

**BOARD OF ASSESSOR'S
MEETING MINUTES
Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
Thursday, June 4, 2020, 3:30 P.M.**

Members Present : John Wesolowski, Chairman,
Lawrence LaBarbera,
Roger Roberge

Members Absent : None

Staff Present: Nick Breault, Town Administrator,
Herta Dane, Human Resources Coordinator

Chairman John Wesolowski called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Wesolowski opened the meeting by stating that the purpose of the meeting and only agenda item was to interview a candidate for the position of Assistant/Principal Assessor. Originally three candidates had been invited to interview but two candidates withdrew their application from further consideration prior to the interview.

Mr. Wesolowski then welcomed Ms. Cathy Barnes to the meeting at 3:40 p.m. The Board took turns asking a series of twenty interview questions on an interview evaluation form which had been prepared by Herta Dane (the form is attached to these minutes and hereby incorporated therein). Ms. Barnes answered all questions and spoke about the knowledge and experience she gained in the last 14 years of service in the Assessor's Office in her position of Assistant Administrator, her prior experience in the banking industry and as office manager, and the Certifications from the Massachusetts Assessor's Association she obtained in 2013. Ms. Barnes was able to demonstrate her excellent qualifications in the areas of administration, organization, budgeting, office management, and competence in applicable software applications. She was forthcoming in speaking about the areas where she may still be lacking in experience and may need guidance from the Board, which is performing the actual assessments of residential, commercial and industrial structures.

Following the interview the Board discussed her qualifications, and her lack in experience in some areas. Ms. Dane explained to the Board that the pool of qualified applicants for this extremely specialized professional position is limited. The Board discussed hiring a consultant to perform those assessments that must be done before November and which Ms. Barnes may not be able to complete, to keep the Town in compliance and certified. The Board suggested that the contract could include a clause to allow Ms. Barnes to receive professional training in performing these assessments from the contractor.

Ms. Dane reminded the Board that as the Appointing Authority they should make a motion if they decide to appoint the candidate, and that the Board of Selectmen will need to approve the starting salary offered to the candidate. She had included a copy of the Town's compensation plan in their folders and pointed out that Ms. Barnes was on Grade 2 (non-exempt) at the top at \$54,915 per year. The position of Principal/Assistant Assessor is on Grade 5 (exempt) with a range of \$57,636 to \$86,452. Mr. Silva was on the top of the grade and that amount was included in the proposed FY 2021 budget. Mr. Breault explained that if the Board wanted to use some of the FY salary for a consultant, a request to transfer funds into a contractual services account would have to be approved at Town Meeting. The Board felt confident that offering Ms. Barnes the position at \$60,000 and hiring a contractor to perform some of the more involved technical assessments would be a workable solution for the office until Ms. Barnes had gained the necessary experience.

MOTION: “Move to appoint Cathy Barnes to the position of Principal Assessor for one year”. (Motion by Roger Roberge, seconded by Larry LaBarbera) Roll Call Vote: Mr. Wesolowski: yes; Mr. Roberge: yes; Mr. LaBarbera: yes. (Approved 3-0)

MOTION: “Move to offer Cathy Barnes a starting salary of \$60,000/year”. (Motion by Roger Roberge, seconded by Larry LaBarbera) Roll Call Vote: Mr. Wesolowski: yes; Mr. Roberge: yes; Mr. LaBarbera: yes. (Approved 3-0)

Mr. LaBarbera suggested that the Board ask Mr. Silva before he retires on June 19 to write down all the items that should be included in an agreement for work to be completed by a contractor. The Board also discussed and agreed that Cathy Barnes’s appointment would be effective on June 20, 2020, the day after Mr. Silva retires.

MOTION: “Move to adjourn”. (Motion by Roger Roberge, seconded by John Wesolowski) Roll Call Vote: Mr. Wesolowski: yes; Mr. Roberge: yes; Mr. LaBarbera: yes. (Approved 3-0)

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for June 10, 2020 at 5:45 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Herta Dane, Human Resources Coordinator

Minutes approved on: _____

Minutes approved by: _____

