

Chairman Reil, Selectmen Schofield and Burke, and Town Administrator Newman are in attendance at the Town Hall, Mendon.

Chairman Reil opened the session at 8:26 p.m. to discuss the Ms. Newman's contract. Ms. Newman left the room during the strategy session.

Selectman Schofield shared his understanding that Ms. Newman applied for and was being offered \$130,000 for the Town Administrator position in Canton. She is not interested in taking it for that salary. She is subsequently looking for an increase in Mendon. All agreed with the interpretation. Selectman Burke understands she is looking for \$115,000. Chairman Reil said if she left, there will be instability. Mendon will need another Town Administrator; there are costs associated with that. He did not feel we could find another capable person for what she is making now. He felt we would have to come up with \$115,000 for a new Administrator anyway. He is leaning toward keeping stability and giving her the \$115,000. Selectman Burke understands his point. He added that we also have a Highway Surveyor making more than she is now. Members reviewed the Compensation Study. Her current salary is at the first step of her pay grade. An annual salary of \$115,000 would be a \$27,000 annual increase. Selectman Schofield estimated the Fiscal Year 17 budget is short \$62,000. It includes some conservative increases. He agreed that the pay for a Town Administrator position needs to be increased and adjustments would need to be made if a new individual was hired.

Selectman Burke said they also need to determine the Executive Assistant's increase which needs to be budgeted. He pondered whether the Town Administrator's increase should be done incrementally. Selectman Reil suggested offering less money. Selectman Burke recommended placing her on step 10, \$104,416 annually, for a \$16,000 raise. Selectman Reil recommended offering the car and phone. Selectman Schofield said based on her experience, she should be in the middle of the scale. Chairman Reil feels this is a reasonable amount with the four-day work week. Members discussed the vehicle for going to meetings within town and to and from work. Selectmen Reil and Burke agreed they prefer a stipend. A \$108,000 annual salary would include a vehicle and \$100 per month for a phone stipend. Selectman Schofield doesn't feel it's warranted because using the phone for town business doesn't add to her phone costs. The Police, Fire and Highway Departments are the only ones that have phones for their employees. Selectmen agreed we could put her phone on one of the Town's plans. All agreed they would prefer Ms. Newman staying. Members agreed on the following proposal:

Year one: Fiscal Year 16, step 10, \$104,416 annually retroactive to July 1, \$300 auto stipend not retroactively and an option for a town-provided phone on the town's plan.

Year two: Fiscal Year 17, step 12, \$108,617.60 annually, \$3600 annual auto stipend and phone.

Year three: Fiscal Year 18, step 15, \$115,273.60 annually, \$3600 annual auto stipend and phone.

They will have a future meeting to discuss any performance issues. Selectman Schofield wanted to make it clear that this is as high as they can go within their budget.

Ms. Newman re-joined the session.

Selectman Reil presented their three-year proposal.

Ms. Newman said she would have to check with Attorney Maccaro about the length of the contract. She assumed there will be no cost of living adjustment (COLA) to the compensation chart. Selectman Schofield said the correct way to implement a 1.75 percent COLA is to make the change to the chart. The COLA was not built in to the offer.

Selectman Burke said the large jumps were done to bring her up to the \$115,000. They value her and want her to stay. Selectman Schofield said if the financial situation was different he'd give her \$125,000 or \$130,000. Ms. Newman said she cannot stay for \$104,000. She said she expected being placed at the top of the chart. She needs to think about it.

Ms. Newman left the room for Selectmen to further discuss.

Selectman Burke noted there is a big difference between \$104,000 annually and \$115,000 annually. Selectmen discussed justifying offering the top of the range of the compensation plan. Selectman Burke said he wants her to stay but that was their final offer. Chairman Reil suggested Step 13, \$53.26 hourly/\$111,206.88 annually (calculated with the extra day in this year). Retroactively it would be a \$23,706.88 difference from her current \$87,500 salary. A non-retroactive salary for step 15 would be \$14,108.48 and only COLAs after that and Step 15 @ \$55.52 hourly in FY 17. Selectman Schofield suggested offering \$115,000 not retroactive, with no car and no phone. Selectmen Burke suggested \$110,000 annually retroactively, with a vehicle and phone.

Members agreed it would be cheaper to offer \$115,000 annually, not retroactive, no car and no phone until the end of the contract with a COLA in FY 17.

Ms. Newman returned. Chairman Burke said they agreed to amend the contract to place her at Step 15, not retroactive, and a FY 17 COLA with no phone and no vehicle. Ms. Newman responded saying she would think about it.

Selectman Schofield made and Selectman Burke seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:29 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Reil-aye, Schofield-aye, Burke-aye.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane Willoughby
Executive Assistant

Documents Discussed located in Town Administrator's Office:
Employment Agreement between Town of Mendon and Town Administrator, May 2, 2014
Compensation and Classification Study, Town of Mendon, MA, October, 2015