

WEST TISBURY PERSONNEL BOARD  
MINUTES

January 9, 2023

**Present:** Leon Brathwaite, Janice Haynes, James Klingensmith, Hunter Moorman, and Brian Smith

**Also Present for all or part of the meeting:** Matt Gebo, Skip Manter, and Joe Tierney

**Staff Present:** Maria McFarland

Leon called the meeting to order via Zoom video conferencing at 5:08 PM.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the December 5, 2022 were approved as written. Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite – aye, Haynes- aye, Klingensmith – aye, Moorman-aye, and Smith - aye.

**Performance Evaluations:** A motion was made by Jim, seconded by Hunter to accept the following evaluations with step increases as approved by the Department Head:

Ernie Chaves (Park Rec)  
Olivia Gatley ( Library)  
Louise Gilpin (Library)  
Bethany Hammond ( COA)

Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite-aye, Haynes– aye, Klingensmith -aye, Moorman -aye, and Smith-aye.

A motion was then made by Jim, seconded by Hunter to accept the end of the season evaluations for 5 of the 10 Parks and Recreation summer staff. No step increases are involved. The remaining unsigned evaluations will be printed out and filed as will the signed evaluations. Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite-aye, Haynes– aye, Klingensmith -aye, Moorman -aye, and Smith-aye.

**New Business:**

**2022 Annual Report:** A motion was made by Hunter, seconded by Janice to approve the 2022 Annual Report as revised. Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite-aye, Haynes– aye, Klingensmith -aye, Moorman -aye, and Smith-aye.

**Building Department/ New position job description grading: Tierney:** Joe Tierney was present to meet with the Board to discuss an Administrative Clerk position for the Building Department. Joe explained to the members that the reason for this request is to have a person work 3 hours a day on administrative paperwork in order to free up the local inspector’s time so he can do inspections and Joe can focus on zoning enforcement and larger project issues. The position will start July 1.

Leon commented that it may be hard to find someone to work so few hours. Brian was skeptical that they will find someone for so few hours.

After a brief discussion. the board reviewed the job description going through the rating process. Upon completion, a motion was made and seconded to place the Administrative Clerk for the Building Department with a total score of 185 points at Grade 2 on the year-round classification plan. Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite-aye, Haynes– aye, Klingensmith -aye, Moorman -aye, and Smith-aye.

**Warrant Articles:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the warrant articles for: the annual wage adjustment of 4.4% for Fiscal Year 2024; amendment to Classification Plan to add the positions of

Administrative Clerk to the Building Department and Community Service Officer for the Police Department to Grade 2 on the year-round wage scale; and for a revision to section 12-4 of the Personnel Bylaw. Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite-aye, Klingensmith -aye, Moorman -aye, and Smith-aye. Janice recused herself.

**Classification and Compensation Plan:** Maria presented the board with information about a grant opportunity offered by the Commonwealth Community Compact Best Practices Program as a means of funding the next classification and compensation study which is required under the Personnel Bylaw every five years. Discussion centered on the need for a classification study given that job descriptions are up to date.

**Wage Scale Warrant Article:** Skip Manter was called on to present his suggestion for a second warrant article adjusting the wage scale. He would like to see the board propose a warrant article that would increase the year-round wage scale by 10%. The 10% is based on the premise that the cost of living is so high that it is hard to attract qualified candidates to these positions and therefore the town has had a hard time hiring at step 1. As there is a 5% increase between each step on the wage scale a 10% wage scale starting a Grade 1 step 1 would adjust the entire scale accordingly. The warrant article should include a separate appropriation to cover the cost of implementation. Leon asked if Skip would be willing to support this publicly at Town Meeting. He replied that he will support it before the Select Board, the Finance Committee and Town Meeting.

Leon stated that he liked this idea better than dropping the first 2 steps on the scale and adding 2 steps on the end of the scale. That keeps all employees on their current step and doesn't change anniversary dates.

Brian agreed with Skip. Brian thanked Maria for the information on the grant for a classification and compensation study because it is good to know that they are available as he sits on two other two personnel boards and all of them are looking at doing these studies. Brian thinks that the taxpayers will need to understand that the taxpayers need to pay more to employees.

Jim added that this adjustment would be a one-time adjustment but that it would help employees continue to live on the island and work in West Tisbury.

There was a lengthy discussion about how to justify a 10% increase to the wage scale without a study to back up the request.

Hunter said he is totally in favor of this proposal. He asked how this will be explained to voters at town meeting. Leon said that the 10% comes from having 5% between steps now and that the town is having a hard time hiring new employees at the current steps 1 and 2. Hunter said some kind of data is required to back up this argument. In his opinion, the step argument will not sway the voters. He questioned if the board has a firm basis for making an argument for 10%. He suggested it be related to how much other people are making, how much prices have risen, and how hard it is to find employees; facts that voters can relate to. Tactically, asking for a 4.4% increase to keep us inline is easy to get approved, but it may be difficult to then ask for an additional 10%. Leon replied that it may depend on whether the article gets the support of the Finance Committee. Usually when the Finance Committee recommends an article it will be passed by the voters. If that committee votes not to recommend the article, the board can decide if they want to go forward or pull the article.

Brian suggested looking at signing bonuses or another way of compensating staff.

Jim said the need for the article can be explained by saying that the board 10% increase is for the purpose of helping people catch up with what has happened with inflation over the last 2 years and to increase it because of the cost of food.

Jim motioned, seconded by Hunter to place an article on the Town Meeting warrant to raise the year-round wage scale by 10% across the entire scale and further to raise and appropriate the funds necessary to cover the cost of implementation.

Discussion on the motion: Hunter said of all the other alternatives, this proposal is the best one as long as the board is prepared to present it in a good context and is able to justify it.

Skip said this is an important step and it will be easy to make the argument about the difficulty of hiring people at step 1 or 2. This adjustment would also help the long-time employees who are at the top of their grades.

Leon said that the board needs to get a warrant article on the table. If the article can't be justified or if it gets voted down by the Finance Committee it can be pulled. If it is submitted it will give the board an opportunity to work on the justification. Roll Call Vote: Roll Call Vote: Brathwaite-aye, Klingensmith -aye, and Moorman -aye. Smith- abstained. Janice recused herself. Motion carried.

Maria was instructed to put the warrant article language together. Leon and Hunter will work together on the wording of the warrant article submission paperwork. Brian requested another meeting prior to submitting the article. A meeting will be scheduled for a meeting on January 23.

**Administrative**

**Documents noted for the record**

Board of Health/Johnson resignation  
Approval of vacation carry-over ( Library)

There being no new business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria McFarland  
Board Administrator  
APPROVED  
FEBRUARY 13, 2023