

Board of Selectmen
SPECIAL MEETING
August 20, 2013 – 8:00 AM
Town Hall

MINUTES

- 1.0 The meeting was called to order by First Selectman Joyce Okonuk at 8:04 AM. Selectmen Linda Finelli and John Bendoraitis and Administrative Assistant Patti Handy were in attendance. Audience: 1
- 2.0 Joyce briefly detailed the changes to the job description for the Public Works Director including the engineering responsibilities being added as the new title will be Public Works Director – Town Engineer. John felt that he needed more time to review and compare the old description with the newly proposed and asked that Selectmen hold off approving the changes until the next meeting. Selectmen discussed the fact that the soon-retiring Public Works Foreman received a comparable benefit package to that of the union Public Works employees he supervised. Benefits and the language in the job description will be included in the next discussion.
- 3.0 Following a team interview of two candidates, the position of Public Works Director/Town Engineer was offered to Brandon Handfield of Lebanon. Handfield has a BS in Civil Engineering and his PE, and will be capable to handling all in-house engineering review for boards, commissions and departments as needed in addition to the daily responsibilities of administering the Public Works Department. He was the unanimous choice of the interview team. Linda stated that although Handfield is very qualified she feels his overall benefits package (wage and benefits) are too large. She's not sure the town can afford another highly paid employee. Joyce explained that other funds set aside within existing operating budgets including \$8K in Public Works and \$5K in PZC will be used to offset the additional cost of the salary as these same monies would have been spent to pay an outside engineering firm to do the same work Handfield will now be doing in-house. Also, by having an in-house engineer, the turnaround time for review and feedback should be much quicker. John noted that the town will have to purchase additional software (CAD) to assist the engineer with the in-house reviews and there is a cost associated with that as well. Joyce agreed with the others but reminded them that the Selectmen's philosophy has been to professionalize positions and have already done so with the planner, assessor and finance director. Having this new joint position will continue with that process which has resulted in more accurate, timely and professional output from all of these aforementioned departments. Town Planner Phil Chester reminded the Selectmen that when using departmental funds to hire outside engineering services the rate is \$95/hour compared to the \$36/hour proposed for Handfield in-house. **Moved by Bendoraitis/Finelli to hire Brandon Handfield as Public Works Director – Town Engineer with a wage of \$75,000 per year, effective 9/30/13, benefits as provided in job description. Vote: Yes (2) Abstain (1) Finelli – motion carried.**
- 4.0 Town Planner Phil Chester explained that his computer was purchased with a grant in 2006 and is not functioning properly and has become incapable of handling the software he needs installed. He is requesting the computer be replaced at the Selectmen's earliest convenience. **Moved by Bendoraitis/Finelli to authorize the purchase of a replacement computer for the Town Planner in the amount of \$830.00, funds to come from TIP Acct. #208-00-620-6200. Vote: Yes, unanimous**
- 5.0 **Moved Okonuk/Finelli to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 AM. Vote: Yes, unanimous**

Respectfully Submitted,



Joyce R. Okonuk, First Selectman