

**SELECT BOARD OPEN SESSION MINUTES
OF WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024**

In attendance: Chair Katie Goldrick, Vice Chair Pamela Campanella, Clerk Patty Conway, Associate William Watkins, Associate David Reilly, Assistant Town Administrator Kara Nyman

1. Call to Order – Chair Goldrick called the meeting to order in the Noel C. King Meeting Room and via Zoom.
2. Approval of Minutes – Chair Goldrick said she is tabling the January 3, 2024 minutes. MOTION to approve the open session minutes of December 6, 2023, December 13, 2023, and December 20, 2023, by Patty Conway, 2nd by David Reilly. Roll Call Vote: 4-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Reilly voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.

3. FEMA Grant Acceptance – Chief Smith stated he had been trying to get reimbursed for items acquired during COVID.

MOTION to accept a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to the Holbrook Police Department in the amount of \$189,590.29 by Patty Conway.

Chief Smith made a note that the grant is for the Town of Holbrook, not the Police Department specifically.

AMENDED MOTION to accept a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to the Town of Holbrook in the amount of \$189,590.29 by Patty Conway, 2nd by David Reilly. Roll Call Vote: 5-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Reilly voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.

4. Police Officer Appointment – Chief Smith recommended that the Board appoint Francis Kelley as a Patrol Officer for the Town of Holbrook. The candidate was born and raised in Holbrook, and active US National Guard and military police. He went through an extensive background check.

MOTION to appoint Francis X. Kelley as a Patrol Officer for the Town of Holbrook by Patty Conway, 2nd by David Reilly. Roll Call Vote: 5-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Campanella voting yes, Reilly voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.

5. Temporary Accounting Services – Eric Kinshurf submitted a proposal for temporary accounting services.

Patty Conway asked about the specifics regarding the hybrid work model with days and hours, and Chair Goldrick confirmed on-site one day a week and remote the remaining days, with a work laptop being provided.

MOTION to authorize Interim Town Administrator Peter Morin to execute the contract for Interim Accounting Services between the Town of Holbrook and Eric A. Kinshurf,

CPA LLC by Patty Conway, 2nd by Pam Campanella. Roll Call Vote: 5-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Campanella voting yes, Reilly voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.

6. Town Accountant Job Posting – Chair Goldrick recommended to have all submittals sent to the Select Board and Town Administrator’s office.

Mr. Reilly asked what the criteria is for the Accountant and Chair Goldrick replied that it was the same as used last time. Mr. Watkins said that on the MMA website, it stated applicants must have Bachelor’s degree, but on the hand-out, it said minimum of an Associate’s degree and a Bachelor’s was desired. Chair Goldrick noted Mr. Watkins’ observation and clarified a Bachelor’s in Accounting, Finance, or a related field.

Chair Goldrick asked Ms. Nyman about other resources/websites in which to capture potential applicants for the position.

Ms. Conway asked if certification could be changed to being required instead of highly desirable. Chair Goldrick suggested changing the language to “Professional certifications are required.”

Chair Goldrick asked the board to consider all the changes made and approve the changes. Ms. Campanella wanted to clarify the changes. Ms. Nyman clarified the following changes:

- Changing the emails to go to the Select Board and the Town Administrator
- Change FY22 to FY24
- Education and Experience: removed Associate’s and changed to Bachelor’s or higher (Ms. Campanella asked to have this changed to Associate’s or Higher, Bachelor’s desired).

The Board discussed requirements regarding experience vs. degree and what level of degree should be required. Mr. Reilly stated he thought there should be a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree and that there would be a large pool of candidates due to benefits. He stated he did not think 3 years of experience was enough.

Chair Goldrick stated that the inventory of candidates for the position is not a lot. Ms. Conway stated she would like to see the Board stay with the Bachelor’s degree requirement, and if there was not a sufficient pool of candidates then they should revisit. Ms. Campanella clarified that she did not say she did not require a degree. Ms. Conway stated that if they started at the Associate’s level and higher, then she would like to look at increasing the number of years of experience.

Mr. Watkins said that, for example, if a person comes in with an Associate’s degree, they need to have ‘x’ number of years of experience, but if they come in with a Bachelor’s degree, they may come in with less years of experience but they have that BA degree. He mentioned having a “tier” system with experience/degree.

Chair Goldrick asked Board to come to a compromise that minimum education is an Associate's degree, but experience of a supervisory nature should be minimum five years. Ms. Conway asked for the years of experience to be in the municipal accounting role. Mr. Watkins clarified if it was a tiered system or Associate's degree or higher. Chair Goldrick said it was Bachelor's preferred.

Ms. Nyman continued on with the following adjustments:

- Certifications are changed from "required" not preferred
- Section on third page is changed certifications from desirable to required
- Ability to work with multiple boards and committees

Ms. Campanella asked the Board if everyone is comfortable with the changes and Chair Goldrick confirmed she was. Mr. Watkins asked if Eric could look at the posting before it gets published, and Chair Goldrick confirmed it was a good idea.

MOTION contingent on all the amendments and consultation with Eric Kinshurf, that we authorize the Assistant Town Administrator/Interim Town Administrator to post the job of Town Accountant, by Patty Conway, 2nd by David Reilly. Roll Call Vote: 5-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Campanella voting yes, Reilly voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.

7. Assistant Town Administrator Job Description – The Board considered blending/merging the HR Director role and Assistant Town Administrator role.

Mr. Watkins stated that he asked at the last meeting that they get in writing, from Town Counsel and 'DSL [sic]' on the position because, at present, this position is not in the budget, and it's in violation of M.G.L. 4433", and he did not see that written document in the packet, or if anyone else had it.

Chair Goldrick stated she wanted to clarify that the board had not voted on those minutes, that they had been tabled for approval until the following meeting.

Ms. Nyman said that she reached out to Town Counsel regarding the matter and they responded that they had replied via email numerous times. Ms. Nyman stated that she had also forwarded correspondence between Town Counsel, the Interim Town Administrator, and the Town Accountant a few months prior; his (Town Counsel) opinion still stands. Ms. Nyman stated that she had forwarded the response to Mr. Watkins.

Mr. Watkins asked why there was no copy provided that evening. Mr. Watkins stated that he had been asking several times to get everything in writing and to have it read in public. Mr. Watkins stated that, "...right now there is a misappropriation of funds." Chair Goldrick stated, "Mr. Watkins, you cannot make statements like that, which are untrue."

A discussion ensued regarding the details of the Assistant Town Administrator position and the legalities of said position as well as whether or not there was a (potential) problem with merging the role with that of HR Director.

Chair Goldrick stated the following, “Ms. Nyman’s last day is nine days from now, and it’s coming up very soon. I’d like to ask the board to take these (packets) home and let’s put this on the agenda for next week. Let’s make a solid decision so we can confidently be proactive with making sure this position is posted and interviews are forthcoming because we don’t want yet another open space in that office. It’s a lot of work, and we need someone to fill it. Is the board ok with us bringing this home, doing our homework, and coming back next week to make a decision?”

The Board agreed.

8. FY24 Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Grant Acceptance – The grant covers the maintenance fees for 6 months of EMD software. The EMD software is a state mandate.

Chair Goldrick asked when the next opening occurs. Anticipated opening for April 2024 – must submit all compliance documentation before being awarded the grant. There were no questions from the Board.

MOTION to accept the FY24 Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant to the Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center in the amount of \$5999.76 by Patty Conway, 2nd by David Reilly. Roll Call Vote: 5-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Reilly voting yes, Campanella voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.

9. Citizens’ Forum – None at that time.
10. Executive Session – MOTION to enter into executive session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (HRECC Assistant Director) and not to return to open session, by Patty Conway, 2nd by Pam Campanella. Roll Call Vote: 5-0 with Conway voting yes, Watkins voting yes, Reilly voting yes, Campanella voting yes, and Goldrick voting yes.