

**Wolcott Selectboard Special Meeting
Minutes
April 2, 2019**

All Minutes are draft until approved by the Selectboard.
Please see future Minutes for approval of these Minutes.

Present: Eric Furs, Michael Davidson, Richard Lee, Jennifer Holton-Clapp
Town Employees: Linda Martin, Skip Patten, Claude Cross, Duncan Hastings
Public: Bill Cotten, Tricia Follert, Joe Hester-Ingram, Lucian Gravel, Monica Cross

The meeting was called to order by Eric.

Amendments to the Agenda: None.

Comments from the Community: None.

Town Administrator Position - Discussion:

Duncan Hastings is now working for the Town on a part-time, temporary basis to assist the Selectboard with the process of hiring a Town Administrator. Duncan distributed a two-page document containing questions to stimulate discussion regarding the roles and responsibilities of the future position. The next step will be to create a job description. Creating the job description is an important step since Vermont statutes do not address the authority and duties of a Town Administrator (TA).

The first topic discussed was how much autonomy or responsibility the TA should have. For example, spending money. There could be a spending limit, with special authorization of the Selectboard. The spending limit could be set by policy at the beginning of the year.

Consideration needs to be given to the TA's authority to sign forms, applications, requisitions, reports or other critical documents. Some forms are basic ministerial documents while others are of more significance. The board needs to think about how much authority will be granted to the position initially. One example would be, once the board decides to apply for a particular grant, then the TA could have authority to follow through on the paperwork. The board may wish the person filling this position to have grant writing skills.

The job description should address how the TA should act on specific requests of citizens when no identified policy or procedure related to the request exists, but some action is desired or needed. For example, should the TA discuss the issue with the Chair and then decide how to proceed? Or should the matter wait until a full Selectboard meeting? It may depend upon the policies and procedures currently in existence.

Thought needs to be given to the level of supervision or general oversight of other employees, that is not already assigned to someone else. For example, the Road Foreman and his crew. Initially, the board may want to start with the TA having no supervisory responsibilities. It was suggested the TA, being in the Town Office every day, could assist the board with employee evaluations as part of the process of performance-based raises.

Discussion included the supervision and oversight of the many Town-owned buildings and properties.

The next topic involved administering adopted policies or regulations. For example, does the Town have policies, ordinances or regulations regarding highway access; highway and bridge standards; a Town Highway Erosion Control Plan; personnel policy, etc. The TA could help develop policies that may be needed.

The board should determine the TA's role in developing or assisting with the development of the Town Budget and its management during the course of the year. Duncan feels that may be a work in progress. Checks and balances need to be in place, but there are many ways to do that. Some boards are comfortable viewing the monthly orders. The actual process for reviewing orders needs to be looked at. It must be done in a timely manner so paychecks can be received on a certain day. Duncan believes the TA should give a report on the budget to the board each month. It was suggested that a more detailed report could be delivered quarterly.

The TA may review and recommend insurances and other benefits. It is felt the TA should take on certain Human Resources (HR) responsibilities.

Duncan believes the TA summarizing and organizing correspondence and reporting that to the board is the meat and potatoes of their job. He does not recommend that the TA take minutes of the Selectboard meetings.

The board would like to see the TA maintain the Town's website since that is where meeting notices, agendas and minutes are posted. They would also like the TA to work closely with the board in developing the agendas. It was suggested the Town's website can also be used for public relations purposes as well, in terms of getting people engaged.

The question arose as to how many hours the TA would work each day, and then be expected to attend Selectboard and committee meetings in the evenings. Duncan stated that in his experience, he was given compensatory time of around six hours per month, to attend meetings. The board feels it is important for the TA to attend such meetings so the TA's schedule should reflect that. A concern would be to avoid burnout.

Duncan suggested the TA be the liaison with the Town attorney. It was pointed out the Selectboard's budget does not allocate a lot of funds for an attorney. Free resources should be utilized first. It was suggested the TA would serve as liaison with Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC). The TA should also work with the Ordinance Committee. Linda stated she envisions the TA taking on additional responsibility with other groups as time goes on.

The TA must have a collaborative role with the Town Treasurer to ensure that checks and balances are in place. Linda would like to develop fiscal policies for the Town.

The board would like the TA to play some role in promoting community development, and would like to see that included in the job description.

It was noted that some towns have combined the roles of TA and Zoning Administrator (ZA). Since Wolcott currently has a ZA, that might be something to consider in the future. Duncan pointed out that having served in both capacities in the past, he does not think it is a very good idea and provided an example. Duncan, in the past, had served as Deputy Health Officer. Duncan stated that writing a defensible Health Order is quite involved. He does not believe the TA should serve as the Health Officer.

Duncan recommends the TA be involved in worker safety trainings and compliance policies to comply with VOSHA. VLCT has model policies.

Duncan feels he now has sufficient information to develop the first draft of a job description to provide to the board for review. It may be better to determine the exact number of hours for the position once the job description is completed. Regardless, it will be full-time, whether it is 32 or 40 hours per week, with benefits. Duncan thinks a realistic salary for the position would be between \$55,000 and \$60,000. Another public meeting will be scheduled and posted.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein