



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building
100 Maple Avenue
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

Minutes Personnel Board Meeting March 29, 2021

Present: Theresa Flynn, Anthony Froio & Robert Cashman

Also Present: Kevin Mizikar, Kristen Las, Kristina Anderson

T. Flynn called the meeting to order in Google Hangout at 8:36 AM using an agenda and meeting notice dated March 24, 2021.

On a motion by A. Froio and a second by T. Flynn, the Board voted 3-0 to accept the minutes of February 26, 2021, as amended.

K. Mizikar explained the fund transfer documents to the board, stating that the financial information displayed represented an unbudgeted vacation buy back for the retirement of S. Wright, Town Clerk. T. Flynn made a motion to accept the transfer, R. Cashman seconded, and through a roll call vote the transfer was approved. K. Anderson would issue the letter for signature through DocuSign following the adjournment of the meeting.

The board then reviewed the suggested changes to the Personnel Bylaw. T. Flynn noted that all changes had been discussed prior. A. Froio made a motion to approve the red lined changes to be presented at the May 2021 Annual Town Meeting, T. Flynn seconded and through a roll call vote the amendments were approved. K. Anderson would have an attorney review the language and report back to the board with any required changes at the next meeting.

The board then reviewed the Cost of Living (COLA) data collected from the Town's comparable communities. K. Mizikar explained that the Town continued to navigate the implementation of the Classification and Compensation Study. A recurring issue was that tenured employees were being paid too closely to new hires in lower classified shared titles, such as Administrative Assistant and Office Assistant. K. Mizikar discussed pushing these tenured employees farther into the range by creatively using a portion the COLA funds for fiscal year 2022. K. Mizikar further detailed the financial challenges associated with the unknowns surrounding the proposition 2 ½ override and the pandemic funding from the federal government. K. Mizikar explained that last year department heads did not receive any type of salary increases, and non-union employees saw just a small increase, and therefore resourceful and impactful increases must be explored and executed this fiscal year for retention and equity purposes. K. Mizikar explained that the budgetary issues will remain year over year, stating that for the foreseeable future he projected a ½ to ¾ of a percentage increase for performance based compensation, above the COLA. A. Froio commented that he foresaw these budgetary growing pains, and that it

had been intensified by the pandemic. A. Froio agreed that it was inequitable for tenured employees to have the same rate of pay as new hires, and further noted that longevity is a factor that must be included in the calculus of performance increases as well as for consideration for promotion within or outside of their department. R. Cashman also agreed and noted that the issue with rate of pay between tenured employees and new hires was sure to cause poor morale. A. Froio explored the idea of a discretionary pool of bonuses to distinguish high performing employees. K. Mizikar clarified that A. Froio was referring to a one-time non-salary based compensation increase, such as a stipend. K. Mizikar expressed the desire for long term benefits through the performance based appraisal system, such as pensionable salary increases or payments. T. Flynn noted that there is a fine line between tenure and performance, as a new employee does have the ability to make a large impact. The Board would continue this discussion in future meetings.

K. Anderson then explained the Classification change request presented to the board. The Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works was having difficulty recruiting qualified applicants for the Assistant to Town Engineer – Civil Designer position, and therefore, requested that the title be changed to Junior Civil Engineer. A. Froio stated that the change made sense in order to attract qualified candidates, and moved to make the title change, which was seconded by T. Flynn and through a roll call vote the title change was approved.

K. Mizikar then informed the board that C. Reidy, Assessor, had provided his retirement notice. K. Mizikar noted that the Assessor Office is the only financial department without an assistant department head position, and that the new Assessor would be charged with hiring someone to fill that role. K. Mizikar noted that the Assistant Assessor title would need to be added to the Classification and Compensation system at the next meeting.

The board then moved on to discuss the fiscal year 2022 work plan, specifically paid family medical leave. A. Froio inquired if municipalities were exempt from Massachusetts Paid Family Medical Leave Program. K. Mizikar confirmed that municipalities are exempt for now, however, that is subject to change and it hinders municipality's ability to remain competitive with the private sector. A. Froio and T. Flynn both noted the difficulties in both implementing and maintaining the state's system. A. Froio inquired if any unions had formally made a request to adopt this act during bargaining, and K. Mizikar assured the board that a formal request had not been made yet and that this discussion was meant to plan ahead for the 2022 Annual Town Meeting. T. Flynn noted that the act is a large lift and an administrative challenge, and that from a fiscal perspective there would be no additional cost because the funds needed are budgeted through salary line items. T. Flynn further stated that if the Town was able to accomplish a benefit similar to the act without adopting it, the Town would be the envy of the private sector. Discussions on this topic were planned continue and mature at future board meetings.

K. Mizikar then updated the board on Union negotiations, stating that meetings had been scheduled for the public works and custodial unions, as those contracts are set to expire at the end of fiscal year 2021. K. Mizikar also discussed ongoing conversations with the police patrol and police superiors unions, as there are employees out on personal medical leaves that are now considering the value of sick leave plans two and three. K. Mizikar noted that the unions were

Minutes
Personnel Board
March 29, 2021
Page 3 of 3

willing to commit to having all new hires, beginning in fiscal year 2022, to be added into sick leave plan three, as opposed to the traditional accrual method seen in sick leave plan one.

K. Mizikar then updated the board on goal setting and the performance appraisal system, stating that the Town Manager's Office would be reviewing goals and making improvements to finalize the goals, in order to move forward with the performance cycle which was set to run April 1 to March 31. The board was in approval and offered their assistance in any way they could be helpful.

By a motion made by T. Flynn, seconded by A. Froio, through a roll call vote, the meeting adjourned at 9:36 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristina B. Anderson
Assistant to the Town Manager
Human Resources Coordinator

Referenced Materials
FY 2021 Classification and Compensation Schedule
Introductory Period Data
FY 22 COLA Data
FY 2022 Draft Amended Personnel Bylaw