

Minutes of 9/28/2022
Warren Selectboard
Warren Municipal Building
12:00 PM

Members Present: Luke Youmell, Chair, Camilla Behn & Andrew Cunningham, Vice Chair.

Members Absent: Bob Ackland & Ms. Klein Corrigan

12:00 PM – Meeting called to order by Mr. Youmell.

12:10 PM – Motion by Mr. Cunningham to ratify the Warren Town Administrators Job Description, seconded by Ms. Behn. All in Favor: VOTE: 3-0.

As I mentioned at the meeting, I am sharing a summary of what I felt was covered today. Please feel free to add or otherwise edit (Andy and Luke as well).

Minutes from Ms. Behn:

I want to acknowledge how uncomfortable today's meeting was at times. Given that we are getting close to the end of the 90-day timeline, The Board felt that it was essential that we start to be as direct and clear as possible, so that we all feel on October 18th as if we have brought our best efforts to bear on improving the relationship between you and The Board, making your work experience more satisfying and pleasurable and getting the best possible outcome for The Town and all its stakeholders. We owe that to everyone involved.

- The Board ratified Cindi's job description (Warren Town Administrator October 2020 version)

- The Board expressed that we needed Cindi to hear/acknowledge our feedback/criticism, not just deflect it back to us

- Cindi shared that she feels defeated by having so much focus on her. She observed that this is a different Board than previous ones and feels that this Board wants to be more involved in her work and she isn't used to that. She stated that she feels "micro-managed"

- Andy offered assurance to Cindi that The Board doesn't want her to feel singled-out in a negative way. He expressed that hers is a critically important role in The Town and that is why there is so much focus by The Board on her and her work and that other Town staff/employees will get The Board's attention as well

- Luke shared his perspective on the difference between being hands off, managing and micro-managing. He said he felt that micro-managing was a derogatory term and that managing is what we are doing now and should be doing for all Town Staff going forward. He commented that management of the Town Highway Dept. has been more active and should be because it is the largest piece of the Town budget

- Camilla stated that The Board does not want to be having these meetings and would prefer to have Cindi take the feedback she is being provided and make changes so that The Board can leave her alone more and she can go back to doing the good work she has done in the past

- The Board shared that they want more collaboration between themselves and Cindi; more dialogue and less feeling like it is either The Board's way or Cindi's way

- Camilla asked Cindi to focus more on quality than quantity. Examples were referenced in emails as well as meeting minutes

- Camilla used an example of the Title 13/constables' email, citing lack of clear background information initially and then incomplete communication in follow-up questions. Camilla asked that Cindi be sure to reply all on any email where there are others CC'd so that everyone gets complete information

- Luke cited an example of the meeting packets. The Board acknowledged that Cindi had taken the feedback from Devin about preferring to have agenda topics collected and shared in a packet with pertinent info rather than just forwarded to The Board throughout the week. However, Luke noted that rather than discussing with The Board how to change the process, Cindi made a decision to stop including anything in the folders and only send electronically. The Board expressed that this is a great example of how we could work collaboratively to improve both Cindi's and The Boards' experience if Cindi would start a dialogue with The Board about what she is thinking

- Camilla shared that The Board wants Cindi to improve her accuracy and lack of bias in the meeting minutes and other written communication

- Cindi replied that she had decided to just go with state statute and do the minimum required for minutes.

- Luke responded that this felt like an example of Cindi trying to punish The Board for giving her feedback rather than working with The Board to come up with a satisfying solution for everyone

- Luke added that Cindi might feel more comfortable just bouncing ideas off one member at a time, rather than the whole group and that this was a perfectly fine way to go about it

- The Board asked Cindi if she was hearing our feedback and she said she was and that she needed time to process it and do some thinking

- It was agreed to meet again on Wednesday, October 12 at noon


Motion to adjourn at 12:45 PM by Ms. Behn, seconded by Mr. Cunningham. All in Favor: VOTE: 3-0.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,
Ms. Behn.

The Warren Selectboard



Luke Youmell, Chair



Andrew Cunningham, Vice Chair



Camilla Behn

Devin Klein Corrigan

Bob Ackland