



# Warner Board of Selectmen

**Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 26, 2018  
APPROVED**

Chairman Dabuliewicz opened the meeting at 3:32 pm

## **1. Nonpublic Session**

Chairman Dabuliewicz made a motion to enter into nonpublic session at 3:32 pm in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II(c), reputation. Selectman Edelmann seconded. Roll call vote: Dabuliewicz – yes, Carson – yes, Edelmann – yes. The motion passed 3-0.

Present were the 3 Selectmen and Gary Thornton.

Selectman Carson moved to come out of nonpublic session at 4:06 pm. Selectman Edelmann seconded. Roll call vote: Dabuliewicz – yes, Carson – yes, Edelmann – yes. The motion passed 3-0.

## **2. Public Session Reconvened**

The public session was reconvened at 4:15 pm.

Attendance: Selectman John Dabuliewicz – Chairman, Selectman Clyde Carson, Selectman Kimberley Edelmann and Town Administrator – Jim Bingham

Others present: Tracey Hallenborg, Judy Newman-Rogers, Bill Chandler

## **3. Seal and Restrict**

Chairman Dabuliewicz made a motion to seal the March 26 nonpublic meeting minutes for 18 months under RSA 91-A:3, II(c), reputation. Selectman Carson seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 3-0.

## **4. Wage Study** (Note: Some content may be missing from Gary Thornton, very soft spoken)

- A. The Board talked about a merit-based system with job appraisals and how in the past no system was consistent. Gary Thornton recommended the Board first adopt a compensation philosophy. The Board reviewed Gary's report that explains how to get everyone to match the market and be at the step and grade of the new system based on the market survey. Everything in the report is based on the fifty percentile in the market from the communities that were surveyed. He said New Durham decided to pay at the twenty-fifth percentile, they defined their philosophy. The next step New Durham did was to make sure that all their employees were at the twenty-fifth percentile and then New Durham elected to continue on a step system. Gary said merit in the public sector is like moving a mountain, Moultonborough tried the merit system and went back to the step system. John said for the record the Town Administrator did present to the Board a compensation philosophy and the Board decided last fall not to take it up until they got to this point.
- B. Clyde asked Gary if he has seen modified systems with bonuses for exceptional employees? Gary said he's in favor of a modified merit increase. The Board talked about how the previous step program became too expensive and was dropped. Gary said the Board needs to adopt something so the employees can understand how they can influence their pay. Clyde asked Gary if he can put a system together that has the grade steps and also allows for a cost of living increase, with the town being able to afford it? Gary said yes he can. Jim said based on past history he recommends no more than 2.5% between each step. Also, unlike for profit companies where bonuses and pay raises increase because overall revenue increases, the town does not have that luxury. A discussion is needed about how close does the town want to be to the grade step versus a strict merit-based system or a hybrid of in between. The system needs to be affordable on an annual basis that's why Jim feels that 2.5% steps allow for flexibility.

- C. Kimberley asked Gary the point system he presented to the Selectmen, how many towns that he showed the system to adopt it. Gary said the town's asked for the system, he assumed 100%. Kimberley asked Gary if he has any feedback from those town's, were there any challenges and who trained them. Gary said they had an Evaluation Committee.
- D. Kimberley asked who are the Department Heads that would be involved in the process. Jim said DPW, Police Chief and himself for the administrative services. Jim said Gary has provided a Warner specific template to work from and he feels an update can be done without much effort and time. Jim said the administrative part is complicated because the Landuse Secretary reports to the 2 Chairs, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Deputy Town Clerk works under the Town Clerk, there is a step of separation that needs to be understood as well. The Town Clerk asked why is she not considered a Department Head. Jim said if this moves forward, Department Heads will be evaluated, as an elected official (Judy interjected and said and treated as an employee) Jim said OK, then you would be evaluated for your job performance. Judy said she has been evaluated in the past by the Selectmen. Kimberley said that means Jim would do Judy's appraisal which Kimberley feels Judy would argue against. Judy said she doesn't work for Jim. John said you are an employee for purposes of pay and benefits and there are certain things that go along with that. Clyde said in certain situations Judy is a Department Head and other's she is not. John said we will need to work out the details for elected officials.
- E. Kimberley asked what are the big decisions that need to be made at this point, Gary mentioned what percentile does the Board want to establish in relation to the market data that was provided. Jim said the other decision the Board needs to make is, does the Board want to accept the consultant's placement of the job description on the grade level the employee has. The job descriptions at this time have been reviewed by the employees who provided some cosmetic changes to some, those will need to be approved by the Board as well. John said the Board's homework is to look at the philosophy in total.
- F. John said he wanted to make sure the record is clear on what Kimberley was talking about earlier on in this process, a pool of funds. Kimberley explained in the corporate world where a 5% pool is provided for wage increases and is distributed by the Department Manager to his staff based on performance evaluations. Favoritism was a concern with this type of process. Clyde asked Gary because wages are public information for municipalities, are there towns that use the pool system? Gary said yes, they are prepared to say one employee is doing a better job than another. Gary said the survey's he's doing for other municipalities about 12 of them are not doing the step system, they are pulling away from that system and doing a merit-based system. Clyde talked about addressing longevity, can it be worked into the merit system. Jim said there could be a separate longevity program. Gary said he prefers bonuses when addressing longevity.
- G. Moving forward, the first step is to adopt a compensation philosophy. Jim also recommended the Board review the executive summary as well. John wants the Board to review the recommendations in the study, they are a little more detailed. Kimberley said the Board should also review Gary's recommendations for the immediate next steps which there are 4 of. Kimberley feels Gary's recommendations are the order the Board should follow.

#### **5. Bond - Fire Station Construction**

- A. Kimberley asked the Board if they want to go for the lowest tax impact possible. John is in favor of the most consistent tax impact. Clyde said he was leaning towards a 20 year fixed schedule, level debt.

#### **Board Action**

Selectman Carson made a motion to go for the 20-year level debt bond. Chairman Dabuliewicz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Kimberley will work on the amount needed for the construction bridge loan.
- C. The garage will go to Bob Irving, Jim will verify with Emergency Management the structure can be moved.

#### **Board Action**

Selectman Edlemann made a motion to give the garage to Bob Irving with the appropriate paperwork. Selectman Carson seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously

## **6. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm

Board of Selectmen

John Dabuliewicz – Chairman

Clyde Carson

Kimberley Edelmann

Recorder of the minutes: Mary Whalen