

MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 8/3/2022

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: Dean R. Larabee, Clerk, Wendy F. Cochrane, Member

TOPIC		ACTION
	Meeting Convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Moitoza – Pettey Hearing Room	
Personnel #3 (taken out of order)	Board to hire James Miller for the open Part-Time Laborer's Position for the Highway Department. Robert Rose along with candidate James Miller were present for the meeting. Mr. Rose explained that Mr. Miller was a good candidate for the position, as he previously worked for the school's maintenance department for many years. The Board voted to hire James Miller for the Part-Time Laborer's position for the Highway Department.	Cochrane to motion to hire, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
Personnel #4 (taken out of order)	<p>Board to discuss the position for Maintenance Attendant #1 and Maintenance Attendant #2 for the Highway Department. Mr. Rose explained that Maintenance Attendant #1 is currently an employee who is retiring very soon, and was hoping the Board would allow this position to be posted so that employee could retire as soon as possible. Mr. Partridge asked Mr. Rose if there would be an overlap between the new employee and the current employee to allow for some training, to which Mr. Rose replied that is what he is hoping for. Mr. Rose also mentioned because the Highway Department is down a couple of positions, there is money in the budget to allow for training. The Board voted to post the Maintenance Attendant #1 position.</p> <p>Mr. Rose discussed the Maintenance Attendant #2 position. He stated this position has evolved over time to become more of a laborer's position, and feels it would be more beneficial to the Town to have that position go from the Maintenance Attendant #2 to a General Laborer position. He noted there is money in the budget to do so. Mr. Larabee stated he would like a proposal to see how much it would cost and a job description. Mr. Rose handed out job descriptions of the laborer position to the Board. He noted he spoke with the union representative for the workers and they are ok with it because nothing is changing with the union. Ms. Cochrane stated she would like to get that in writing. Mr. Rose explained if he were to rehire as it stands right now, that person would make \$14.54/hr. However, if it jumps up to a laborer position, it would be approximately \$17.20/hr. Mr. Larabee stated he would like a breakdown of the cost analysis for the position. He also noted after a review, there is a difference between these 2 job descriptions. He stated if they are expecting the person to handle cash, it needs to be in the job description. Mr. Rose proposed that he would like it to be a General Laborer Position at \$17.45/hr. The Board voted to table this discussion regarding the Maintenance Attendant no. 2 position providing that they receive documentation of the cost to the department.</p>	<p>Cochrane to motion to post, Larabee 2nd, voted.</p> <p>Cochrane to motion to table discussion of maint. No. 2 pos., Larabee 2nd, voted.</p>
Executive Session	<p>Board to go into Executive Session under MGL Ch. 30A §21 (a) 3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares: potential litigation, and to return back to open session.</p> <p>Board to return to open session at 6:28 p.m.</p>	Cochrane to motion to go into Executive Session, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
Personnel # 1 (taken out of order)	Board to hire and sign contract for Melissa Forgue, Town Accountant. Ms. Forgue was present at the meeting. Mr. Partridge stated he's recommending that Melissa Forgue fill the position of Town Accountant for the Town of Berkley. He explained Ms. Forgue comes to Berkley as the former Interim Town Accountant and Town Accountant from Acushnet. She was with the Town of Acushnet since 2015 in the accounting office. Prior to her leaving, she was serving as the Town Accountant, and has a lot of municipal accounting experience. Mr. Partridge noted she interviewed extremely well, and feels he has a good candidate to take on the position. Mr. Larabee asked Ms. Forgue what she liked the most about her former accounting experience in Acushnet, to which she replied she's always loved finances and helping people, especially in small towns such as Berkley. She is willing to help department heads understand their finances, and answer any questions they may have. Mr. Partridge stated she has agreed to a 3 year contract with the terms previously discussed. Ms. Cochrane asked Ms. Forgue when she would be able to start. Ms. Forgue replied 2 weeks from tomorrow, noting that she would be starting on a Thursday (August 18). Mr. Partridge suggested she start on that Thursday to get her acclimated to the building and to help get set	<p>Cochrane to motion to hire w/ term to exp. 6/30/25, Larabee 2nd, voted.</p> <p>Personnel Board to motion to hire w/ term to exp. 6/30/25, all voted in favor.</p>

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	up. The Selectmen and Personnel Board voted to hire Melissa Forgue to serve as the Town Accountant for the Town of Berkley, with a term to expire on June 30, 2025.	
Personnel #2 (taken out of order)	Board to review and approve proof of plaque from Bridgewater Trophy for Chief of Police Scott Labonte. The Board voted to approve the proof.	Cochrane to motion to approve, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
Personnel #5 (taken out of order)	Board to accept resignation from Treasurer Clerk Chloe DeFaria, effective date August 25, 2022. Mr. Larabee proceeded to read the resignation letter signed by Ms. DeFaria. Mr. Partridge noted within his first 2 weeks, Ms. DeFaria was very outgoing and great to work with. Mr. Larabee noted she will be missed, and wore many hats while serving as the Treasurer's Clerk. Ms. Cochrane noted she far exceeded all expectations of her job. The Board voted to accept the resignation letter.	Cochrane to motion to accept, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
New Business	Board to sign Bristol County ARPA Grant Agreement for the upgraded Fire/EMS Cardiac Monitors. Mr. Partridge explained this is one of the ARPA Grant applications that the town is putting forward. It is to purchase 2 Cardiac Monitors for the Fire Department, and it's eligible for the funding. One of the final pieces needed is for the Board to sign the application so it can be submitted tomorrow. Ms. Cochrane explained she temporarily took on the role of the ARPA funding when the former Town Administrator left. She has since found out she is allowed to sign it even though she is a certifier of ARPA. The Board voted to approve and sign the Bristol County ARPA Grant Agreement for the upgraded Fire/EMS Cardiac Monitors.	Cochrane to motion to approve & sign, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
	Board to review and sign letter to memorialize the IMA between the City of Taunton and Town of Berkley regarding the Holloway Street project. Mr. Partridge noted after speaking with Town Counsel Thomas Gay, the Town's attorney still needs to sign the IMA. There was a supplemental document that needs to be signed by the Board of Selectmen to memorialize several things that the Town of Berkley has agreed to do, and proceeded to read off those items. Once this document is signed, it should finalize the documents necessary for the project. Mr. Larabee asked if the City of Taunton has taken care of any loose ends at this point. Mr. Partridge replied after speaking with Mr. Gay, there were no issues on the City side, and the Mayor will have to sign that Agreement as well. Mr. Larabee asked if the date will be changed on the Agreement, or is it still binding as of the date on the Agreement itself, which is April 8, 2022. Mr. Partridge stated the date will be updated. The Board voted to enter into an IMA with the City of Taunton regarding the Holloway Street project. Mr. Larabee requested that this be put on the agenda for August 17, 2022 for an update on it.	Cochrane to motion to enter into IMA w/ Taunton, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
Town Administrator Report	Interim Town Administrator to discuss Geosyntec 2 nd Quarter Landfill Gas Monitoring for June 2022. Mr. Partridge explained that this is the monitoring at the Berkley Landfill on County Street, and that the results during the 2 nd quarter were good with no readings. He suggested to the Board that the company come in after the next quarter to go over the monitoring process and what the readings are at that time. The Board voted to file the monitoring review from quarter two for the Berkley Landfill.	Cochrane to motion to file, Larabee 2 nd , voted.
	Interim Town Administrator to discuss ARPA update. Mr. Partridge explained that there are currently 3 applications on the Bristol County ARPA portal. The first one is for the communications equipment for the Fire Department to upgrade their communications and dispatch, which totaled approximately \$117K, and is very close to the commission to where it will go for a vote. The second one is for the communications for the school phone system, which is complete and in stage 1 review. The last one is the one signed tonight by the Board, which will get submitted tomorrow. Mr. Partridge stated he wanted to find out if there is a timeline on when the funds need to be spent by from the towns that the County Commissioners have. Mr. Larabee noted there is a Commissioner's meeting next Thursday and he will try to gather any information at that time. He also requested that this be put on the agenda every 2 weeks to update the Board on any new information. The Board voted to file the ARPA update.	Cochrane to motion to file, Larabee 2 nd , voted.

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Interim Town Administrator to discuss MIIA Insurance update. Mr. Partridge explained he spoke with the Town's MIIA representative to try and finalize the annual payments for liability and property insurance, and it has been submitted. He noted there was a little delay in processing and the Town was close to losing out on a \$5,000 discount, but he was able to work through it and the Town will still receive that discount. He then explained there will be a meeting set up within the next 2 weeks with MIIA representatives, and he is planning on bringing in various department heads for them to just review everything that we're covered for in the community. He noted he sent out numerous documents to the school and the Police Department regarding liability which need to be filled out and returned. He'd like MIIA to explain to them all the different aspects of liability so everyone knows what they're covered for through MIIA. They're also going to talk about the rewards program that they run. He stated currently, the Town is getting approximately \$116 in rewards, and the Town is eligible for significantly more than that. One of the representatives from MIIA will be focusing on the rewards program and where the Town can receive credits, and what all the departments need to be doing to make sure their people and their buildings are protected. He stated he will be working with Ms. Tigano to coordinate future meetings.

Information only;
no action needed.Finance
Committee
Update

Mr. Freitas stated he met with the Interim Town Administrator and discussed a few things, one of them being the stormwater issue in town. Mr. Partridge noted he received an email from the Highway Department from the EPA, which stated the Town is very close to being in violation with stormwater. He stated he has a phone call with the EPA tomorrow, and will ask for an extension to give the Town time to pull it together. He will update the Board on how it goes, and they will need funding for that as well. Ms. Cochrane noted there was ARPA money put aside for that. Mr. Freitas stated stormwater has always been a big issue, however he believes if the EPA sees a plan in place and the funds are available, he doesn't see a problem with them giving an extension.

Information only;
no action needed.

Mr. Freitas stated there are some budgetary issues that need to be addressed for the November Special Town Meeting. He noted what the drivers of the \$70K unbalanced budget were, which were collective bargaining, unpaid bills, and increased use of legal counsel. He stated the State budget has been passed and signed, and that there were minimal changes, mostly to the positive for schools, which won't have to pay anything out of the unbalanced budget for shortfalls within their budget.

Adjournment

Ms. Cochrane noted she would like to post for the Treasurer's Clerk position ASAP, before the next scheduled meeting on August 17, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Larabee noted the next Board of Selectmen meeting will be held on Monday, August 8, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. for that reason, and the next scheduled meeting will be August 17, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Cochrane to
motion to adjourn,
Larabee 2nd,
voted.
George F. Miller, Chairman
Dean R. Larabee, Clerk
Wendy F. Cochrane, Member
Kevin Partridge, Interim Town Administrator