

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PERSONNEL COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2020 AT 4:00 P.M.**

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**Public comments accepted at [Comments@cheshirect.org](mailto:Comments@cheshirect.org),  
and by voice mail message at 203-271-6638.**

Present

Sylvia Nichols, Chair; Peter Talbot and Donald Walsh  
Staff: Sean M. Kimball, Town Manager; Arnett Talbot, Asst. Town Manager; George  
Noewatne, PW Director; Louis Zullo, Asst. Town Manager/Human Resources

**1. ROLL CALL**

The Clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

**3. DISCUSSION RE: FORMAT FOR TOWN MANAGER'S FY 20-21  
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (moved to later in the agenda)**

**4. DISCUSSION RE: AMENDED JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Ms. Nichols noted the committee is in receipt of the amended job descriptions for review and decision making.

Capital Projects Manager – Classification E-2 – Public Works Department

Town Manager Kimball stated that this job description was approved in the FY20-21 operating budget. The Assistant Town Engineer position and Capital Projects Manager will be “hybrid positions”.

PW Director Noewatne explained that this is a promotion within the Public Works Department. The department will have the Capital Projects Manager/Assistant Town Engineer and an outside engineering consulting firm will be hired for the Town Engineer position.

There are 27 projects on the Public Building Commission (PBC) agenda for both the Town and Board of Education (BOE). The Capital Projects Manager will be the point person for the Town, and Rich Clavet will be the point person for the BOE, and a consultant could be hired, as needed, to get projects completed. Throughout the project process there will be briefings to the Town Manager, Town Council and BOE. Mr. Noewatne said the job description is “generic”; the person must be fluid and do many things...manage capital projects and engineering duties, work with Mr. Noewatne and insure projects are done.

The Capital Projects Manager position will be filled by current Assistant Town Engineer Dan Bombero.

With the new position, Mr. Talbot asked about some duties being taken off Mr. Clavet and managed by the Capital Projects Manager, and how this will affect the BOE and Mr. Clavet. He also asked about the PBC staff liaison.

In response, Mr. Noewatne said he has met with Mr. Clavet, who will still be involved with projects. The Capital Projects Manager will work with to be approved, bidding, writing an RFP and bids, visiting the projects to insure everything is being done to town standards. This gives Mr. Noewatne and Mr. Clavet time for more detailed project work. During the winter, the PW staff gets projects ready for the spring season work. Mr. Noewatne will continue as PBC liaison, although the Capital Projects Manager will be involved in PBC projects and attend some meetings.

Ms. Nichols stated the new position provides assistance to the PW Director and Department, and asked if Mr. Clavet has the same status in the BOE...giving backup with managing projects.

According to Mr. Noewatne, there is no other person at the BOE other than Rich Clavet handling current duties.

Regarding the School Modernization Committee (SMC) Ms. Nichols asked how the position will affect their future school projects and his input into these projects.

The Capital Projects Manager would assist with SMC projects. Mr. Noewatne said the person would be the point person for large projects...a bridge between the contractors, consultants, BOE, Town Council and any other entity involved in a capital project. This person would have the best interests of the Town as a paid Town employee. The costs of the position are shared with the BOE, and there will be collaboration between the BOE and Town. All PBC projects are managed by the Town and there is justification for the manager to work with Mr. Clavet for school projects.

Under the proposal, Mr. Noewatne said Mr. Bombero would continue with current duties and assume new duties...it is not an ideal situation, but is doable. The Town will have a consulting engineer to handle plan review and Don Nolte will handle engineering project management and insure they move forward. Mr. Bombero has the skills and management of the system data base, and the bulk of his time will be on the capital projects management side.

Mr. Walsh asked if any position is being eliminated. He commented on the 50/50 split with BOE, and noted it could even be 60/40.

The committee was told by Mr. Kimball that the in-house Town Engineer position is eliminated, and the BOE and Town split is 50/50 for costs. A full-time Town Engineer was proposed in the budget, but an engineering consulting firm will be hired.

Assistant Town Manager/Public Information Officer – Classification E-5

Mr. Kimball advised that there is formalizing of the management level of the leadership team and organization. A significant amount of direct supervision will come under the Assistant Town Manager, with supervision of the Building Official, Economic Development Coordinator, Human Services Director, Library Director, Town Planner and staff responsible for social media and communications. The ATM will provide administrative oversight of staff in the Town Clerk and Registrars of Voters offices.

This reorganization gets the organization on a good path moving forward, and there are no other changes from the initial discussions. Mr. Kimball said the ATM job description is being formalized.

The issue of the Town's website was raised by Mr. Walsh, who asked if this should be in the job description, and if there is future consideration of a full time website person.

Regarding the website, Mr. Kimball said it is almost ready to launch, month to month, and staff is working with the I.T. team. The Public Information Officer (PIO) is an important part of the ATM position, and staff is empowering people to manage their own section of the website.

Mr. Walsh supports hiring an Electronic Media Coordinator for website management.

Ms. Talbot stated she has supported this position for 6+ years.

With the ATM position and CPM position filled by incumbents, Mr. Talbot asked if these jobs have to be posted or the incumbent automatically gets the job.

For the ATM position, Mr. Kimball stated it is a revision to the job description and the incumbent person stays in the position.

Administrative Assistant – Classification N-2

Mr. Kimball pointed out that there are modest changes to the job description for additional responsibilities and up to date language for current office operations. This position will not be posted and the job classification does not change.

Mr. Nichols agreed with the thoughts about hiring an Electronic Media Coordinator as a needed position in the future. Going forward there will be a need to hire for technology. For the Administrative Assistant position, she noted the job description clarified what is being done with a few more responsibilities cited.

For the Administrative Assistant position, Mr. Kimball said there are general changes, clearing up language for expectations...and use of the words “coordinate” and “manage”. The person would be more self-directed in some of the tasks to be done.

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Mr. Walsh

MOVED that the Personnel Committee approve the amended job descriptions for the positions of Assistant Town Manager/Public Information Officer, Capital Projects Manager and Administrative Assistant, and forward to the full Town Council for approval.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

### **3. DISCUSSION RE: FORMAT FOR TOWN MANAGER’S FY 20-21 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The committee and staff discussed the concept of a “retreat” for Town Council and Town Manager and selected staff. Three (3) proposals were received from consulting firms, which may be more expensive than planned. The original intent was to look at, review, Town Manager goals and objectives, expand them, and look at the organization-wide plan on how the Town pursues goals and objectives. From the proposals there is concern about a consultant over-playing the intent. There is information through the SMC, Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and other current Town materials. Mr. Nichols said the Council must get Mr. Kimball clearer direction on priorities on a day-to-day basis.

Looking at the proposals, Mr. Talbot noted they are more for “how to run a town”, and the Council and staff are looking for a facilitator to work through the goals and objectives. There is no problem writing them. We need to stick to them, prioritize them...there are nine (9) people supervising one (1) individual and who does the individual listen to...one person or the collective group. Mr. Talbot stated we do not need a high cost consultant; we need a facilitator to keep everyone on task and get to where we need to be at the end.

Stating his agreement, Mr. Walsh stated the goals and objectives can be implemented and prioritized, and someone is needed to guide through the process. He supports the idea of a “retreat” for everyone to get together and discuss issues in an informal setting with the facilitator.

Ms. Nichols also agreed about having a “retreat” session and establishing procedure.. She talked about elections every two (2) years, new people elected or appointed, not knowing or understanding the protocol, the need for a semi-retreat/review of the way the Town is structured i.e. supervision of employees. She supports a full day or half-day retreat session.

The committee was informed by Mr. Kimball that he is talking to a number of facilitators, finding a way of thinking and structuring his goals and objectives per his contract. This is done in June, adopted by the Council, and his evaluation is based on them. In one discussion with a consultant Mr. Kimball said they talked about how the Town Council wants to govern the next two (2) years, what are the strategic priorities, core values of the community remain year to year and do not change. He likes the idea of doing something every two (2) years for Council and staff to meet, look at the big picture, goals and objectives, know the community core values, projects aligning with the goals and objectives, goal setting etc. A facilitator would assist with a full day or half-day retreat session.

Mr. Talbot pointed out this would now be done between election cycles, and cited the importance of reviewing priorities, i.e. economic development, fiscal responsibilities, and other things which are interchangeable. Within the goals are the objectives, and this is used for the Town Manager's assessment. He favors a full day or half-day retreat.

After listening to the committee's discussion and statements, Mr. Kimball advised he could have an answer in the next week on the status of consultants and a retreat plan. With the 14-day quarantine in Connecticut, we may have to go with a CT company from outside Cheshire for a fresh view of the Town. Mr. Kimball stated that having the goals and objectives as he is planning the budget next year is a good time. We can get the consultant or facilitator in October time frame, have the directive document as he prepares the 21-22 budget. Mr. Kimball believes this is building a budget with more credibility and in keeping with what the Town Council wants to do. He sent a survey to Connecticut town managers, received eight (8) responses with recommendations for a consultant or facilitator.

Summary – Town Manager Kimball will review firms and facilitators, and present two (2) or three (3) companies to the committee to contact/call (via zoom) for a consultant or facilitator.

A two (2) day retreat with a facilitator would cost in the \$15,000 range, and this covers travel and lodging expenses. Doing this every two years equates to \$7,500 per year.

A one(1) day retreat with a facilitator would be in the range of \$2,000 to \$3,000.

## **5. CONTRACT NEGOTIATION UPDATES, possible executive session**

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Mr. Walsh.

MOVED to enter executive session to discuss contract negotiation updates to include Town Manager Kimball, Asst. Town Manager Talbot and Mr. Zullo.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

The committee exited executive session at 5:30 p.m.

**6.     **ADJOURNMENT****

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Mr. Walsh

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

VOTE           The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk