

Minutes of the Personnel Board Public Hearing
February 4, 2015
Town Hall Meeting Room

Members present: Victor Normand, Diana Harte, Stu Sklar
Staff present: Tim Bragan, Marie Sobalvarro

The hearing was called to order at 7:48 a.m. by Victor Normand

Hardcopies of emails sent by Chris Frechette, Chair of the Library Trustees, regarding proposed changes to the Emergency Closures and Deferred Compensation policies, and the Board of Selectmen's protocol/process for public hearings were distributed to Board members.

I. Victor opened the meeting by a review of the proposed changes to the Emergency Closures/Weather-related Closures policy and the impact of these modifications, then solicited public input.

Marty Green, Library Trustee, presented an overview of why the library needed to make a separate decision regarding closures, and should be more akin to the schools. She highlighted the different administrative structure of the library (elected Trustees as the governing body, the Library Director reports to the Trustees), and that the Library Trustees have entrusted the decision-making on weather-related closures to the Library Director.

Mary Wilson, Library Director, highlighted that the current policy (the Library closes or has a two-hour delay depending on school closings and road conditions) has been in place for a long time.

II. Victor provided a review of the proposed changes to the Deferred Compensation policy and the impact of these modifications, then solicited public input.

Lisa Gagnon presented a memo from the Library benefit-eligible staff, and highlighted their 11 concerns with this proposed change, stressing that this change would shift the parity between the Town and School employees.

Marty Green, Library Trustee, highlighted that the Town is competing for staff not only with other municipalities, but with universities and private industry.

Mary Wilson, Library Director, emphasized the importance of parity with the school in terms of COLAs, and the need for the Board to acknowledge that all of us work for the Town of Harvard.

III. II. Victor provided a review of the proposed changes to the Insurances policy, the impact of these modifications, then solicited public input.

Mary Wilson asked whether Beacon Hill had received the OPEB policy, and if the surviving spouse for retired employees would be covered for current employees who are nearing retirement. As the Selectmen have already implemented this policy in the Spring, only existing (i.e., present) retirees would be grandfathered.

IV. A discussion ensued among Board members to set a date and approach for reviewing all of the feedback, documents, and proposed changes. Victor requested Marie review the state law vis a vis modifying benefit levels for existing and retired employees.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. (note time), Town Hall Meeting Room.

Motion by Diana Harte to adjourn at 9:50 a.m., seconded, 3-0.

Documents reviewed: Existing policies for Administrative Leave, Insurances, and Deferred Compensation component of by-law, suggested modifications, and impact of suggested modifications; Public Hearing Process, BoS Policies and Procedures; two emails from Chris Frechette, Library Trustees; one document from Lisa Gagnon on behalf of library staff.