



TOWN OF KINGSTON
WAGE AND PERSONNEL BOARD
OPEN SESSION
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 101 & VIA ZOOM
APRIL 23, 2025

6:00 PM – CALL TO ORDER

Chairman James Soule called the meeting of the Wage and Personnel Board to order at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23, 2025. Present was member Lorraine Burgio. Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, was also present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

This meeting is being recorded by Zoom. Anyone intending to make an audio or video recording of this meeting should notify the Chair at this time.

Items may be taken out of order at the discretion of the Chair.

The Wage and Personnel Board needs a third member to be appointed by the Finance Committee. If you are interested in joining the Board, please contact the Finance Committee or the Board of Selectmen's office.

APPOINTMENTS:

TINA BETTI, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, AND HOLLY NIGHELLI, DIRECTOR OF ELDER SERVICES, TO DISCUSS THE SALARY OF A NEW ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ELDER AFFAIRS HIRE ABOVE STEP 3 OF GRADE 5

The Board met with Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, and Holly Nighelli, Director of Elder Services, to discuss the salary of a new Assistant Director of Elder Affairs hire at Step 4 of Grade 5 at an annual salary of \$61,673. Ms. Nighelli was present via Zoom. Ms. Betti had sent the candidate's application materials and the job posting in an email dated April 15, 2025. Keith Hickey, Town Administrator, supported the request.

Ms. Betti provided information on recruitment and the candidate. There were 27 applicants and 6 were interviewed, and this candidate was the first choice. She had great experience and references. Part of the justification for Step 4 was that the candidate's first step increase would not be until July 1, 2026.

Ms. Nighelli provided additional comments. The candidate had a strong background with other Councils on Aging and had all the necessary qualifications. She would not need any further training and would fit in well with existing staff.

Questions were asked and answered in a lengthy discussion. The candidate wanted Step 4 based on her 16 years of experience and knowledge. Since she had served in various roles at other Councils on Aging, she would be able to fill in at other positions, if needed. The cost of the new Assistant Director's salary would be less than what was budgeted for FY2026. The position of Program Coordinator COA was vacant and would not be filled. James Soule expressed his reservations about hiring above Step 3 for "training or growth" positions because of fairness. The Board was in agreement that the candidate was a good choice. Ms. Nighelli reiterated that this candidate was the right person for the position and that her many years of experience were necessary. She would be able to fill in for the Director and had the necessary communication skills and passion. She was also SHINE-certified. A position reclassification for the Assistant Director would not be requested in the next year, and the organizational structure, reporting relationships and grades of positions in the department were reviewed. Elimination of the COA Program Coordinator position in the Bylaw was also discussed.

Motioned by Lorraine Burgio and seconded by James Soule, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of the Assistant Director at the Council on Aging at Step 4, Grade 5 for the candidate going forward.

Ms. Nighelli left the meeting at 6:46 p.m.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

DISCUSS ANY ISSUES RELATED TO ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, IF NEEDED

The Board discussed the job description change for the position of Public Works Director. An email dated April 16, 2025 had been received from Tina Betti, Human Resources Manager, stating that the creation of a Public Works Department would be on the Annual Town Meeting warrant and that oversight of the Facilities Department had been removed from the Director's job description. Ms. Betti did not know the reason for the change. The Board felt strongly that it could no longer support the creation of the position at town meeting because a different job description had been used to classify the position. Departments of Public Works, in general, were discussed. The Board discussed making an amendment to the Board's warrant article at town meeting to remove the Public Works Director position from the Bylaw. Ms. Betti was asked to obtain the organizational chart that was shown for the position at the last Board of Selectmen's meeting. She will also speak with Keith Hickey, Town Administrator, regarding the job description change. It was decided that no action would be taken until the Board learned why oversight of the Facilities Department had been removed from the job description.

NEW BUSINESS:

TOPICS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED TO BE DISCUSSED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

There was no new business that needed to be discussed.

ADJOURN:

Motioned by Lorraine Burgio and seconded by James Soule, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer B. Scavone
Executive Secretary

Meeting Documents: (1) email from Tina Betti dated April 15, 2025 regarding a new hire for the position of Assistant Director of Elder Affairs with the candidate's application materials and job posting and (2) email from Tina Betti dated April 16, 2025 regarding a Public Works Department and a change in the job description for the Director