

Town of Hampton  
Board of Finance HR Committee  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 21, 2013  
Hampton Town Hall  
1:30 pm

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:31pm.

Members present: Margaret Haraghey, Dan Meade, Penny Newbury.

Also present: 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Al Cahill, Assessor Kathleen Thornton, Librarian Linda Gorman, Public Works employees Toby Vertefeuille, Don Sholes, and Paul Featherston, and Deputy Registrar/Recording Clerk Kathi Newcombe.

Meet with Elected Officials concerning updated job descriptions

Penny gave an overview of the charge of the HR Committee by the full Board of Finance.

Administration is one of the large items in the town's budget. There have been many issues raised concerning what the responsibilities of each office or position entails, how each position is compensated, who supervises whom, and how the voter determines if an elected official has adequately performed their job. The Board of Finance is working toward developing a fair personnel compensation package and salary range for each position but can do that only if the criteria for each position is established, documented and published. The salary range would allow an employee to be compensated according to the skills, abilities, certifications, and experience brought to the position. The HR Committee is trying to document the overall responsibilities of each position, the qualifications needed or desired, and the chain of command (who supervises or oversees whom) in a uniform format, based upon the State of CT criteria as well as what other towns have done. The members are taking the existing job descriptions and putting them into the new standard format. The Committee also developed a standard policy for personnel files, outlining what should be included in personnel files, where they should reside, etc., based upon guidelines from the State of CT, separating items which should be available under Freedom of Information from those which are confidential. The Committee is looking to work with each elected official and employee to finalize the job description for each position, not to tell personnel what their jobs entail, expecting some back and forth with the employee in order to finalize the document.

Dan stated that he recalled when he was a Selectman that compensation and benefits tended to be arbitrary, and this new approach would benefit all hired employees; job descriptions form the basis of fairness. For instance, merit increases can be granted only if evaluations were performed, and the first step in evaluating is a clear definition of the expectations of each position.

Thornton questioned whether job descriptions would go to town meeting.

Vertefeuille stated that there should be more than three tiers of salary for Public Works because of the variety of skills needed or desired in the department: laborer, driver, laborer, operator, mechanic, foreman, etc. He also discussed the advantage of having a new Public Works employee start as part-time, so their skills and work ethic can be determined before a full-time position is offered. Vertefeuille also talked about the interface between the transfer station and Hampton Public Works when and if problems arise or equipment malfunctions. It was discussed that perhaps the Public Work Department should have a job description to give an idea of the overall expectations of the Department.

Thornton asked why the Board of Finance is looking at job descriptions instead of the Board of Selectmen. Dan clarified that the BoF and this Committee is just setting up the groundwork, not taking over any of the personnel-related duties.

Newcombe stated that she welcomes what the Committee is doing; she talked about how the level of job duties for "recording clerk" can vary but most recording clerks receive the same rate of pay. Thornton stated that in her experience the administrative budget is under the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen who develop it and pass it in to the Board of Finance. She questioned the chain of command as far as dealing with the Board of Finance.

Vertefeuille asked about the power of the Board of Finance as far as a request for the need for new equipment.

Thornton stated that the Board of Finance holds the purse strings.

Sholes stated that a lack of fairness in job descriptions, evaluations and compensation would not inspire employees to do a good job.

Newcombe talked about the suggestion of the Registrars several years ago to set a salary scale based upon experience.

Gorman shared her experience as librarian where she was told that she was and was not a town employee, was considered salaried despite her paystub showing an hourly rate and receiving holiday pay, and how arbitrary and unfair the whole process has been since she was hired in 2007. She stated her surprise that for years she was not allowed to submit a timesheet documenting her hours which often exceeded the number for which she had been hired, despite her willingness to do so, and her current frustration with her loss of holiday pay, supposedly because she is now considered an hourly employee.

Newcombe stated that most of the hourly elementary school employees, both full- and part-time, receive holiday pay.

Gorman said that she is not pointing fingers but stressed that parity across the board is vital, and questioned the definition of exempt vs non-exempt.

Penny asked if there was another body in town government, besides the library, where the employee is paid by the town of Hampton but overseen by a different body.

Newcombe responded that the Registrars must abide by the State Statutes and receive oversight from the Secretary of the State's office, but are paid by the town.

Dan suggested that some of the questions which have arisen should be run past the Town Attorney.

Margaret asserted that she is bothered by the fact that some town employees receive benefits denied to others with the same job status.

Dan wants to assure that all employees are treated fairly.

The meeting was adjourned at 3pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathi Newcombe  
Board of Finance Recording Clerk