

PERSONNEL STUDY TASK FORCE – TOWN OF CONCORD, MA  
MEETING MINUTES

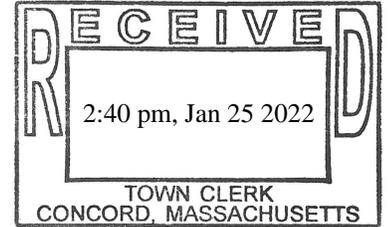
Date: January 03, 2022  
Location: Virtual

Present from the Board: Ruth Lauer (Co-Chair), Anne Rarich (Co-Chair), Claude Cicchetti (Clerk), Paul Macone, Bruce Button.

Others Present: Terri Ackerman – Select Board, Susan Bates – Select Board, Amy Foley – HR Director, Kate Hodges, Deputy Town Manager, Joseph O’Connor – Chief of Police, Karlen Reed – PEG AAC, Mark Howell, Ned Perry, Anita Tekle, John Young.

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to Order by Anne Rarich, Co-Chair at 4:01 pm.



**2. Approval of Minutes**

The group discussed and amended the draft minutes of the PSTF meeting at 4pm on December 20, 2021. Upon a motion duly made and seconded it was voted unanimously by those present to approve the minutes. The group discussed the draft minutes of the 8pm meeting of December 20, 2021 (concurrent with the Select Board meeting.) Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted unanimously by those present to approve the minutes.

**3. Discussion**

Anne discussed the outreach meetings. Anne confirmed that Paul will meet with the DPW, Bruce will meet with police department, and the Ruth and Anne will both meet with the Acting Town Manager. Members suggested outreach to groups like the Library, the League of Women Voters, and the Concord Business Partnership. Many of these meetings would not occur until March, after we have put together an initial draft of our ideas, with the goal of the final draft in May. The items from other towns that were attached in emails were discussed in brief. Bruce and Claude will separately report on their comments. Paul mentioned that he has been looking at other towns similar to Concord to see what their Personnel Boards and personnel systems are like. Anne has done similar. Paul also looked at those towns that have municipal light plants.

It was agreed that committee members should go forward with their questions to stakeholders. Ruth talked about the potential use of a survey. Kate Hodges noted that she sent the link to the Town’s previous surveys to Susan Bates, who will send it to members of the Task Force.

**4. Public Comments**

Amy mentioned that that the letter to Town employees suggested by the Task Force would be sent out.

Mark Howell talked about the broadband business as well as the Beede Center as being important factors in personnel issues. Anita Tekle said that Concord has more enterprise funds that towns of similar size, as well as more non-unionized employees.

Anita also said that her understanding was that the letter going to employees would come from the Task Force and not the Town Manager. Anita also said that any survey would need to be anonymous. Amy Foley noted that the letter will be from the Task Force and is working with the Acting Town Manager.

Susan Bates suggested focusing on the Personnel Bylaw and coming to some initial conclusions before sending out a survey. Terri Ackerman strongly urged the committee in both the letter and any eventual survey, to focus on the charge, so as to not end up with responses beyond the scope of our charge.

Karlen Reed asked whether such communications from employees would be confidential. Terri Ackerman said that previous such surveys can be done confidentially, but at a cost. Claude agreed with a previous comment from Paul saying that any eventual survey should be focused on our specific charge, be multiple choice questions, and not include any open-response questions.

Amy asked if the letter from the Task Force should go to all employees or just those covered under the Personnel Bylaw.

Terri Ackerman thanked all members of the Task Force for serving on the committee. Mark Howell echoed Terri Ackerman's comments about the difficulty of the role of the Task Force.

Joseph O'Connor clarified that the police department is a highly unionized workplace.

## **5. Action Items**

- Anne is continuing her meetings with Personnel board she will contact LWV to see if we can do a joint open forum, she will also call the Collins center to see if a representative might attend our next meeting to discuss survey questions from the task force.
- Ruth is interviewing Select Board Members, CMLP (with Paul's help), and is meeting with Kerry Lafleur.
- Bruce will handle interviewing the library and police department
- Paul will reach out to DPW, the Fire Department, Alan Cathcart, and will put together a list of cities and towns that have light departments.
- Claude will talk separately with interested citizens who attend our meetings as well as continue his work looking at the Personnel Bylaw with recommendations on what by laws should be changed. He will present this at our next meeting.

## **6. Future Meeting Schedule**

The Board re-affirmed the following schedule of future meetings through the end of the year.

- Monday, January 24, 4pm (Virtual)
- Monday, January 31, 4pm (Virtual)

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Claude Cicchetti, Clerk