**Meeting of the Board of Selectmen March 9, 2021**

**Phone: 669-224-3318**

**Access Code: 220-595-605**

**6:15 p.m. – Interviews with Human Resource Coordinator candidates**

Chairman Patricia Riley called the open meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. in the Donald McKinnon Meeting Room at Veterans Memorial Town Hall, located at 558 South Main Street. In addition to Chairman Riley, Selectmen Joseph Pacheco and Richard Schiavo were in attendance, along with Town Administrator Graham Waters. Ms. Riley announced that the Board was meeting at the earlier time specifically to interview the two finalists for the position of Human Resources Coordinator. She also announced that pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.C.30A, §18, and the Governor’s 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people who may gather in one place, “This meeting of the Raynham Board of Selectmen is being conducted with the Public Body members in person at Veterans Memorial Town Hall and with the general public following the proceedings remotely. Every effort has been made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. For real time access, residents can join the live broadcast on the Raynham Channel, use the “gotomeeting” online feature, and/or call in using their phone. The Town will post a record of this meeting on the Town’s website as soon as possible.” Ms. Riley also announced that the meeting was being recorded.

**6:15 p.m. -** **Ms. Kelly Usher Johnson**

Ms. Usher Johnson was present to interview with the Board. She said she has worked in Human Resources for her entire career in roles ranging from benefits, compensation and HRIS management and administration, as well as more generalist and employee relations focused positions. She detailed her educational and employment background and noted that she is ready to hit the ground running in regards to all programs, policies and procedures for the town. Mr. Pacheco asked, “How would you handle it if your advice is contrary to your supervisor’s?” She replied, “That happens and if it’s a difference of opinion, that’s one thing, but if it’s a risk to the organization, I would be more forceful.” Mr. Pacheco said, “In essence, you would not be adverse to that type of dynamic if it was necessary?” She responded, “No, it happens. People are not always on the same page. I have a lot of experience in HR and I feel comfortable in my decisions.” Mr. Pacheco continued, “We have labor counsel. We don’t have a labor staff person. I would guess that you do not have any direct labor relations dealing with unions?” Ms. Usher Johnson replied, “I have dealt with working under union guidelines and working with folks in the union.” Mr. Schiavo asked, “In two of the positions you held, you partnered with Senior Management and what did that entail?” She explained, “That was a consulting role with management, helping them to achieve their goals.” Mr. Schaivo said, “The HR position here would be wearing multiple hats. How comfortable would you be doing some administrative and some active activity that might be part of it?” She replied, “I would be comfortable with that. I like something that’s hands on.” Ms. Riley asked, “What do you see as the role and responsibility of the HR Coordinator?” She replied, “It sounds like you are looking for a centralized HR person who has the knowledge and expertise and someone who can counsel any employee issues.” Ms. Riley asked how she would compensate for not having municipal experience. She replied, “I would talk to Graham and the Department Heads and also look to network with HR people in other municipalities.” The Board thanked Ms. Usher Johnson for applying and for coming in for the interview.

**6:30 p.m. -** **Ms. Sara MacDougall**

Ms. MacDougall was present to interview with the Board. She said that she has 12 years of experience in Human Resources and she detailed her educational background and employment experience, starting at Nordstrom in employee development. Mr. Pacheco said, “You have a lot of depth in HR experience but none in the public sector and you said this is a good opportunity to switch.” She replied, “In HR, we look to simplify things and there seems to be more longevity in business than in the public sector.” She explained that she would work to create a people-first culture through strengthening employee engagement, leadership development, building strong relationships and working as one team. Mr. Pacheco said, “Typically, HR professionals seem to be more reactive than proactive. Your style is just as much proactive. How do you handle a situation when your advice is contrary to your supervisor’s?” She replied, “By saying this is a collaboration, not just between me and my direct supervisor but by a manager and an employee. We ultimately try to make the best decision for the employee and the business and at the end of the day, Human Resources is a support function.” Mr. Pacheco said, “It looks as though you have not had any labor experience and that is an important part. You would have some interaction with collective bargaining.” She responded, “That would be part of my growth, but looking at collective bargaining would be like looking at any other policy.” Mr. Schiavo asked about building relationships and how that is accomplished. She replied, “The key point is being present and spending a lot of time with employees and dealing with what their HR related issues are.” Ms. Riley asked what she considers the role and responsibilities of the HR Coordinator to be. She replied that she would focus on increasing employee retention through creating and facilitating employee engagement initiatives including effective communication strategies, morale-building events and recognition and that she would support organizational development through training and employee development. The Board thanked Ms. MacDougall for applying for the position and for coming in for the interview.

Mr. Pacheco made a motion to take a brief recess until the normal 7:00 starting time for the regular meeting. Mr. Schiavo seconded the motion and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**7:00 p.m. Regular Selectmen’s Meeting –** with Remote Public Access

Chairman Riley called the open meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Donald McKinnon Meeting Room at Town Hall. In addition to Chairman Riley, Selectmen Joseph Pacheco and Richard Schiavo were in attendance, as well as Town Administrator Graham Waters and Fire Chief Bryan LaCivita. Ms. Riley announced that the Board had just completed interviews with the two finalists for the positon of Human Resources Coordinator and that this meeting, in accordance with the Governor’s Order suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law and imposing strict limitations on the number of people who may gather in one place, was being conducted with the Public Body members in person at Veterans Memorial Town Hall and with the general public following the proceedings remotely. She also announced that the meeting was being recorded.

**Pledge of Allegiance -** Ms. Riley led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Acceptance of the Minutes**

Ms. Riley asked for a motion to table for one week the minutes of the Selectmen’s meeting held on March 2, 2021. Mr. Pacheco made a motion to table, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**Department Heads**

Fire Chief Bryan LaCivita gave his monthly report. He explained that for the month of February, there were 91 fire incidents, 156 ambulance responses, and 56 inspectional service calls. For mutual aid, there were three ambulance responses given; one ambulance response received; two fire responses given and none received. Chief LaCivita also reported on two employees who are out on sick leave. He added, “I want to thank the Board for their work and support for the Public Safety Building. It is appreciated.” For the Board, Ms. Riley thanked Chief LaCivita and the members of his department for all of their efforts.

**Appointments**

Mr. Pacheco made a motion to appoint Attorney William August as Cable Counsel for the Town, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**Completion of Old/Continuing Business**

1. **Discussion and action – CERT Coordinator position**

Ms. Riley read the job description created for the CERT Coordinator position which will be appointed by the Board of Selectmen in consultation with the Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director. The function of the position will be to provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer management and to direct and assist staff and volunteer efforts. The Coordinator will work with Fire Department staff on an ongoing basis to assist in the development and implementation of volunteer-staffed positions. The position will report directly to the Fire Chief or Emergency Management Director.

Mr. Pacheco said, “I approve what the Chief posted for the position and his recommendation for the stipend and his request to increase the budget to offset the amount of this position.” Mr. Schiavo said, “I’ll second that motion.” Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

1. **Discussion and action – Human Resource Coordinator**

Mr. Pacheco made a motion to move forward with making a decision on the Human Resource Coordinator and to appoint Kelly Usher Johnson to the position. He explained, “She has experience with labor relations and a length of experience and also has a master’s degree.” Mr. Schiavo said, “I lean towards Ms. MacDougall.” Ms. Riley said, “They are both excellent candidates. I think it’s important to have a unanimous vote of support in these situations, so if you would withdraw your motion Mr. Pacheco and table this for one week. That would give us a chance to review their applications and interviews.” Mr. Pacheco made a motion to withdraw and take the matter under advisement for one week, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

1. **Discussion and action – Riverwalk, LLC**

Mr. Dan Andrade of 525 Church Street was present to discuss the proposed development. He explained, “I am the Managing Member of Riverwalk LLC. The development comprises 43 acres and borders Metro Ford down to the Taunton River back to Church Street. This is zoned business. It started out as a 55 and older development and, at the end the process, the permit was denied but the roadways were approved. We have all of the DEP, Conservation and MassDOT approvals. So, we had to decide if we wanted to convert this over to a business park, but we decided to contact the State and we got in touch with MassHousing and worked with them. We will construct 138 condominium units. There will be 35 units that will be sold for $242,500 to income eligible households. They allow you to build a much more dense project and families have to be income eligible. The units will all be three bedrooms and have a garage.” Mr. Andrade said he currently has a letter of acceptance from the State, and he has been before the Board of Appeals. He was asked to do a traffic impact study. Part of the project approval would include redoing the lights on Route 44 at Church Street. The drainage calculations were already approved, but they are now under review because there are more buildings than originally proposed. Mr. Andrade noted that he has met with the Sewer Commission to address sewer connections. He continued, “I have built the houses on Church Street and there are many acres that are under agricultural and recreational protection. There will be a dog park, walking trails, picnic tables, and a basketball court. Since we’ve changed to the MassHousing development, I received 100% support from each neighbor who abuts this. The units will all be owner-occupied and Raynham residents will be given priority. There will be a postal stop in the middle of the property.” The Board thanked Mr. Andrade for a preview of his new development. Ms. Riley explained that Town Counsel drafted a letter for the Selectmen to consider which she read: “We, the Selectmen for the Town of Raynham, support the approval and development of the 138 unit Raynham Riverwalk Project as it will provide quality, moderate income housing for the citizens of Raynham and the surrounding towns.” Mr. Andrade explained that if any Raynham residents are on the MassHousing list for affordable housing, they will be given priority. He said he will report back to the Selectmen on the process to apply. Ms. Riley noted that on the town-wide survey that was done in 2019, one of the major concerns was a lack of affordable housing in Raynham. Mr. Pacheco made a motion to approve the letter, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**New Business**

1. Discussion and Action – Animal Control Officer

Mr. Schaivo said, “We are going through a period of change with the Animal Control Officers, and we are looking for a part-time person. We have a very tight budget. It’s $14,000 each for two people. I make a motion to add to the total budget of $28,000 another $9,000.” Mr. Pacheco seconded the motion. Ms. Riley asked, “Would the extra $9,000 be to add extra compensation for two part-time people?” Mr. Schiavo said, “Yes, it would.” Mr. Schiavo said he also wanted to motion that the Board approve a very modest study by the Collins Center for a plan of how best to apply the funds that are available. Mr. Pacheco said, “I’ll second for discussion and add that it not just be for allocating those funds but also an executive overview of the structure of the department.” Mr. Schiavo agreed to amend his motion accordingly and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

**Town Administrator’s Report**

Mr. Waters reviewed his report. He explained, “The General Code Bylaw Project is moving forward. They have begun the review of past annual reports. The Town Clerk and I have been working collaboratively on this project and will keep the Board updated as it moves forward.”

Mr. Waters also reported, “The Finance Director/Town Accountant Search has been posted by the Collins Center. Review of resumes will begin on March 22nd.”

Regarding the Community Compact Best Practices Grant, Mr. Waters explained, “As mentioned in my Friday report, the Town was awarded $33,000 from the State Community Compact Best Practices grant. Of those funds, $20,000 goes toward the recently completed Organizational and HR review and $13,000 funds a wage and classification study.”

Mr. Waters also reported, “Semi-annual sewer bills were mailed out to residents today.Residents should be on the lookout for those arriving soon.”

Regarding upcoming meetings, Mr. Waters reported, “The next regularly-scheduled Selectmen’s meeting will be on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in the Don McKinnon Meeting Room of Town Hall, 558 South Main Street, Raynham, Massachusetts. The public will be able to participate via the GoToMeeting meeting platform or by watching the RayCAM channel on Verizon, Comcast, or a recording posted later on YouTube. The Finance Committee Meeting will be held on March 10th at 6:00 PM at the Senior Center and Online. The Capital Planning Committee Meeting will be held on March 11th at 6:30 p.m. Online via the Zoom Meeting Platform. Please contact Treasurer/Collector Mike King at 508-824-2702 for log-in information.”

**Selectmen’s Report**

Ms. Riley reminded everyone that the Master Plan Workshop will take place tomorrow night as part of the Master Planning process through SRPEDD. Information about the workshop in particular or about the Master Planning project in general can be accessed through the Town of Raynham’s website.

**Performance of Administrative Duties**

Mr. Pacheco motioned to approve the Town of Raynham Payroll and Invoice Warrants dated March 9, 2021, as submitted, Mr. Schiavo seconded, and Ms. Riley made it unanimous.

Mr. Schiavo then made a motion to approve the Police Department Payroll and Invoice Warrants dated March 9, 2021, as submitted, Ms. Riley seconded the motion and Mr. Pacheco abstained. Miss Riley asked for a roll call vote: Mr. Schiavo said, “I”. Mr. Pacheco abstained, and Ms. Riley said, “I”. It was so voted.

**Adjournment**

At 7:43 p.m.,the Board voted to adjourn the meeting and sign the bills with no additional business to be conducted..

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Murphy

Recording Secretary