

At a meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on November 3, 2016:

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Walter M. O. Steere, III, President; George O. (Buster) Steere, Vice-President; William E. Reichert; Edward C. Burlingame; and Steven A. Sette.

Also present: Tim Kane, Town Solicitor; Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Diane Brennan, Finance Director; Gary Treml, Director of Public Works; and Ken Johnson, Building/Zoning Official.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

None.

V. Consent Items - Discussion and/or action

- A. Approval of Town Council regular meeting minutes of October 6th & October 20th, 2016

MOTION was made by Councilor Sette to APPROVE the Town Council meeting minutes of October 6th & October 20th, 2016; seconded by Councilor G. Steere.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

VI. Unfinished Business

- A. Boards & Commission

1. Appointment

- a. Senior Center Board of Directors

One term to expire 10/2021 - Discussion and/or action

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to TABLE the appointment to the Senior Center Board of Directors for the five year term to expire 10/2021; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

b. Affordable Housing Board

One term to expire 12/2016 - Discussion and/or action

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to TABLE the appointment to the Affordable Housing Board for the term to expire 12/2016; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.

NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

VII. New Business

A. Appointments: Personnel

1. Public Works - Driver/Laborer 1

Councilor W. Steere read the following recommendation from the Personnel Director:

To: Honorable Town Council Members

From: Diane L. Brennan, Director of Finance/ HR

Date: October 28, 2016

Re: Driver I/Laborer Position

On Tuesday September 27, 2016, the position of Driver I/Laborer in the department of public works was posted on the town website and an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper. The application period was until October 12, 2016. There were over seventeen applications received. Seven individuals were selected for interviews.

Interviews were conducted by Gary Treml, Public Works Director and myself.

The decision was to recommend Nicholas Charles Bailey of Chepachet, RI for the position. The decision was based on qualifications and additional skill set of the candidates. In his current and past jobs, Mr. Bailey has performed a variety of the required duties of the driver laborer position.

The appointment would be for a Driver I/Laborer with an hourly rate of \$19.68 for a weekly total of 40 hours. This position is eligible for full time benefits as described in the personnel handbook. There is a six month probationary period with incremental step increases occurring every six months until top step is reached. Upon the completion of two years of continuous employment the employee shall be paid the listed contract rate. This appointment is subject to successful outcomes of a physical including a drug/alcohol test.

This recommendation is for consideration at the meeting on Thursday November 3, 2016. The recommended start date would be Monday November 21, 2016.

At this time, the six other applicants are being recommended to be placed on a list for this position until June 30, 2017. If a second position were to become vacant, these applicants would be considered for an opening during this fiscal year.

(End of memo)

Discussion: None.

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to APPOINT Nicholas Charles Bailey to the position of Public Works, Driver/Laborer 1, effective November 21, 2016, at an hourly rate of \$19.68 for a weekly total of 40 hours; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor G. Steere to save the list of other applicants that applied for this position for future use until June 30, 2017, the end of the Fiscal Year; seconded by Councilor Sette.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

B. Appointments: Board & Commissions

1. Historic District Commission

a. Two 3 yr terms to expire 11/2019

Councilor W. Steere stated that this appointment is for the expired terms of Charlie Wilson and David Colantonio. Councilor W. Steere stated the Clerk's Office has reached out to the Chair and both members have indicated they would like to be reappointed.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to REAPPOINT Charlie Wilson & David Colantonio to the Historic District Commission for 3-year terms to expire 11/2019; seconded by Councilor G. Steere.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

2. Zoning Board of Review

a. One 5 yr term to expire 11/2021

Councilor W. Steere stated that this appointment is for the expired term of Daniel Morin from the Zoning Board of Review. Councilor W. Steere stated the Council has received confirmation from

Mr. Morin that he would like to be reappointed.

MOTION as made by Councilor G. Steere to REAPPOINT Daniel Morin to the Zoning Board of Review for a 5 year term to expire 11/2021; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

Councilor W. Steere questioned if there is anyone on the list to fill the alternate seat to be filled on this board. The Clerk stated the Chair was to bring any names available to his board.

- C. Historic District Property- 15 Dorr Drive (AP 10C, Lot 10)
 - 1. Ordinance violation and/or possible remediation actions
 Discussion and/or action

Ken Johnson, Building/Zoning Official, spoke regarding property at 15 Dorr Drive which is in violation of the Zoning Ordinance. K. Johnson stated that his office handles these cases on a routine basis, successfully, but this particular property has been frustrating to him and his staff. K. Johnson stated that he has gotten nowhere with the bank that owns the property and noted that the property management company has changed several times. K. Johnson asked the Council for guidance and advice on how he should move forward. K. Johnson explained that the building is in the Historic District and is continuing to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance. K. Johnson noted that both he and the Town Solicitor have sent correspondence but the issue remains.

Councilor Burlingame stated that this has come up at Department Head meetings for the past several months and he recommended having the Solicitor take legal action against the lien holder and do whatever is necessary to get this matter remedied. Councilor Sette agreed, stating that we have taken all the steps we could possibly take. Councilor Burlingame stated that he does not want to leave this to the next Council.

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to instruct the Solicitor to take legal action to get this situation remedied in the best interest of the Town; seconded by Councilor Sette.

Discussion: Councilor G. Steere asked if there should be “teeth” put into that Ordinance. Atty. Kane stated we don’t have a municipal court in Town so to get someone’s attention we should proceed on a legal level. Councilor W. Steere questioned if there were fines in place and Atty. Kane answered in the affirmative. Councilor Burlingame stated that all that possible actions allowed should be included in the action to resolve this situation.

The Chair of the Historic District Commission, Charlie Wilson, stated he was present this evening to follow this issue and thanked the Council for deciding to take action. C. Wilson stated this building needs to be saved.

Discussion followed on the actions of so called “management companies”.

Councilor G. Steere stated part of the problem is these banks are putting people out of their homes but not transferring ownership.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

VIII. Town Council Correspondence and/or Discussion

1. Councilor W. Steere stated the Council rec'd the FY - 2017 R.I. tax rates for each of the 39 municipalities today and noted Glocester's residential tax rate is tied for ninth highest in the state with the city of Cranston. Councilor W. Steere stated when he started with the town we were in the top five. Councilor Burlingame stated many years ago we were in the bottom third and stated that is due to regional school costs.
2. Councilor W. Steere stated correspondence was received regarding a joint meeting with Central Falls Hydro Electric and FERC to discuss hydro-electric programs for the Blackstone Valley.
3. Councilor W. Steere stated we received correspondence from the R.I. Commerce Corporation with information on initiatives to stream line regulation processes state wide for small businesses.
4. Councilor W. Steere stated we rec'd information from New York on the Spectra Energy pipeline expansion with the goal to encourage the opposition of the expansion.
5. Councilor W. Steere stated Council received the State Traffic Commission's agenda for an upcoming meeting where a reduction of speed limit on Putnam Pike, between Reservoir Road and Adelaide Road, is scheduled to be discussed. Council discussed where the initial request came from for the reduction of speed and acknowledged it is a state road. Councilor Burlingame suggested sending a letter as to who initiated the original request.
6. Councilor W. Steere stated the Council has received information regarding an award program from the Interlocal Trust, the Thomas E. Dwyer Wellness Program Innovation Awards along with the applications to apply for that award. Councilor W. Steere stated this program is meant to promote wellness in the workplace.

IX. Department Head Reports/Discussion

1. Gary Treml, Public Works, brought up “misinformation” regarding the equipment at the Senior Center. G. Treml stated the equipment purchased, at the time the center was built, was all new with the exception of a refurbished industrial stove. G. Treml stated there has been a lot of social media in which people seem to have gotten the wrong information. Councilor Burlingame agreed there is a lot of misinformation on social media and thanked Gary for taking care of any equipment that needed repair. Councilor Burlingame stated we need to ask the Board to plan for a five year equipment replacement plan and asked D. Brennan to note that when the budget request goes to the senior center. G. Treml stated the equipment needs to be maintained and a replacement plan in place. G.

Treml stated there is no need to create all these issues.

Jean Fecteau, Clerk, stated whenever something breaks at the center residents call her with complaints that we don't take care of our senior center. J. Fecteau stated she believes they are being told these things by the manager and it is time to stop that.

2. Councilor W. Steere asked Chief DelPrete what the call volume is for the schools, particularly the region. The Chief stated we are there approximately once a week. Councilor W. Steere stated there are a lot of parking lot issues at the high school.
3. Walt Steere, Jr., School Committeeman, stated the school committee met and one of the items discussed was the success of the pathways program. W. Steere told the Council a person was being hired to oversee this program, at a high salary. Councilor Burlingame asked if this was a coordinator for the whole program. W. Steere answered in the affirmative and stated this person would have a lot of responsibilities, and possibly a six figure salary. Councilor Burlingame asked if there were approx. 60 children in the program. W. Steere stated 61. Councilor Burlingame questioned if the school gets \$16,500 each, was that \$1million projected as revenue in the current budget. W. Steere stated the projection was only for 31 children. Councilor Burlingame stated then there is an extra half a million dollars coming in. W. Steere stated the program, it is projected, will go up around 40% - 50% next year.
Councilor Burlingame asked if the School Committee addressed the correspondence the Council sent, which included a requests request. W. Steere stated it was discussed under correspondence. Councilor Burlingame stated we need to invoke the records request and we should follow up and ask why there has been no response.

Councilor Sette brought up an issue involving an issue with the current Commissioner of Education. Councilor Sette stated that in the past when you offered vo-tech and pathway programs, (if you get that program) you have an exclusive program in your area. Councilor Sette stated that Chariho School District is in a law suit because other communities are starting similar programs that Chariho already offers to keep their students in their own community. Councilor Sette stated Chariho may feel as though these schools are "stealing" their students. Councilor Sette stated the former Commissioner wouldn't have allowed this but the new Commission does. Councilor Sette stated that Ponaganset should be careful because other communities may start their own programs to keep their students. Councilor Sette stated if this happens the implications could be there will be no students for a program we are spending a lot of funds on.

W. Steere stated there is going to be a lot of expense in bussing costs and it will take away from education. Councilor G. Steere questioned who is responsible for the bussing costs and (for example) if No. Smithfield students come to Ponaganset who pays the cost. W. Steere stated, at this time, the school that sends the child has to pay. W. Steere stated we just approved a late bus for out of town students for \$28,000. W. Steere stated it will probably be empty most of the time.

Councilor Burlingame asked if the School Committee has sent a letter to the Commission objecting to this duplication of effort. W. Steere stated he does not know where the School Committee Association “is at” with this issue. Councilor Burlingame stated the School Committee should get involved.

X. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

1. Charlie Wilson, Chair of the Historic Commission, brought up the issue of speed in the village. C. Wilson would like to start the process of trying to lower the speed through Chepachet Village. C. Wilson described situations of speed in the village and stated we must make it safe.

XI. Open Forum

1. Patricia Henry addressed the issue of the regional school districts Pathway’s Programs. P. Henry expressed her concerns regarding issues with the program and asked why the School Committee does not question these issues. P. Henry stated currently this program is not competitive and does not follow the recommended standards in staff, “seat time”, higher costs, and articulation agreements. P. Henry stated the region does not hold any articulation agreements and referenced the Superintendents claim, at a financial meeting, that the Region holds 48 agreements with universities around the country. P. Henry stated these agreements make it possible to offer college credits, Ponaganset cannot do that. P. Henry stated Ponaganset does not offer internships, which would be an important reason to join a Pathway Program. P. Henry again asked why the School Committee does not question these issues with the Superintendent and hold him accountable.

2. W. Steere stated P. Henry is right on most of those points.

W. Steere spoke regarding the speed through the village. W. Steere stated people don’t use the crosswalks, people don’t look when they open their doors, and people speed. W. Steere stated you need to look at this issue both ways.

3. P. Henry stated she believes the Gloucester Business Association should be commended on the Halloween event they held in the village last weekend.

4. E. Lesperance, Victory Highway, discussed the speed issues going by his home and agreed with C. Wilson on the need to lower the speed limit. Mr. Lesperance relayed the issues of speed he has witnessed on a daily basis. Mr. Lesperance stated he would like to see more police patrols.

Councilor W. Steere stated we have about 55 miles of road and we have two police officers on at many times. Councilor W. Steere stated they do what they can and they are aware of this issue.

XII. Seek to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to:

A. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining: Contract Negotiations - Discussion and/or action

MOTION was made by Councilor Sette to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to, R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining: Contract Negotiations, Discussion and/or action; seconded by Councilor G. Steere.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

XIII. Reconvene Open Session (Disclose votes taken in Executive Session)

MOTION was made by Councilor Burlingame to disclose that no votes were taken in Executive Session and to SEAL the minutes of Closed Executive Session; seconded by Councilor Reichert.

Discussion: None.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

XIV. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor Reichert to ADJOURN at 9:13 p.m.; seconded by Councilor Burlingame.

VOTE : AYES: W. Steere, G. Steere, Reichert, Burlingame and Sette.
 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED