

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
May 31, 2018**

Present

Brian Wotton, Commissioner
Cameron Durant, Commissioner
Keith Silvia, Commissioner
Robert Hobson, Commissioner
Michael Ristuccia, Commissioner
Vincent Furtado, BPW Superintendent
Rebecca Vento, Senior Clerk
John Charbonneau, Highway Superintendent
Linda Schick, Sewer Superintendent
Mark Rees, Town Administrator



I. Call to Order

Mr. Wotton called meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

II. Appointments

A. Mark Rees, Town Administrator – Re: Employment Agreements

Mr. Rees – First of all the Town Counsel has verified that the Board of Public Works can enter into a contract with management personnel. What I am here to do is talk to you about what we are looking to do on the Board of Selectman side. Currently for the non-union employees, the personnel bylaws have not been updated in ten to twelve years. We currently have hired someone from an outside company to come in and update the classification plans, the pay scales and job descriptions. Since we have done away with the Personnel Board the Town Administrator assumed all tasks that the Personnel Board oversaw. The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee have reviewed the pay classification. They have decided to hold off until November’s Town Meeting and if approved make the changes retroactive. I am going to pass out a packet for the Board of Public Works to review at their leisure. I am here to ask you to consider being consistent with all of the Town’s employees and treat them all the same. Also, I am asking the Board of Public Works to hold off on signing the contracts and let me have the opportunity to show that this new system will be fair.

Mr. Hobson - Do you currently have any employees at the Town Hall with a contract?

Mr. Rees - Currently the Treasurer / Collector has a contract that expires on June 30th.

Mr. Hobson – I have been a town employee and a resident for over 70 years. In the old days the union got 3% and all other employees got the same raise. I don’t see anything wrong with giving contract employees the same raise as the union employees. I don’t know how the town ever got away from this policy.

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Mr. Rees – The pay classification plan has not been updated in several years. Non-union employees must have their pay classification plans adjusted and we have to retool the classification plan to make sure they are being paid the correct amount.

Mr. Hobson- What's wrong with the system the way we had it?

Mr. Rees- It's broken. Last round of union negotiations everyone didn't get the same pay raise.

Mr. Ristuccia - When are you going to have the proposal finalized?

Mr. Rees – The proposal will be finalized for the Town Meeting in November. The Town Meeting in May approved \$150,000 for upgrades to the classification plans and it needs to be finalized by November so we can distribute the money to the line items that were approved. The selectmen didn't want the proposal to go to Town Meeting without a final plan.

Mr. Ristuccia - My take on it is I see no reason why this board should not give you as the Town Administrator enough respect to compare the numbers and see if they are the same or how close they are. I don't see how there is any downside in waiting to see the numbers. Maybe your plan will be more money to the people we want to sign contracts with.

Mr. Durant – I have a couple of questions. Sounds like two components salary and human resource policies. I know we were waiting for a Memorandum of Understanding. What is the time frame for that?

Mr. Rees – I am looking for Human Resources to help the Board of Public Works. I can come back to a future meeting to talk about that.

Mr. Durant - I was under the impression that the highway superintendent was required to have a contract. I would like town counsel to come to a future meeting for clarification.

Mr. Rees - My suggestion is to have a fair and equitable system. I would like everyone to follow the same rules.

As I stated from the get go I don't want anyone to lose anything. I would like internal, equity and be externally competitive. I have also asked the consultants to relook at the pay scales for the top step.

Mr. Wotton - I am kind of torn. I think we should have known about this before we hired the Water Superintendent and signed a contract with him. The Highway Superintendent is long overdue to enter into a contract with us. I think waiting until the Fall Town Meeting is too long. We should have known about this two months ago. This isn't fair to the other superintendents who are waiting to have their contracts signed.

Mr. Ristuccia - You know the two individuals who the board is looking to give contracts. You know the numbers that the consultants gave you did not make sense. I'm suggesting that you relook at the numbers. The main thing here in my mind is I know what these superintendents are worth. I know that we couldn't hire someone to do their job for what they're asking.

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Mr. Rees - If approved at the Fall Town Meeting everything would be retroactive back to July 1st. You are the policy makers for your employees. I just want to make sure everyone is treated fairly.

Mr. Wotton – If we don't sign their contracts and they are non-union employees who would they report to?

Mr Rees- They would report to the BPW Superintendent.

Mr. Hobson – Who would hire the new Superintendents?

Mr. Rees – The BPW Superintendent and I would interview potential candidates and then we would give our recommendations to the BPW who would then hire the candidate.

Mr. Ristuccia - I feel that the ball is in your court the numbers need to reflect the right things for these folks that have been with us for over fifteen and twenty years and being paid at the same salary.

Mr. Rees –We could have the hired outside consultant come before the board to explain the study.

Mr. Durant - When can we expect the new numbers?

Mr. Rees – Hopefully by the end of summer.

III. Adjourn

Mr. Durant motioned to adjourn at 3:42 p.m. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Vento
Senior Clerk Water Department

Minutes Approved June 18, 2018