked Jenn when the audit will be finalized, and Jenn replied not until the fall. Wendy replied that July and August will need to be audited before Jenn leaves. Jenn stated that she will contact CliftonLarsonAllen and ask them about doing an exit audit.

Discuss and vote on the qualifications and salary range for the position of Clerk/Treasurer to be subject to references and CORI check

Jenn provided a current job description to the Board for review. Jenn asked the board if procurement should be added to the job description since she is now a certified Massachusetts Public Purchasing agent. Jenn said that she wasn't sure if it was important to add. Skip said not to get too specific. Wendy asked if the description is acceptable. The board agreed.

Wendy brought up salary. Jenn provided the step chart for the Treasurer's salary. There was discussion if the salary range should be included in the job posting. It was decided to list the job stating, "salary commensurate with education and experience." Jenn explained that people can either start at class one or class two depending on qualifications and experience. Jenn said that the board should have an idea of what range we are offering in case applicants call and ask.

Judy Flynn made a **MOTION** that starting salary will be around \$70,000. Skip Barlow seconded that motion and all in favor.

5.) Vote and set deadline for responses

Judith Flynn made a **MOTION** to accept applications thru August 21, 2020. (There was no second on this motion).

The board decided that they will need at least a week to review. The board decided to meet on Thursday, September 3rd at 4:00 in an open session.

Wendy asked if they had a **MOTION** to meet September 3rd. Skip replied, "so moved." Judy replied, "I second." Joe said, Aye. Wendy stated, "all in favor."

Wendy asked the board to think about what questions they would like to ask applicants.

Other related matters to fill the full-time benefited position of Clerk/Treasurer.

There was discussion on how many applicants should be interviewed. Skip suggested 10-15 applicants.

Skip Barlow made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 4:53 pm. Joe Carrara seconded that motion and all in favor.