

DARTMOUTH



MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

Director
David T. Hickox, P.E.

Lee M. Azinheira, P.E.
Manuel Branco
Mark S. Nunes

**BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
MEETING MINUTES**

SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

Department of Public Works Conference Room
759 Russells Mills Road
Dartmouth, MA 02748

DARTMOUTH TOWN CLERK

2013 SEP 21 A 8:25

RECEIVED

Present:

Mark S. Nunes, Chairman
*Manuel Branco, Clerk

Lee M. Azinheira, Vice Chairman
David T. Hickox, Director

Steven Sullivan, Superintendent Water & Sewer Division

*Mr. Branco was absent due to a previously scheduled vacation.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 a.m.

APPOINTMENT

Hearing -- Seasonal Employee -- Personnel Issue

The Chairman opened the meeting at approximately 7:40 a.m. The Chairman recognized Mr. Richard R. Hopkins, Jr., whom requested the hearing in relation to his termination on August 9, 2013, from seasonal employment with the Town of Dartmouth Department of Public Works.

Mr. Hopkins took the opportunity to explain his account of the chain of events of August 9, 2013, which lead to his termination of employment. Although he stated he was in the wrong for not following a directive, he voiced that he didn't believe his actions had justified the consequence. He noted that he had never been reprimanded prior to that date and felt berated and verbally abused when he was dismissed.

The Chairman asked Mr. Hopkins what he was seeking from the Board. Mr. Hopkins replied that he didn't want his dismissal to reflect poorly on his prospect at obtaining a full-time position with the Department of Public Works. The Chairman pointed out that they were present that morning to discuss the termination from a seasonal position and not to discuss a possible permanent position. Mr. Hopkins said he understood and added that he basically wanted to "clear his name." Mrs. Regina Hopkins asked to be heard. The Chairman asked Mr. Hopkins if he wanted Mrs. Hopkins to speak for him. Mr. Hopkins said he had nothing further to say and granted permission for Mrs. Hopkins to speak.

Mrs. Hopkins voiced her opinion of how she believed the actions that were taken were not in line with the actions of Mr. Hopkins. She added that her son wanted to clear the air so the punishment would be equivalent to the actions and so there would not be a bad mark on his employment record.

The Chairman asked those present if they had anything further to ask or add to the discussion. Mr. Nunes asked Mr. Hopkins if he believed there was anything wrong with an employee being unaccounted for two hours. Mr. Hopkins replied in the affirmative and agreed he should have been disciplined but not to the degree he was. Mr. Nunes noted that Mr. Hopkins was a returning seasonal employee from the prior year and knew the protocol.

The Chairman recognized Ms. Melissa Medeiros, Personnel Director. Ms. Medeiros asked Mr. Hopkins as a veteran seasonal employee if he had thought to contact Mr. Sullivan for further direction once the rain started. Mr. Hopkins replied in the negative and added that he usually takes his on initiative because he has very little contact with Mr. Sullivan. Ms. Medeiros asked Mr. Hopkins if he believed it was appropriate to drive to other sites when he was not directed to do so. Mr. Hopkins replied that he usually has no direction and is left to his own accord. The Chairman asked Mr. Sullivan to respond to Mr. Hopkins statement. Mr. Sullivan replied that on this particular day he himself had instructed Mr. Hopkins on his work assignment.

At approximately 8:00 a.m. and after hearing all present that wished to be heard, the Chairman asked for a motion to close the hearing.

After a motion was made by Mr. Nunes and duly seconded by Mr. Azinheira, it was voted two in favor and one absent to close the hearing.

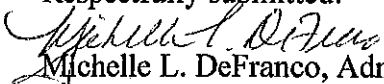
The Chairman informed Mr. Hopkins that the Board would deliberate on the item and present Mr. Hopkins with a written decision. Mr. Hopkins left the meeting.

Mr. Nunes suggested suspending Mr. Hopkins for 15 days and removing the letter of termination from his employment record with the Town. The Chairman suggested to staff for future consideration that each seasonal employee be given a written form that outlines their duties and the Department's protocol and work assignments.

After a motion was made by Mr. Nunes and duly seconded by Mr. Azinheira, it was voted two in favor and one absent to suspend Mr. Richard Hopkins, Jr. for the rest of the seasonal employment season and remove his letter of termination from his personnel record.

Having no further business to discuss that morning, at approximately 8:05 a.m. a motion was made by Mr. Nunes and duly seconded by Mr. Azinheira Nunes to adjourn the meeting. So voted.

Respectfully submitted:

 Approved:
Michelle L. DeFranco, Administrative Assistant

9/26/13
AD

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