

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING DECEMBER 20, 2016

Chairman Walter called the meeting to order in the Senior Center at 6 PM with Mr. Hevy and Mr. Kiley also present.

Town Collector candidate Lisa Taylor of Oakham was present at 6 PM. The Board asked a series of questions that will be asked of both candidates. (Attachment #1) Mrs. Walter began by asking how Ms. Taylor would maintain organized records and files. Ms. Taylor said that she would like to review what is currently in place. She explained that when she took over the collector position with the Town of Oakham things were very well organized. She went on to explain her current system of deposits and reconciliations, and how she would hope to run the office in North Brookfield.

Mr. Hevy asked Ms. Taylor to tell the Selectmen a little bit about herself, and she explained that she lives in Oakham with her family, where she has served as the Collector for 6 years, and as Treasurer for 3 years.

Mr. Kiley asked what is the most important skill that a collector should possess, and Ms. Taylor stated that in addition to being good with numbers, a person holding this position needs to be good with people as well.

When asked why she wants this job, Ms. Taylor said that she currently works only part-time, and she would like something more challenging and new to learn.

In response to several questions about delinquent taxpayers and the tax taking process, Ms. Taylor explained her process for pursuing delinquent taxes, and how she arranges for payment plans for delinquent taxpayers.

After the interview questions from the Board, Ms. Taylor asked how far back North Brookfield has delinquent taxes? She was told that the Town has no outstanding taxes, the Collector does the takings each year.

Ms. Taylor left at 6:50 PM.

In the time before the next candidate arrived Mrs. Walter noted that she has spoken with Troy Brown, who will donate his services to install lighting for the Town House Bell Tower.

Mrs. Walter stated that she forwarded three revenue reports to Mr. Hevy and Mr. Kiley from the Town Accountant. She has spoken with the Collector, who is keeping up the best that she can. Mr. Kiley said that he wants to make sure that the Accountant has what she needs. Mrs. Walter said that the Accountant will be working on the revised sick leave policy.

Mrs. Walter noted that she and Mr. Hevy attended a meeting with the School Superintendent and School Committee Chairman to talk about Quaboag Superintendent Kustigian's request for a meeting. Superintendent Tencza has started a program with Mr. Sinner for middle school students to participate more in the learning process. Mr. Hevy said that he would like to look at school studies that have been done in other towns.

At 7 PM Collector candidate Joanne Savignac of Paxton was present for her interview. She was asked the same series of questions as was Ms. Taylor.

When asked how she would maintain organized records and files, Ms. Savignac explained that right now she uses a series of Excel spreadsheets to track her daily, weekly, and monthly balances. She noted that she uses a lot of e-mail contact, but sometimes she finds that face-to-face is best.

In response to Mr. Hevy's question, she said that she heard about this position from the Mass Collector and Treasurer Association's website.

Mr. Kiley asked what she feels is the most important quality for a collector, and Ms. Savignac said that the ability not to take things personally is important, and the need to smile and deal with everyone fairly is equally important.

Ms. Savignac explained the tax taking process and her procedure for dealing with delinquent taxpayers and payment plans.

After her interview Ms. Savignac asked why the position is open, and was told it is because the current collector is retiring. She asked about the town's annual audits and management issues, and online payments. She left the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Mr. Kiley asked if Mrs. Walter and Mr. Hevy knew who had removed a tree on North Street, and both said that they did not know. Mr. Kiley noted that he will do some more investigation, since the removal of a tree from town property normally requires a hearing by the Tree Warden.

There being no further business, at 7:45 PM Mr. Hevy moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Scott Burton
Administrative Assistant