

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2011 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S SPECIAL MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman David Canada, Selectmen Tim Copeland and Bruno Federico, and Town Administrator Paul Deschaine.

At 10:30 am, the Chair opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Canada stated that this is not a public hearing—this is a work session, but the Board will welcome any comments.

Mr. Canada stated that Town Counsel suggested omitting things on the list of equal employment opportunities. The Board agreed to go with just what is required. The Board then began the review and discussion of the Employee Manual.

The group first discussed the maintenance of personnel files. It was agreed to keep separate files for police officers and add a checklist of all documents kept in each file. Mr. Deschaine and Mr. Scippa will discuss a system to maintain the files.

The Board agreed to adopt the suggested changes made by Town Counsel to the “Introductory Period” portion of the manual.

Mr. Deschaine stated that other items in addition to the minimum should be explicitly stated in the job descriptions. He will make sure that such a statement is inserted into the manual.

The group then discussed the “Work Hours” section of the manual, specifically employees taking a paid or unpaid ½ hour lunch period.

Under the section “Conduct & Discipline,” Chief Scippa stated it is imperative that the Police Department maintain a list of unacceptable conduct, which is significantly more stringent than what will be listed in the manual. The group agreed this would be covered under the statement Mr. Deschaine will insert into the manual. Also, each job description in the Police Department should state that compliance with the Department SOP's is a mandatory condition of employment.

The group agreed that if the manual states employee reviews are to be done annually, then this should be happening, and if not, then disciplinary action could be brought against the supervisor. Mr. Deschaine stated he has been working on creating an evaluation tool to be used universally and it is close to being complete and brought before the Board.

The group then discussed the section “Immediate Suspension.” Mr. Scippa stated that the acceptable approach to discipline, both positive and negative, in a police department is going to stray from what is written in this document. It was stated that since the Police Department has written SOP's, that they would supersede items in the employee manual. Mr. Deschaine stated that is true as long as there is no contradiction between the two.

The Board agreed to accept counsel's advice and delete the section “Discipline Deactivation.”

The Board agreed to accept the amendments to the "Harassment and Discrimination Policy."

The Board discussed at length and agreed to insert an option of using leave time during a suspension at the Board's discretion.

The Board discussed the section "Specific Wage and Salary Policies" and agreed to insert a statement under "Pay Cycle" stating that when there are 27 pay periods per year, salaried employees shall receive 1/26th of their yearly pay for each of the 27 pay periods.

The group discussed closing the Town Offices during inclement weather and agreed that the decision to close the Town Offices for any reason will be made by the Board of Selectmen. In the event the Board is unavailable, the decision will be made by the Town Administrator.

The group then discussed the policy regarding overtime pay and specifically, how it may affect the Park Ranger, Kim Woods, when performing overtime duties for the Highway Department. Mr. Deschaine will have further discussion with Town Counsel regarding this matter. There was also some clarification on the overtime policy for police officers.

The group discussed the "Compensatory Time Off" section. Mr. Deschaine stated it is the employer's option to offer compensatory time or not. Once offered, it is the employee's decision to choose which one they want.

Chief Scippa commented that regarding the "Normal Work Week" section, it is imperative that he is able to adjust workweeks for police officers. Mr. Canada moved to insert a statement saying that this section does not apply to the Police Department. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Board agreed to schedule a second work session to continue discussion on the Employee Manual for October 3, 2011 at 1:00 pm.

Mr. Canada reported that the Highway Department is painting some striping along the south side of the Library wall to designate it as a "No Parking" area. Mr. Federico stated they needed to come up with a definitive concept of where employees should park.

At 12:41 pm, Mr. Canada moved to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Stacey J. Grella
Executive Assistant

Paul R. Deschaine
Town Administrator