

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Assessors met on Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at approximately 6:50 PM. Present were Chairman Steve McCarthy, Member Paula Bunker, Principal Assessor John Donahue, and Principal Secretary Daniela Nilsson. The Chairman announced that Clerk Cheryl Smith was participating remotely via telephone.

Clerk Smith reiterated that in Open Session she had disclosed that she filed a Disclosure Of Appearance of Conflict of Interest Form with the Town Clerk, pursuant to MGL CH 268A, §23(b)(3), due to the fact that she is a first cousin to Principal Secretary Tami Houde, and that her familial relationship would not affect her ability to make objective decisions.

Principal Secretary Houde presented documentation to the Board in support of her grievance for a pay increase. She was accompanied by Union Steward Price. She discussed the documents, which she believed demonstrated the duties she performed over a three (3) month period after Head Secretary Donna Cotter retired; and stated that she was the only secretary for the Assessor's office during that time. She outlined the duties which Head Secretary Cotter had discharged and asserted that she had assumed those duties. She showed certain procedures she had converted to electronic formats. She also provided numerical counts of different tasks she had performed. She then asked if there were any questions.

Chairman McCarthy commended Principal Secretary Houde on the documentation she compiled. He stated that he was concerned with the outer grade pay and asked what dollar amount was being requested. Principal Secretary Houde stated that she was requesting a differential pay of \$7.18/hour. She stated that she was only offered a \$1 to \$2 differential increase and that the contract says if you do the job duties you should be compensated. Chairman McCarthy asked if the contract stated that the compensation would be the full difference in outer grade pay. Union Steward Price stated that it does not but the contract says the department head determines the compensation.

Clerk Smith stated the Board would take it under advisement and informed Principal Secretary Houde that she had the right to grieve to level three (3) if she was unhappy with the outcome.

Member Bunker stated that she was on the fence on whether this matter should be brought to the next level because Principal Secretary Houde did some of the work that had been Head Secretary Cotter's duties, and figured it out and even struggled through some of it to figure it out, but not all of the duties were performed by Principal Secretary Houde. She also stated that the contract is vague and believes that later in the contract there is a reference to additional pay only if the other employee is in a supervisory role.

Union Steward Price stated that the supervisory role is not written in the contract and Member Bunker may be thinking of the letter from the Human Resource Director which was denied by the union and grievant.

Principal Secretary Houde stated that she still answers Principal Secretary Nilsson's questions and supervises the senior work off volunteers. She also stated that not all duties take years to learn, so she has taken them on.

The Principal Assessor asked the Union Steward to summarize the issue brought to the Board. He stated that he had received the grievance and that, in his response letter, he would entertain an offer. The response he received was that the grievant wanted \$7.18/hour or there would not be a deal. The Union Steward agreed with the summary.

The Union Steward reminded the Board that its response needed to be received by April 2, 2020 (tomorrow). The Board appreciated the reminder and took it under advisement and would vote on it tonight. The Union Steward and Principal Secretary Houde left the meeting at approximately 7:14 PM.

The Board discussed the grievance and all were in agreement that Principal Secretary Houde did take on some of the job duties that had been Head Secretary Cotter's duties, but did not take on all duties, and felt the \$7.18/hour was not a fair request. A motion was made by Chairman McCarthy to deny the request for outer grade pay. It was seconded by Clerk Smith. Voted unanimously 3-0-0.

The Board would immediately issue a denial notification via email to the Union Steward in order to meet the notification deadline and to ask about the possibility of having the Board sign a denial letter electronically due to the declared coronavirus state of emergency.

The Board reviewed the ATB schedule and the Principal Assessor informed the Board that all cases were in a state of suspension and will not be heard until either the Summer or possibly in the Fall because of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

The Board reviewed, discussed and denied Application for Abatement #53.

A **motion** was made to adjourn Executive Session. A **roll call vote** was taken as follows: Chairman McCarthy = affirmative, Clerk Smith = affirmative, Member Bunker = affirmative. The Board adjourned Executive Session at approximately 7:26 PM

Next Meeting: April 15, 2020

I certify that the minutes of this meeting are true and accurate to the best of my recollection.

Respectfully submitted,



Cheryl Smith, Clerk

Prepared by Principal Secretary, Daniela Nilsson