

Human Resource Board Minutes 10/04/18

Human Resources Board of Chilmark October 4, 2018 **APPROVED MINUTES**

Present: Jennie Greene, Chair, Bruce Golden, Max McCreery, Don Leopold, Chuck Hodgkinson, Employee Representative, Molly Glasgow, Jim Malkin, Selectmen's Representative, Tim Carroll, Executive Secretary

Not present:

Public/ Board or Comm. Members: Robert Decker (Hunter)

Staff: Jennifer Christy, Admin. Asst., Ebba Hierta, Library Director, Ellen Biskis, Accountant, Dennis Jason, Harbormaster

Meeting called to order at 8:00AM

Payroll Change Notice Procedures at Year-End:

- Mr. Carroll presented his memo regarding Payroll Change Notices and dated August 8, 2018 (received by the Human Resource Board on August 24, 2018). Mr. Carroll stated that the request for the Board to review the structure of Payroll Change Notice procedure. He further explained that during a review of the Payroll Change Notice process it was noted that the Police Dept. and the Library Dept. are not submitting Payroll Change Notices to the Board of Selectmen. He noted there are other areas needed review too. Last, he noted that if the Library and Police Depts. preferred to submit the Notices to the HR Board that would satisfy the required process as well.
- Mr. Carroll noted that the Payroll Change Notices require review outside of a Department and that is not currently happening if the Town Administrator is not provided the Payroll Change Notices for signature.
- Mr. Carroll explained signatures required on each Payroll Change Notice is the signature of the employee, the Department Head and the Executive Secretary (for the Board of Selectmen).
- Ms. Hierta explained the payroll change notice practice of the Library department which follows the practice of the previous Library Director and the Board of Library Trustees. Ms. Hierta noted she was directed by the Trustees and exiting Director at the time that she was not required to have a signature from a representative of the Board of Selectmen's office. She noted some errors in the memo and asked that Mr. Carroll contact her directly for information.
- Mr. Carroll stated he is aware of the longtime practice of the Library Department not submitting Payroll Change Notices to the Board of Selectmen's office and he further stated that other practices also occurred in the past that no longer occur now. He noted one practice that occurred in the past is that the Town Treasurer used to provide completed Payroll Change Notices to the Board of Selectmen's office. He noted that the current Treasurer ceased providing the Payroll Change Notices to the BOS's office a year ago and that the previous Library Director was communicative with the Board of Selectmen's office regarding the Payroll Change Notices of employees in that department. Mr. Carroll noted that he has always received the Payroll Change Notices "after the fact".
- Mr. Carroll clarified that his question to the Board is do they want an outside person beside the department head to approve changes to the payroll. He noted that the auditors set up a system a number of years ago that required three separate people to sign off on Payroll Change Notices and currently that is not happening for all departments.
- Mr. Leopold inquired about the exact action that is being asked of the Board. He asked if the question is something that has to do with decision authority or is it about filing and communication or neither.
- Mr. Carroll stated that there have been infrequent instances when filed Payroll Change Notices are incorrect so there may be decision making issues, but that his question is more about what the procedure should be.
- Ms. Biskis suggested clarifying that the issue is that when a Payroll Change Notice comes in that is beyond a one step increase and it is not at the time of the fiscal year change.
- Mr. Hodgkinson stated he has not had a performance review completed by a department head in his time at the Town Hall or had a payroll change notice completed. He noted that the Treasurer sends out a reminder near the end to the fiscal year and he does not respond to that reminder. Mr. Hodgkinson continued to explain the issue, using the Harbor & Beach Depts. as an example, as he understands it.

- Mr. Carroll explained employees in the Beach and Harbor Department do receive a COLA increase at the turn of the fiscal year, but they only receive a step increase if they are returning employees from the previous year. New seasonal employees do not receive a step increase on July 1. He noted that the Administrative Asst. to the Harbor Dept., who was hired in February of 2018, was not granted a step increase on July 1st as per the Human Resources Bylaw.
- Selectman Malkin distilled the question as “does the HR Board wish that there be a sign-off beyond the dept. head for all employees paid for by the Town.”
- Mr. Leopold identified that there are three issues that he hears:
 - Issue #1 appears to be the one just stated by Selectman Malkin
 - Issue #2 possibly could involve COLA increases
 - Issue #3 is a broad issue around performance reviews and resultant increases that may be wanted outside of the annual step increase for satisfactory performance
- Mr. McCreery suggested a working group be formed to solve this problem.
- Ms. Hierta stated that her experience was that she was hired in June of a year and then received a step increase in less than a month on July 1st. She expressed concern that a step increase on an anniversary date would require a cumbersome budget preparation for supervisors and noted that the amount of paperwork is also cumbersome. Ms. Hierta stated some concerns with moving to a Payroll Change Notice procedure due to privacy concerns, but also stated that an electronic process would help with the paper issue.
- Mr. Carroll agreed that the privacy concerns are important and the process could be adapted to protect that information and he also stated that the Board could also determine if they wished to not require any more signatures above the department level.
- Ms. Greene noted the wording in the Human Resources Bylaw and read from section 4.2 of the HR Bylaw:

Progression through the rate ranges normally will be one step annually, unless otherwise requested by the Department Head and approved by the HRBC and Appointing Authority. Step increases may be given only on the basis of satisfactory work performance as certified annually by the Appointing Authority.

- Mr. Carroll noted the appointing authorities do not currently sign the payroll change notices. Ms. Hierta stated that the Trustees are made aware of the Payroll Change Notices but that she does not have them sign the Notices.
- Mr. Hodgkinson noted a section under the title of Miscellaneous Chilmark Human Resources Policies of the Procedures Manual concerning pay grade changes:

“A formal pay grade change notice is filled out and given to the Treasurer for new or updated pay grades with an effective date.”

- Mr. Carroll noted that the Town’s auditors have made this recommendation. They have suggested that the employee recognize the action on a step increase with their signature, the department head also sign and then a third outside person to review and sign.
- Selectman Malkin clarified that the question is does the Town have a satisfactory system whereby an employee and a department head can put through an increase in compensation that affects the Town’s budget without someone else saying yes that is ok. And, he stated, if the current system is not satisfactory does the Board have a determination of who the outside person should be: HR Board, Board of Selectmen or the Town Administrator.
- It was found that the correct Payroll Change Notice form was not being viewed. Ms. Christy printed the Payroll Change Notice forms and distributed the blank forms to the Board members.
- Ms. Hierta suggested that the Payroll Change Notice could be amended in the area of the third outside signature area to say Town Administrator or Appointing Authority.
- Mr. Carroll explained that it would be better to suggest that the alternative be the Chairperson of the Trustees of the Chilmark Library so that it wouldn’t need to be the entire Board.
- Mr. Leopold asked for clarification of the question: is the Board comfortable with the current process of Payroll Change Notice approval or are there changes that are needed. It was agreed this is the question.
- Mr. Carroll stated that he is confident that he could work with the Library Director, the Police Chief and the Treasurer to come up with a process/form that is streamlined.

- Mr. Hodgkinson inquired why Mr. Carroll did not visit the Library and Police dept. before coming to the HR Board. Mr. Carroll stated he had talked with the Police Dept. Chief and that the Chief had stated that he is following the practice of the prior Chief and Mr. Carroll stated he had received information from the Treasurer that the Library Director had informed her that the Payroll Change Notices would be signed by just the Library Director. Mr. Carroll noted that it was at that point that he drafted the current memo.
- Mr. Carroll noted that the Payroll Change Notice was digitized this year which saved paper use. Ms. Hierta requested that she be informed of a digitized version.
- Ms. Greene noted that she has not seen any evaluations this year except for TriTown Ambulance Dept.
- It was clarified that there are two forms: the one-page Payroll Change Notice and the Step Increase form that is included in the three page performance evaluation document.
- More discussion occurred about who should be the third outside person to sign the Payroll Change Notices.
- Ms. Glasgow noted the section in the HR Bylaw and read aloud:

Progression through the rate ranges normally will be one step annually, unless otherwise requested by the Department Head and approved by the HRBC and Appointing Authority. Step increases may be given only on the basis of satisfactory work performance as certified annually by the Appointing Authority.

- Ms. Glasgow determined that the passage appears to indicate that if an employee is to receive a pay increase then the Payroll Change Notice must be signed by the department head and then also signed by with the HR Board and Appointing Authority. It was noted the Board of Trustees is the Appointing Authority for the Library Dept.
- Mr. Hodgkinson suggested that the Payroll Change Notice be reviewed by the Town Administrator with the Police Dept. and the Library Dept. and that these three determine what the change should be for the third signature. He also noted that the COLA information should be removed from the Payroll Change Notice form.
- Mr. Carroll agreed with the suggestion and stated the Treasurer has, in the past, liked to have the COLA information on the form.
- Mr. Golden stated that he does not see the harm in keeping the COLA information on the form and further stated that the change that is needed is that the HR Board needs to be included as a signatory on the Payroll Change Notice.
- Mr. Hodgkinson stated that the form could just include a signatory space for Appointing Authority and not the HR Board and he inquired how the HR Board would be capable of assessing performance.
- Mr. Golden stated the HR Board does not review the performance and would only be signing the Payroll Change Notices after the form had been signed and requested by the Department Head.
- Mr. Hodgkinson suggested the third sign-off be completed by the respective Appointing Authority.
- Mr. Malkin clarified that in his work he has always seen that an auditor requires that there be a higher authority, above a Supervisor or Dept. Head, that signs off on a Payroll Change and suggested that the HR Board be the sign-off authority on the Payroll Change Notice due to the knowledge the HR Board has of the HR Bylaws and the procedures.
- Mr. Leopold noted that the HR Board would, if the Board took on the sign-off duty on the Payroll Change Notice (instead of the Executive Secretary), be reviewing process rather than performance. The HR Board would be reviewing the process of the payroll change and not the performance of the employee that led to a requested payroll change.
- Ms. Greene noted that the Board would want to know the Town budget information if they are to sign-off on the Payroll Change Notices. Mr. Carroll stated that department heads could be asked to certify that their request is within their approved budget.
- Mr. Leopold clarified that the question is should the Payroll Change Notices come directly from a department head to the HR Board for a signature or do they first got to the Town Administrator or Appointing Authority and then the HR Board. If they go to the Town Administrator first, he further stated, then the budget information has been confirmed and the HR Board would not need to confirm that the budget can withstand an increase.
- Ms. Greene requested that Mr. Carroll please obtain an updated Payroll Change Notice from the Auditor for the Board to review.
- Mr. Leopold clarified that the main question is about overview authority and specifically what role, if any, does the Human Resource Board play in the sign-off of the Payroll Change Notices. He further clarified that the question before the Board is "is the current status ok or do we feel a need for more overview". Ms. Greene noted that the bylaw does indicate that the Payroll Change Notices are to be approved by the HR Board.
- Mr. Leopold noted that once the HR Board agrees that they need, as per the bylaw, to sign-off on the Payroll Change Notices then the second issue is what would the HR Board need, as recommended by the Auditors, to feel authorized to sign the Payroll Change Notice. He allowed also that the auditors could be consulted for their opinion as well.

- Selectman Malkin suggested that the HR Board decide whether they should be signing the Payroll Change Notices and, if so, what form should be used and then this draft form could be sent to the auditor to confirm that the form adheres to the requirements.
- Ms. Greene noted that the HR Board is only required to sign-off on Payroll Change Notices that occur outside of the annual change. Mr. Carroll confirmed this and stated that his question is should the HR Board take on the additional task that Mr. Carroll has been doing currently of signing the annual Payroll Change Notices as the level above the department head. Mr. Carroll explained that he is often signing off on Payroll Change Notices as department head and again as the higher authority.
- Mr. Malkin suggested that the HR Board decide what they prefer, then create a form which reflects what they prefer and then request that the auditor review the process and notify the Town if it satisfies their requirements.
- Ms. Greene stated she would like to know what the auditor wants before making a decision.
- Mr. Malkin stated his understanding is the auditor raised the issue with the Treasurer that the Town should have someone higher than the department head signing off on Payroll Change Notices.
- Ms. Greene noted this was a while ago.
- Mr. Leopold again clarified the question: should the current practice continue or should the HR Board request that the form be adapted to allow a signatory space for the HR Board.
- Discussion occurred about the auditor's management report.
- Ms. Glasgow inquired whether the Town Administrator is required, in the job description, to sign-off on the Payroll Change Notices.
- Mr. Carroll answered that he did not know.
- Ms. Glasgow also asked if Mr. Carroll feel uncomfortable signing the Payroll Change Notices and this is the reason for the request for the HR Board to be the higher, third signatory on the Notices.
- Mr. Carroll stated he felt uncomfortable defending Payroll Change Notices that he does not see. He clarified that the auditor requires that he sign every year a statement that he has viewed the Notices and he feels uncomfortable signing this without seeing the Notices.
- Mr. Leopold stated the process is clear for Payroll Change Notices that occur outside of the regular annual Payroll Change as the Bylaw states the HR Board must sign off on these Payroll Changes.
- Mr. Leopold further stated that the issues are is it appropriate for the department head to be the final review and whole else would be the final authority. It appears that the Board, he further stated, does not think the department head should be the final authority and it also appears, he continued, that the Board of Selectmen should most likely not be tasked with the sign-off duties and so it should be the HR Board.
- Mr. Carroll stated he would be more comfortable if somebody other than the department head reviewed the actions of the department head. Discussion occurred about which higher authority would sign the Police, Board of Assessors and Library Dept. employees' Payroll Change Notices. It was noted that the Board of Assessors are the department heads, whereas the Board of Library Trustees have a Library Director who is a department head. Mr. Leopold suggested that in the case of the Board of Assessors department Payroll Change Notices that they come to the HR Board for their signature as the third outside authority.
- The HR Board agreed that the Town's auditor be asked if it would be proper to have the HR Board be the authority that signs off on all Payroll Change Notices as the third signature above department heads.
- A motion was made to alter the Payroll Change Notice to change the sign-offs to Department Head. No vote was taken.

Minutes:

- August 2, 2018: The minutes were reviewed and approved as written.

Cemetery Superintendent Job Description Update:

- Mr. Carroll inquired about the proposed elimination of K. and asked if this proposed change, along with others, may change the grade of the position. K was rewritten to be "Process all invoices from contractors and casual labor for Cemetery Commission approval and submit to Town Accountant."
- Mr. Carroll also asked if the V. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES should be eliminated. It was determined that V. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES be restored.
- Other changes were made to K and a typo was fixed and a new draft will be prepared for signatures on November 8, 2018.
- A motion was made to approve the Cemetery Superintendent updated job description.

Harbor Staffing 2019 Discussion:

- Harbormaster Jason stated there appears to be duplication in the three job descriptions titled:
 - Harbormaster
 - Assistant Harbormaster/Wharfinger
 - Assistant Wharfinger
- Harbormaster Jason noted there appears to be a problem with definitions. He suggested that the Assistant Wharfinger job description to eliminate A. More discussion occurred.
- Ms. Greene asked if Harbormaster Jason please come back with a red-lined Assistant Wharfinger job description at the next HR Meeting for review.
- Mr. Carroll also noted that the Harbormaster would like to suggest the addition of an additional Assistant Harbormaster.
- More discussion occurred. The Harbormaster described a daily schedule worked by the Harbormaster, Asst. Harbormasters and Wharfingers.
- It was reiterated that the Harbormaster must redline the Harbor job descriptions and provide those to the Administrative Asst. for inclusion in the agenda for the next meeting.

Topics Not Anticipated by the Chairperson at the Time of Posting:**Next Meetings:**

- Thursday, Nov. 8, 2018, 8AM

Documents:

- HRB Procedures Manual

Meeting adjourned at 9:45AM