

**Town of Readsboro
Special Meeting
The Readsboro Town Office
Thursday, November 10, 2016 @ 6:30 p.m.**

Present: Helyn Strom-Henriksen, David Marchegiani, Ted Hopkins, Norman Wilber, Rebecca Stone, Edward Arnold, Larry Hopkins, Lance Howard

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Additions/Deletions

None

Approval of Agenda

Helyn moved to approve the agenda as written. David seconded. So voted.

A) Work on Personnel Policy

Reviewed Draft #4 of the Personnel Policy. Becky reported that the Town Clerk has clarified that short-term disability begins on the 8th day after the reported disability. It was also clarified that eligibility for benefits for full-time staff begins at 90 days from date of hire. Upon research of CTO (combined time off) policies, it was decided to table further discussion about incorporating CTO into the Personnel Policy.

Discussed at great length the paid days off for full-time staff. Lance Howard asked about the performance of the DPW Superintendent and the DPW crew. The Selectboard indicated that the DPW Superintendent and staff are doing well. Lance commented that if things are going well, he would like to see incentives, and for the extra days off that are being requested by the DPW Superintendent, he is willing to pay the extra \$5 in his tax bill. Edward Arnold stated that a DPW position was eliminated years ago and it is not being asked for now. Norm discussed Readsboro benefits in comparison with other towns that do not have Water and Sewer, that are strictly Highway departments. He stated that the request for the extra days would be bringing Readsboro more in line with surrounding towns. Norm is proposing: Vacation 7 days; Personal 3 days; 4 Floating days; and Sick 5 days, noting that the Sick leave is state-mandated. Helyn said that the current Personnel Policy includes 15 paid days off per year, and based on the last meeting, the Selectboard was considering changing it to 17 days off. With the new proposal, the total would be at 19 days. Larry Hopkins offered comments about other towns and said this meeting sounded like a negotiations session. Becky stated that this was an open public meeting and that everyone was and is encouraged to offer their opinion. Ed stated that basically what Larry was saying that these jobs are worth less than other towns. Norm commented that other Town officials in surrounding towns stand by their DPW/Highway staff and gets their support. Ted asked Norm if he felt that staff is deprived of time off and Norm said yes based on the current policy. The Selectboard will take the proposed requests under advisement. No action taken.

The Sick Leave section was discussed with the Selectboard tentatively agreeing that staff would accrue sick leave beginning January 1, 2017 and be eligible to take sick days beginning January 1, 2018. The new Sick Leave Law applies to all staff working more than 18 hours per week. Becky stated as it applies to full-time DPW, the 5 Sick leave days that are part of the total proposed 19 days off, the staff would not be eligible to take any of the 5 Sick days until they accrue it after 1 year. She reminded the Selectboard that VLCT has said it is an option for towns to make staff accrue the sick time before they can use it, but most towns are not doing so. And considering the tenure of the majority of the Readsboro DPW, Becky stated they should not have to wait an entire year before they are entitled to the use of a sick day. Becky

said that based on what was discussed tonight, if a person is out sick, they would need to use a Personal, Vacation, or a Floater day. Other staff working more than 18 hours per week would not be eligible until January 1, 2018 for any paid time off if they are out sick, even though they are accruing it. Discussed capping sick time at 56 hours; if terminated, no pay out of accrued sick time; if retiring, no pay out of accrued sick time.

The Selectboard requested clarification on whether they can request proof from an employee as it relates to the 5 reasons for use of Sick time based on the new Sick Leave law. Becky will follow up with VLCT, and if they are not able to offer an opinion, the Selectboard approved having her talk with Attorney Fisher.

Becky will incorporate the possible changes into another draft for review.

Adjournment

Helyn made a motion to adjourn at 8:07 p.m. David seconded. So voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Stone
Selectboard Clerk
November 10, 2016
Approved November 16, 2016