

Memorial Town Hall, 1 Library Street, Georgetown, MA 01833
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
Memorial Town Hall
1/22/18
7:00PM-General Meeting~3rd floor meeting room, Town Hall

Selectmen Present: Joseph Bonavita, Chairman; Steven Sadler, Clerk; Douglas W. Dawes, Gary C. Fowler, and C. David Surface

Others Present: Michael Farrell, Town Administrator; Janet Pantano, Administrative Assistant

Absent:

7:00PM Call to order

Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes
Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bonavita welcomed everyone and stated that there will be some important discussions tonight.

NEW BUSINESS

Insurance Bid-Sue Shillue, Cook & Co. to be present

Ms. Shillue gave her background and that she works mostly on municipal insurance consulting. She explained the plans the town offers now a HMO and a PPO. She stated that the town also offers a Medex plan for retirees. She stated that a lot of small towns are in MIIA and they have over 100 cities in the trust. She explained how the MIIA trust works. She stated that at the MMA meeting this past weekend it was voted that most towns in the plan will have an average increase of 4.6% with none less than 0% and no increases more than 11.2%. She stated that she has all the information that she needs from MIIA to go out to bid.

Mr. Sadler asked for a comparison of GIC and MIIA. She explained the plans offered under GIC and that they do not offer BC/BS. She stated that they are dropping Tufts, Fallon, and Harvard Pilgrim as of July 2018. She stated rates are lower in GIC but costs are higher for employees.

Mr. Sadler asked about getting into GIC. Ms. Shillue explained the process to go into GIC have to notify by December 1st to start in July or July 1st to start in December.

Mr. Bonavita stated that they are looking to reduce costs and that is why they have hired her.

Ms. Shillue stated the problem is that Georgetown is a small group. She stated that they could go to a sole carrier but it could be risky.

Mr. Dawes asked about regional schools and how they do insurance. She stated that some are in a small group. She stated that there is a group in Concord that she could look at.

Mr. Fowler asked about a 3rd plan with a higher deductible and if we could offer this. He asked if we go out to bid can we offer BlueCare Select. She stated that we could. She stated MIIA will offer but only if you have enough employees in the plan.

Ms. Shillue stated that they could ask to change deductible. Mr. Fowler stated would have to negotiate with unions to change the deductible. Mr. Farrell stated that we looked at a plan last year that served a limit plan area.

Discussion on what changes to plans would have to be negotiated.

Mr. Surface asked about a two person plan. Ms. Shillue explained that it can be more costly and explained.

Mr. Fowler stated that he is nervous to leave MIIA. He asked if put out to bid are we required to take the lowest bid. Mr. Farrell and Ms. Shillue stated insurance is not part of procurement.

Mr. Farrell stated if we leave MIIA we have to stay out for 2 years.

Mr. Surface stated that should we just have Ms. Shillue negotiate with MIIA. He stated does not seem to be a lot of negotiation. Mr. Bonavita stated that the board needs a goal.

Wayne Snow, FinCom member stated that it can take 4 years to get back into MIIA.

Robin Olsen, FinCom asked about an option of an adult plus children. Ms. Shillue stated not sure they would add this. She asked about an HSA. Ms. Shillue stated that they could do a high deductible plan with a HSA. Ms. Olsen asked about deductibles. Ms. Shillue stated town plans do not have deductibles and GIC has high deductibles.

Vin Milano, Horsemint Circle asked if we are looking at this short term and long term. Ms. Shillue stated that with the flux in insurance this is hard to do. Mr. Surface stated that we have our budget out 10 years and can look at the percentage and where we want to be.

Mr. Sadler asked about finding out what part of the plan staff use and can we use this information to look at the plans. Mr. Farrell stated that we can obtain this information.

Discussion on changing plan and deductibles.

Mr. Dawes asked about benefits for wellness. Mr. Farrell stated that we do have a Wellness Program and Ms. Pantano works on scheduling events and classes which are free to employees.

Mr. Dobie stated that they usually are not part of this process and are learning along with the board. He stated that there does not seem to be much the town can do. Ms. Shillue stated that the board can negotiate with the employees.

Ms. Olsen stated do the employees know that the town is doing this for the town and employees.

Discussion on union and options and what the public sector has for deductibles.

Mr. Fowler stated that he is in favor of staying with MIIA.

Mr. Bonavita stated that it is good to promote competition and see what is out there. He stated that we can get quotes.

Mr. Sadler asked if all this is in the scope of her contract. Ms. Shillue stated that all this is covered. She asked if they wanted her to go to MIIA and asked for a certain percentage and if they give it the town then the town will not go out to bid.

Mr. Surface moved to direct Sue Shillue, Cook & Co. to negotiate with MIIA on a renewal increase of 0-2 ½ percent and to add a third plan with a higher deductible. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion.

Mr. Surface thanked Ms. Shillue for coming in and doing a great job explaining the process.

The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Bonavita called a 5 minute recess

Mr. Surface left the meeting.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Wage & Classification Study-Update

Joint Meeting with the Finance & Advisory Board

Ed Dobie, Chair; Wayne Snow; Robin Olson; Fin Com members

Mr. Bonavita explained that they will be discussing the Wage & Classification Study and asked the FinCom to be a part of the discussion and asked for the board's thoughts.

Mr. Dawes stated that he has a lot of questions and asked if this is proposed because of the new law. Mr. Farrell stated that he has been trying to update the Wage & Classification since 2010 and it has not been updated since 2003. He stated that the law goes into effect in July and that is why he brought this up again. He explain for the chart he looked at 13 towns for salaries and internal at gender and numerical numbers. He stated look at job not the people in the job. He stated the Attorney General was to give guidance. He stated do not have to bring all employees up to speed in one year you have up to 3 years. He stated it is 14 years since we have had a Wage & Classification.

Mr. Bonavita stated has not seen a disparity between man/women. Mr. Farrell stated that it is a fact. He stated that this plan would take away any disparities.

Mr. Bonavita stated that this should be about merit. Mr. Farrell stated that we have to get to the median.

Mr. Dawes asked if the name of the towns are in the list. Mr. Farrell stated that he picks the towns and the board sets the rate. Mr. Dawes asked where the numbers come from for positions. Mr. Farrell stated that you look at data points.

Mr. Sadler stated that he does not know the consensus of the board and this is a lot of information and that Mr. Surface gave a comprehensive study. He stated that he looked at Amherst and Shirley and they do not look at median. He stated that the other towns use a consultant and a complex process and with all Mr. Farrell has on his plate he cannot know all this. Mr. Farrell stated that he has the time and he is glad he likes HRS this is their study. Mr. Sadler stated that what he sees is not consistent with what other towns do. Mr. Farrell stated that he got the numbers from HRS and we participated in their study and this is how it is done.

Mr. Farrell explained the process he used, met with employees, rate the jobs.

Mr. Fowler thanked Mr. Farrell for his work and does not know if there have been 14 years of neglect. He stated that you have to take into effect the benefits. He stated that does not see a lot of new employees. He stated that that we negotiated a new Fire Chief. He stated a conflict that the Town Administrator is getting an 11% raise, and the Building Inspector a 14% raise he just started.

Robin Olsen, FinCom thanked Mr. Farrell for the study and asked what employees the study covered. Mr. Farrell gave her the list of town hall positions and beyond. He stated no union positions. She asked why they do not take the 50% and not 25%. He stated did not have data for 25%.

Mr. Surface rejoined the meeting via phone.

Ms. Olsen asked about benefits. He stated that he did not look at benefits. She stated that she agrees this has to happen.

Mr. Surface stated his concern is to bring to salaries to median.

Mr. Dobie stated that the town does not have to give raises right away. He stated that they agree on the inequalities.

Discussion on staff and longevity.

Mr. Surface asked what level of experience we expect to be on median. He stated you have to look at each person. He stated that we can over the next 3 years do salary adjustments. He stated that we need an action plan. He stated in each group inequities they have to look at. He stated that it can be expensive and have to look at the inequities and address immediately. Mr. Farrell stated that he agrees.

Mr. Surface stated that he feels not to median with everyone. He stated looking at market rate. He stated where we want to be 5 years at median is that where we want to be.

Mr. Fowler stated that he answers to tax payers and he does not want to be Santa Claus.

Vin Milano, asked if he met with each employee. Mr. Farrell stated that he did and talked to their manager/supervisor.

Robin Olsen, stated have to have bands for staff and who earns overtime. She stated they have to look at pay disparities. She stated that they have to look at what is your goal for your employees to stay for 5 years and what positions you want to turn over.

Mr. Bonavita stated median isn't the median. Ms. Olsen stated that have to pay equitable. He stated that we have to have a plan.

Mr. Dobie stated that we have to do this but how we do this is the issue.

Mr. Sadler stated have to have an objective study. He stated that we need a plan that should be updated yearly. Mr. Dobie stated Mr. Farrell is qualified to do this and does not see the point in hiring a consultant.

Mr. Bonavita stated he agrees that Mr. Farrell is qualified to do this. He asked for a round table with a couple FinCom members and a couple BoS and have a conversation and come up with an equitable program for the town. He stated something has to be put in place.

Mr. Dobie stated Mr. Farrell has done the basics and if we work together we can come up with a plan.

Mr. Surface and Ms. Olsen to meet with Mr. Farrell and then make some suggestions to the board. He stated that then the process may go smoother. Mr. Bonavita stated that he would like to be part of the process and Mr. Dobie would like to be a part also.

Mr. Fowler stated that he likes to be open and let's keep the focus of what we started.

Mr. Surface stated they will look at what first needs to be done and then long term.

Discussion on meeting with small group.

APPOINTMENTS and APPROVALS

Request from Dana Shuttleworth for appointment to the BoH

Mr. Sadler moved to appoint Dana Shuttleworth as a member of the Board of Health term to expire June 30, 2020. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll vote.

WARRANT and MINUTES

Minutes of January 8, 2018

Mr. Sadler moved to approve the minutes of January 8, 2018. Mr. Dawes seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll vote.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Farrell stated that snow and ice is at a negative \$87K.

Selectmen's Report

Mr. Fowler stated he went to a Homeland Security seminar for Houses of Worship and it was very informative and he talked to the Police Chief and they will work to come together with a safety plan.

Mr. Bonavita stated that the FinCom will be meeting with departments to discuss their budgets on Saturday February 10th 9AM, 3rd floor meeting room.

NEXT MEETING

February 12, 2018 at 7PM, 3rd floor meeting room

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Fowler moved to adjourn. Mr. Sadler seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15PM.

Minutes transcribed by J. Pantano.

Minutes approved February 12, 2018.

Documents used in this meeting:

- Insurance Bid-Sue Shillue, Cook & Co. to be present
- Joint Meeting with the Finance & Advisory Board
- Wage & Classification Study-Update
- Request from Dana Shuttleworth for appointment to the BoH