The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, November 15, 2022 began at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Derek DeBarge, James Gennette, Antonio Goncalves, William Rosenblum and Manuel Silva.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:11
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First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

VISITATIONS:

5:35 p.m. – Nuisance Dog Hearing – six-week revisitation

Mr. Goncalves: This is a continuation of the previous hearing and you all have been sworn in, you remember that you don't have an objection to continue to be under that oath? Alright, Ms. Anderson?

ACO Anderson: So, the device that we were discussing the last time, the ultrasonic device, neither one of them were willing to pay the amount that I found. We found it online a whole lot cheaper, for $30.00. I bought one, handed it over to her. There's not a whole lot more I can do and so that's where we left it and that was on November 1, 2022. I then received a text form Jennifer asking if they had gone away or not because they hadn't seen anybody and they hadn't heard the dog. So, I'm going with the assumption that it's working. I talked to the other neighbors, there's no complaints. So, at this point I feel that this is as far as I can go, as you guys can go back and forth. If the dog starts barking again, check the batteries on the device. If the dog continues barking, I don't think there's any other thing I can do besides direct them to District Court. That's where I am at this point.

Mr. Goncalves: Is the dog not barking?

Mr. Ruggiero: Yeah, I haven't heard it actually since Thursday the fourth or the third.

Mr. Goncalves: Good job.

Mr. Ruggiero: I had plenty of hearing the dog before that but until then,

ACO Anderson: It just stopped?

Mr. Ruggiero: It just stopped completely.

ACO Anderson: Absolutely amazing as far as going forward with other barking dog complaints. This device is literally this big and it was $29.99. It takes a 9-volt battery.

Mr. Goncalves: Perfect.

Ms. Ruggiero: So, I was just going to say, do you think that it's the device because it's just so amazing to me like I wasn't sure if it was like sound proof or something like that.

ACO Anderson: Yes. You won't hear it, it's an ultrasonic device and it's literally right on her kennel.

Ms. Ruggiero: Oh, it's right on her kennel, oh okay.

ACO Anderson: So, the device that we showed you at the last meeting, it had a, I was looking for a device that had a range of more than fifty feet.

Ms. Ruggiero: Yeah.

ACO Anderson: Thinking in my head I was going to put it with you guys and that way you could monitor it more if the dog starts barking, check the battery. Obviously, nobody wants to spend $100 plus dollars. Mira actually found one on Amazon for $30.00. It only has a thirty-to-fifty-foot range. So, it's not very far but it's far enough if it's sitting on the dog kennel. Obviously, it seems to be working because like I said they haven't had any problems which is really great and I'm hoping that we can just move on.

Mr. Silva: Great, with that everyone seems to be satisfied.

Mr. DeBarge: How are you ma'am? Sorry. Is everything okay with you?

Ms. Larose: I'm good. Stay off my property, don't throw your garbage, leave the dog alone and we're good to go. That's it.

Mr. Ruggiero: Agreed.

Ms. Larose: Thank you.

Moved by Mr. Silva to close the public hearing seeing all the participants are happy with the results from the device, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Ms. Larose asked the Selectmen about a drainage issue she has in her yard which the DPW refuses to address. She stated that they have a drainage pipe that goes under the road and into her property and the DPW does not maintain it. She has been told by the DPW that they don't have enough money in their budget to address the issue and that they were all changing jobs.

Mr. Goncalves asked her when the last time she spoke to the DPW?

Ms. Larose explained that she spoke to them 3-4 weeks ago.

Mr. Goncalves stated that they would try and get an answer from the DPW as to what was going on.

6:00 p.m. – John O'Leary, PCPV – Discuss some of the proposed activities for this year's CDBG application

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2022 MAR 21 P 3:03
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. O'Leary: I am John O'Leary. Just to give you a little bit of background, Marc had reached out to our agency a few months ago asking if we could provide him with assistance in writing a community development block grant for this year. So, with that we talked about a few items or types of activities that we thought would not only be in the mutual interest of the town but also would give the town a good shot of being awarded these funds. So, one of the big things to know is that these funds come from the department of housing and urban development (HUD), which then they give down to the state and then the state has a fund that they distribute to communities that are not entitlement communities. So, like the larger cities like Boston, Worcester, Cambridge, these cities get these funds directly from HUD, but the state offers the towns that are not entitlements to apply for these funds. So, that would be what Ludlow is looking at. So, there's three criteria that the grant needs to achieve. One of them is to benefit low to moderate income people. So, you have to prove that to the activity that you are applying for, that that is going to do that. One is to eliminate slum and blights. HUD defines it as an area that is designated or a portion of town that is rundown with dilapidated housing or infrastructure stuff like that and then the last one would be in response to an urgent need, something like a natural disaster. So, I think most appropriately for the town of Ludlow would be to benefit low to moderate income people and so we discussed a few potential activities and I wanted to just take the opportunity to update the board and see how you felt about it before we move forward and begin to develop this application process.

Mr. Goncalves: Last week we got $50 and $70, there were a couple of small grants there, nothing to do with this?

Mr. Strange: Yes, those are different.

Mr. Goncalves: One of them was a community development block grant, correct?

Mr. Strange: No, DHCD.

Mr. O'Leary: So, one of them and I just want to say that we write, our department, we write these on a regular basis, these types of applications. So, we have a good idea of what the state is more favorable to fund and so that is included and was considered in this list. So, one of the first programs would be a housing rehabilitation assistance program. The program lends loans to individual homeowners or landlords up to $40,000 to rehab their homes. Improve their housing windows, siding, roofs and the

nice thing with this is if the homeowner remains in the home fifteen years or more it's actually forgiven. So, it becomes a grant. We're looking at that, depending on how much we can fit into the budget, maybe ten units worth of funds to provide homeowners in town to access these funds to do such things.

Mr. Goncalves: They're zero interest, correct?

Mr. O'Leary: Correct, exactly. The way the loan is structured, it's actually prorated. So, for every year it's actually decreased a certain percentage and if they move before the fifteen years is up the town recaptures those funds. So, that is beneficial to the town as well.

Mr. Goncalves: So, how is it cited?

Mr. Strange: On a lottery.

Mr. O'Leary: It can be, yes.

Mr. Strange: So, we did this in Agawam and it's a lottery. You have ten projects, you solicit applications and let's say you get seventeen applications, you literally invite everybody in and do a lottery and because it's a lean a lot of people get scared away. So, some people might not plan on being in their home for fifteen years after which time it becomes a grant. They don't really want to have a lien on their house if they're planning on selling it.

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2022 NOV 24 P 12:16
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: But the criteria is set.

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: So, you can't make more than their income and probably tie it to some kind of state already level or definition of low-moderate income?

Mr. O'Leary: Yes, exactly.

Mr. Goncalves: And then can it be a third lien if somebody already has a first and a second?

Mr. Strange: I'm not sure how that works. I don't want to speak out of turn.

Mr. O'Leary: So, that would be that program. We're actually going through and conducting a windshield survey right now just to do a general condition assessment of homes throughout the town the DHCD likes to see that to prove that there is need. In addition to that the homeowner does have to qualify, income based.

Mr. Goncalves: Do we have a slum and blight area?

Mr. Strange: Yes, our track is down by the mills.

Mr. Silva: Is this pre-existing or someone that want to develop something?

Mr. O'Leary: This is pre-existing, yes.

Mr. Gennette: This is for landlords? Only landlords or any homeowner?

Mr. O'Leary: Any homeowner. The second activity we are looking at is some type of infrastructure improvement project. So, that would include anything from water, sewer, drainage, streets, sidewalk services. Right now, we are looking at two potential areas of town. There are two census tracks in town that qualify for low to moderate income threshold, over 51%. DHD does have to approve that so as a backup we're also conducting an income survey of a neighborhood, the Joy Street neighborhood and the connecting streets within that neighborhood as well. Just in case, this will give us two different options. If we can qualify those, either way, we are going to have an engineer come up, give us a cost estimate to see what that is going to cost and what needs to be done while working with the Town Engineer or someone from town. Then the next activity is infrastructure planning studies. So, very similar but what this would do is give us a road map that would allow the town to consider types of projects and

prioritize them; for improvement projects for over the years. So, very helpful especially when we're applying for these grants on a yearly basis, to have a document to reference and say hey this is where we are starting, we are going to take it from here and DCD is very favorable of that. They like to see that we're making an effort to organize and make sure these funds will actually be spent accordingly. Lastly, if it fits into the budget, which I should say the amount we can apply up to is $1.35 million this year. So, we have to fit these into it and the last one is some type of park improvement project. We are looking at that as well. The two parks to consider are Whitney Park and then also Memorial Park.

Mr. DeBarge: Whitney needs it badly, inside and out.

Mr. O'Leary: So, those are the four proposed activities that we're at least considering or under consideration.

Mr. Goncalves: Can it be a little bit of each?

Mr. O'Leary: Yes, that's what the hope is. So, once we determine that these areas of town are eligible to receive the funds; that's when we actually go to ask an engineer or architect to put together some kind of cost estimate to give us a general sense of how we are going to prioritize and also can it fit in the budget and what we can't. We are almost at that point, but I just wanted to give you the direction that we we're planning on going.

Mr. Rosenblum: Under the parks, does the golf course fall under that as well or no?

Mr. O'Leary: It may technically but that would be a tough one,

Mr. Rosenblum: Oh, that's not on the...okay.

Mr. Strange: It has to be,

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, yes, alright. Thank you. Sorry. No, the pump house and woodchipper.

Talking over each other.

Mr. O'Leary: I think it is just north of it to be honest.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12: 16
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: So, maybe we have to find that our real quick but that's an easy one because that track was discussed in something else probably in the last six months. It was either a grant or eligibility for something and it was just south of Windsor Street pretty much.

Mr. Strange: Yes, it is right down there by the mills and there is also one I think by the jail, right?

Mr. O'Leary: I don't think that was,

Mr. Strange: Oh, that's not income, there is another,

Mr. Goncalves: It could be West and Cady maybe?

Mr. Strange: Yes, it's another track, I'm blanking, I think it might be a minority track.

Mr. Goncalves: So, what do we do tomorrow? We're all excited, we want to move on this thing and this is just hypothetical because we have to vote but what is our next move?

Mr. O'Leary: Sure, good question. So, we as the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, we do all of the actual writing the development of the grant. We need the input and the approval from the town and with that we also ask for delivery and admin costs. So, if the grant does get awarded, that we will receive funds as well to pay our staff the development and administration of the grant. So, it's pretty hands off in terms of the town's responsibility. We do all of the writing, data collection and all that. We just need your blessing and,

Mr. Goncalves: Is it a contingency you get paid or you're getting something; so, like the attorney commercials you don't get any money, you don't get paid?

Mr. O'Leary: Correct.

Mr. Strange: They don't get paid unless we get the grant.

Mr. Goncalves: Do we have a one in a hundred chance or do we have a really good chance and then what is done if we don't get any money?

Mr. O'Leary: Personally, I think you guys do have a good chance of getting it and that's why we would like to write it for you guys.

Mr. Rosenblum: I deal with the ECD a little bit also and there's money out there that people just aren't applying for. So, it's just being able to find the stuff that would work with what we need in our town.

Mr. O'Leary: Exactly. So, the application is due in early March. So, I would go back and work on that income survey to determine the eligibility of the area since track, the windshield survey and getting the cost estimates together and then I'll come back and meet with you guys and make sure everything is all set, talk about the budget,

Mr. Goncalves: Housing rehab, are you going to go to look at some other communities that might of gone through this and see what type of programs they had put together?

Mr. O'Leary: Yes, exactly and we do this on a regular basis, like Marc had indicated we did it in Agawam but we do it in a lot of communities throughout the area, East Longmeadow, Ware, Hardwick, South Hadley, Hadley. So, we've done quite a few of those communities. So, it would be very similar. I mean it would be the exact same program. The application would be very similar.

Mr. Goncalves: Personally, I'm more excited about all the other items then that because I know somewhere down the line, we are going to have an issue. Someone is going to feel like they didn't get it but I think we may be a little bit of everything.

Mr. O'Leary: And that can change if you do want to take that off the table, we can do that. At this point, from our experience what we know the HCD is going to be inclined to fund, so we want to write you guys a good application and those are one of their top priorities.

Mr. Strange: The housing is rehab is the hook.

Mr. O'Leary: It's not a pretty program, I mean it's...

Mr. Goncalves: But you know what I'm saying?

Mr. Strange: Of course.

Mr. Goncalves: Everything else on that list benefits twenty-two thousand people somehow.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:19
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Strange: We did housing rehab and infrastructure planning. The infrastructure planning was great, it took a look at a neighborhood everything through the subsurface, everything, the roads, the sidewalks. Come up with a plan to use that as a basis for applying for grants and into the future through.... The housing rehab is a different program.

Mr. Goncalves: Do we need a motion to move on?

Mr. Strange: I think it's just informative, right?

Mr. O'Leary: Just informative, but I will need another meeting, a more formal one in January to actually ask for the Board's approval to actually submit the application.

Mr. Goncalves: Fine tune it?

Mr. O'Leary: Yes, definitely.

Mr. Goncalves: Good deal, thank you!

Mr. O'Leary: Thank you very much.

Mr. Goncalves: That's a lot of money coming our way, with the million and then that seventy thousand and the million for the school.

Mr. Gennette: Keep it coming.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:16
TOWN OF LUDLOW

6:30 p.m. – Jamie Tomas, new Director of Facilities & Grounds.

Mr. Goncalves congratulated Mr. Tomas on his new position that he begins on December 5th and asked him what his vision and plans for the town are?

Mr. Tomas stated that he has been with the town since 2010 and he started as a seasonal employee and then became a foreman a year later. With his experience in town and with municipalities, he has gathered a lot of different ideas and he sees a lot of things that could be improved upon with the town in the buildings and grounds. His vision is to make the buildings safer and bit more inviting and the grounds more inviting for the residents. He stated that he has done everything at the DPW from snow management to sewer projects to roadwork and road project. He has a lot of knowledge with the town and infrastructure. He looks forward to taking on the role and hopefully bringing his expertise and knowledge and making things better.

Mr. Rosenblum stated that he was glad to see someone that has been working with the town for almost thirteen years and knows what is going on, much better than someone from the outside. He welcomed Mr. Tomas and thanked him for applying.

Mr. Tomas stated that this position is needed in this town. He has a pretty extensive background in HVAC and worked on a lot of projects through the LEED certified program, which is the leadership in energy and environmental design. He looks forward to bringing his ideas to make the buildings more efficient to save the taxpayers money.

Mr. Silva welcomed Mr. Tomas and stated that he thinks he will be a perfect fit for the job. He also explained that because Mr. Tomas is the first person in this position, he will need to develop the job for himself. Mr. Silva congratulated Mr. Tomas.

Mr. Tomas stated that he is looking forward to the challenge.

Mr. DeBarge stated that he has known Jamie for a long time, and he knows that he is a hard worker. He likes the progression from laborer to foreman to Facilities Manager. He feels it's a great fit and that it will work out great for the town especially with all of his knowledge.

Mr. Gennette stated that there is not a lot of things in place for Mr. Tomas to work off of and one of the things that they are interested in is Mr. Tomas being able to identify problems, be able to follow up and maybe get some contracts in place. The HVAC especially, it's one of the biggest things. Mr. Gennette asked Mr. Tomas if he was going to be able to identify those issues and keep track of them and report on them?

Mr. Tomas stated that he absolutely will be able to do that. He also stated that he has a lot of relationships with contractors in the area also.

Mr. Gennette stated that he wants someone to get on things before they become an emergency.

Mr. Tomas agreed and explained that he learned a lot at the DPW with Kenny Batista and Jim Goodreau being his teachers.

Mr. Gennette welcomed Mr. Tomas.

Mr. Goncalves stated that this position is not sitting at a desk on the phone. Mr. Tomas will actually be out in the field, looking and taking inventory of issues and relaying it back to the Board of Selectmen as to what needs to be done and when. He asked if Mr. Tomas will be carrying a hammer with him?

Mr. Tomas stated that he absolutely will be able to fix things himself. Whatever he can do to help the town and the taxpayer by doing repairs inhouse, he will do that.

Mr. Goncalves stated that once Mr. Tomas figures out what needs to be done maybe some of the employees at the DPW could be assigned to facilities. Hopefully things will get a little bit more efficient that way.

Mr. Tomas stated that a lot of the things that are dumped on the DPW could definitely be reassigned to facilities.

Mr. Goncalves welcomed Mr. Tomas and congratulated him.

The Board thanked Mr. Tomas for coming in.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

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2022 NOV 10 P 12:19
LUDLOW

Jamie Tomas: has accepted an offer to become the town's first Director of Facilities and Grounds. Jamie has been with the Ludlow DPW since 2010 and been Foreman for Sewer/Parks/Highway since 2012. He also has years of experience as a property owner and manager and working in the HVAC industry. As weas the case with the CPO and Building Commissioner, Jamie was our one and only applicant and, fortunately for the town, we think he's a great fit for the position. Jamie's first day as Facilities Director is December 5th.

DPW Superintendent Exit Interview: HR Director, Carrier Ribeiro and I met with outgoing DPW Superintendent, Jesse English, last week to conduct and exit interview. With his permission, we wanted to share some information that he shared with us during that interview.

- The primary reason that Jesse is leaving the town is the BPW's consistent interference in daily operations and micromanagement of employees on all levels.
    - **Some examples:**
    - BPW member(s) call subordinate employees directly to assign work tasks without informing the DPW Superintendent.
    - BPW member(s) will show up at job sites in town trucks and do the work that should otherwise be performed by DPW employees.
    - BPW member(s) micromanage snow plowing contractors.
    - BPW member(s) threatened Jesse that he "had strike one" when dealing with issues related to the DPW's role in a public event that was happening.
    - BPW member(s) told Jesse and staff members that the Board was "up here" and that the DPW employees were "down here".
    - When DPW employees are offered overtime, they ask if a BPW member is going to be at the job site and, if so, employees refuse the overtime.
    - The DPW is consistently out of compliance with Mass DEP and the Division of Labor Standards because the Board delays funding and implementation of DPW Superintendent's efforts to remediate and come into compliance.

- The DPW currently has openings for five PW positions, one Clerical position, the DPW Superintendent, and soon a Foreman once Jamie Tomas vacates his position and also a mechanic.
- The reason that employees are leaving the DPW and the BPW are not able to fill the positions is the reputation of the BPW's overbearing ways.
- The town will have a hard time finding a quality candidate for the DPW Superintendent position because Ludlow's reputation within the public works community is irreparably damaged. The public works community in Western Mass is very small and people talk to each other and know what is going on.
- The DPW issues will not be fixed unless the BPW's authority is removed.

There was a lot more but we don't want to belabor the obvious message that the outgoing DPW Superintendent wanted to convey.

New Website Launch: Lastly and much happier news, the town's new website is scheduled to go live on Tuesday, November 22nd. Visitors to the site will be able to report concerns, search and apply for jobs, find town staff, search meeting agendas and minutes, pay bills, read about town announcements, search the town's meeting and event calendar and so much more with just one click.

Mr. Goncalves asked if the town's website was slowing down the GIS system?

Mr. Gennette explained that one has nothing to do with the other.

Mr. Silva stated that the Board of Selectmen definitely needs to find out about some of these complaints that Jesse English presented because they are Union violations and labor violations. This can't happen and the town could be in serious trouble.

Mr. DeBarge stated that the employees probably didn't file a grievance out of fear.

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2023 MAR 24 P 2:08
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Strange stated that Jesse told him that he did explain to the employees that it was a Union issue but they did not want to pursue it.

Mr. Rosenblum stated that the reason the issue was put on the ballot to disband the BPW was because of these things not because we don't like them. Disbanding that board is the only thing that we can do.

Mr. Gennette stated that public spoke by voting at the ballot box and wanted a BPW to oversee the DPW. So, there's not much that the Selectmen can do. The Selectmen's hands are tied.

Mr. Goncalves asked where they are in getting that on the ballot again or at Town Meeting.

Mr. Strange stated that it is on the agenda tonight.

Mr. Goncalves stated that they will just move forward unless the DPW comes into speak with them and explains otherwise.

Mr. DeBarge thanked Mr. Strange for the great job he did regarding the new website for the Town. Mr. DeBarge stated that lots of people in the town have issues with the DPW. He believes the Selectmen did not do their due diligence the last time this happened with the Superintendent. He believes the Selectmen did not give the precinct members good enough information about the issues with the DPW either. The Board of Public Works should resign all of them. Mr. DeBarge believes that the board members have good intentions but it's just not working. Now the outgoing director says our reputation is irreputable and the issues cannot be fixed unless the BPW's authority is removed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

174. Christina Brown – request to be appointed as a Democratic poll worker.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, to appoint Christina Brown as a Democratic poll worker, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

175. Attorney Carmina Fernandes – request for her client, Armand Gaudreau to purchase town-owned property at 0 Arthur Street.

Mr. Goncalves explained that Attorney Fernandes client, Mr. Gaudreau attempted to get a variance for the property he owns on Arthur Street and it was denied and the parcel is landlocked. Mr. Gaudreau would like to purchase the property from the town. However, he believes this would need to be auctioned off. Mr. Strange will contact Attorney Fernandes to advise of this information.

Mr. Silva stated that the town will need to research the title and find out if there are any restrictions on the property before it can be auctioned as well.

Moved by Mr. Silva, to advise Attorney Fernandes of their findings, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

176. Lieutenant Michael N. Brennand – Ludlow Police Department – requesting permission from the Board to use the facilities located at the Ludlow High School, to include the parking lots, high school sporting fields, cross country course, bathrooms, and concession building, as well as any Town owned facilities and roadways as needed for the Annual Sgt. Joshua D. Desforges Walk/Run Challenge on Saturday, April 29, 2023.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge, to approve the annual Sgt. Joshua D. Desforges Walk/Run Challenge on Saturday, April 29, 2023, and to use any Town own facilities and roadways as needed, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

177. Letter from Mike Parker requesting to be appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals for one year of an unexpired five-year term.

Mr. Silva asked if there are vacancies and if they have been advertised? He also asked if Mr. Parker was the only application?

Mr. Goncalves stated that there are openings on the Board.

Mr. Strange stated that it has been advertised on the website for quite some time and Mr. Parker is the only applicant thus far.

Moved by Mr. Gennette, to approve the request of Mike Parker to be appointed on the Zoning Board of Appeals for the year, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

178. Darleen Randall - request to be appointed as an unenrolled poll worker.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to appoint Darleen Randall as an unenrolled poll worker, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

UNFINISHED BUINESS

Board to discuss and vote on updated non-union employee classification plan.

Ms. Ribeiro: So, this is to discuss the comp and class study that HRS did and started back in 2021. So, everybody should have a packet in front of them. This should be the first page.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes.

Mr. DeBarge: Yes.

Mr. Silva: Yes.

Mr. Gennette: Yes.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:49
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Ribeiro: So, I included the first page This what the comp and class study was based on, these are the positions that the study was based on, only these. So, you know procurement is not in here facilities, there's a few other positions on our classification plan that weren't part of the study and the local building inspector, the part time position and the adult reference librarian was not part of it because the positions were not funded at the time and now they are. So, to answer any questions as to why some positions aren't on here and others are, that's why. Does anybody have any questions about the positions, these are the non-union management and hourly positions. So, it wasn't just the management positions, it was actually all non-union positions okay.

Mr. Goncalves: This is their current pay?

Ms. Ribeiro: No, that is what was given to HRS in 2021 so those rates have gone up and have changed. We haven't gotten there yet. Other to reference what positions were part of the study you really don't need that first page. I was just including it, so you saw that. So, based on the second page is put aside for right now, based on the results of the study you should have a proposed classification plan for management that looks like this. It says Ludlow Mass classification grades management proposed M1 through M8. So, these were the proposed new classes to replace GL1, GL2, GL3, GL4 and GL5 and then the elected positions. So, the wages that coincide with that would be the next page and it looks like this, Ludlow Mass comp rates proposed. So, instead of having, I have to remember the class again and say M1 through M8 but for purposes of this evening, we'll just use the roman numerals that I put on here. So, you have classes M1 through M8. HRS had given us a minimum and maximum range, which we talked about the last time I was here. So, what I did was I took the minimum and maximum and then I just made six steps. Well, it actually is seven, you have your starting point which is a minimum and then I added in and converted that into equal increments of steps to step six. So, someone starts at a minimum, they're going to work for six years until they get to the maximum okay. So, if you look at this is management only. So, if you look at M1 that coincides with class one, that would be the scale for those four positions, assistant superintendent of golf, assistant town accountant, associate assessor, human resource specialist. M2 would be assistant assessor, appraiser, cable TV manager, and operations supervisor DPW. M3 would be adult reference librarian, assistant town engineer, superintendent of golf, town clerk, tax collector, town treasurer, youth services librarian and so on. Is everybody following? Okay.

Then you get to the bottom, M7 and M8, the latter and the higher positions are a little bit less sparse but that's just the nature of the way it fell. So, this is the proposed new scale, so if we adopt these this evening, it'll replace the one we are using now, the union and nonunion pay scales together. This makes much more sense because as we continue to create new positions and reclassify you have all of them kind of lumped together. This was done by department, it's hard to track. I've trained two people in using this and it's just very, this is a better way to do it.

Mr. Gennette: Can I interrupt you?

Ms. Ribeiro: Sure.

Mr. Gennette: You got that Director IT computer services at M6, it should actually be down at an M3 only because that Director of IT is no longer a position we have.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12: 16
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Ribeiro: I left it on there because it was part of the study.

Mr. Gennette: Yeah.

Ms. Ribeiro: I left it on there because it was part of the study.

Mr. Gennette: Well, the position that is for that, that would be in house now in Ludlow is no more than an M3. It certainly is not higher than our Town Planner.

Ms. Ribeiro: Well, we don't, like you said we don't have the position anymore. I left it on here because this is how this was proposed to us from HRS.

Mr. Gennette: I got you, I hear you.

Ms. Ribeiro: So, the other positions that are in IT are on the hourly scale. We haven't gotten to that yet.

Mr. Gennette: Okay. Alright.

Ms. Ribeiro: So, we can certainly, we can now that we're no longer going to have that position we can certainly, take it off. But I wanted to present the findings from HRS to the Board as we received them.

Mr. Gennette: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Ribeiro: So, any questions on the management classification or the new scales that are proposed in front of you?

Mr. Goncalves: Generically, not specific right? Just the idea that,

Ms. Ribeiro: Yes, we haven't gotten into details yet. Okay, we're good? So, then the next class and comp would be for the hourly employees. So, the next sheet in front of you is the Ludlow Mass class and grades nonunion hourly proposed and then you have the scales that look like this to go with it. So, these are the hourly employees. Again, it's sparse, we didn't include any of the seasonals in this. Seasonals are typically minimum wage, anyone that's per diem, temporary we did not include. So, it's your custodians, the maintenance supervisor at the boys and girls club, the part time computer technician, production studio assistant, office assistants, public health program coordinator, youth services assistant librarian, business administrator at the DPW, lead computer technician and also on here should be the local building inspector under the NU non-union twelve. It wasn't part of the study, that's why it's not on here but I did add it to the compensation scales.

Mr. Goncalves: That's the 19-hour a week position that we're thinking about, right?

Ms. Ribeiro: Correct. So, if you look at the pay plan, it has the current grade and the proposed plan. We can call if whatever we want and then we've got you know the steps here so we can agree to go to step six, I mean do you need a seven step. We can leave as is because the scales that we adopted especially for the business administrator do go to step seven, but we can change that if we want. So, the top part of it were the wages that were given to HRS when they started the study, the bottom part of the scale is adding five percent to those non union wages. She didn't make any real adjustments. She didn't spend a lot of time on hourly nonunion versus she really focused on more management. Obviously, I mean I think these positions we can kind of you know figure out ourselves what the going market rate is. So, adding five percent to those nonunion you know takes in and they're going to get a two percent COLA probably anyways next year and then just adding I figured you know a five percent increase across the board,

Mr. Goncalves: And why, five percent for what?

Mr. DeBarge: To bring their salaries up.

Ms. Ribeiro: To bring their salaries up to the,

Mr. DeBarge: Look where the custodians, for example, custodians need to be, their salaries need to be brought up as well as others.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:17
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette: Making less than McDonalds.

Mr. DeBarge: Yes, I mean it's pathetic. We have to, yes. It's a good start.

Ms. Ribeiro: Yes, the problem is, we talked about this at the last meeting. You have your union, you have your union contracts and you have your employment contracts that get looked at every three years, every year whatever the case may be. You have this group of people in front of you that don't ever get looked at. So, they get your two percent COLA across the board. It's been two percent every year since I have been here. We're getting into, we're having trouble hiring people, finding good help because these rates are so low.

Mr. Goncalves: That's what I wanted to hear.

Ms. Ribeiro: And when we do hire them, they say well I'm getting paid less than, like Mr. DeBarge has said you know I could go work at McDonald's for more money. So, I'm going to slip by and do the least I have to and that's not good. I mean we need to think about these people here. We can't forget about them, you know that the two percent non union is just not, we have to have some type of equity adjustment just like we do with the union contracts. We've made equity adjustments in other contracts and if you look at the dollars, I mean a five percent increase on a custodian is less than a dollar for each of those steps. You're not talking about a lot of money. I mean as you get into the higher paying positions on the hourly scale of course five percent of twenty is more than five percent of ten, we all get

that but we have to start, I think doing a better job at looking at these nonunion hourly positions and management that don't have contracts. That are at will employees. I mean we can make is eight percent, seven percent, three percent. I just don't think the two or three percent is enough. I think we need to adjust these rates.

Mr. DeBarge: I agree. I know for me my only question for you at the end of all of this is what's the final number and can we afford it, right because I'm just saying. We have talked about this, I've talked about this, we have all talked about this at nauseum about positions and how we've kind of gotten behind with a lot of our employees and their salary. So, I think it's a good start. I'll say it again.

Ms. Ribeiro: I mean this is no different than taking you know as we negotiate union contract we can do this and take every employee in those units and you cost it out and show you what it's going to look like on paper because it's a lot more, some of those contracts, then the total even of this for all the nonunion. I mean we can certainly manipulate this a little bit but I think we have to be careful we want to be fair and consistent across the board about how we implement things and make changes based on the study.

Mr. Goncalves: All of those positions we just looked at on the previous page are filled right now?

Ms. Ribeiro: On what page are we talking?

Mr. Goncalves: On the hourly pay plan? So, we're fully, fully, everybody; all of these people are working? We're not short anybody?

Mr. Strange: Except for the local building inspector.

Ms. Ribeiro: Except for the local building inspector but again that wasn't part of this.

Mr. Goncalves: Right.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12: 17
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Ms. Ribiero: Yes, except for that one. We have a current ad out right now and haven't had great luck.

Mr. Goncalves: I heard, a little birdie told me you're going to have an applicant in the next 48 hours.

Ms. Ribeiro: Okay, good to hear. So, those are the proposed, so if you adopt these tonight, it would be the new classification plan for non-union management and hourly and the wage scales that go along with them. I mean the hourly ones I will pretty up a little bit more, but for tonight that's what,

Mr. Goncalves: Alright, are we talking about this one or not yet?

Ms. Ribeiro: No, we can. Yes.

Mr. Gennette: So, just for my own benefit here, we're talking about this suggested increase?

Ms. Ribeiro: Well, that's if you bring all of them, all of the non-union, the hourly non-union you give them a fiver percent and bring all of them to top step. That's not going to be the figure. It's on another page. Because some of those people are part time and that's assuming full time. So, I did it on this one.

Mr. Gennette: I see.

Ms. Ribeiro: So, the number actually for based on the positions that are filled, based on the hours that are worked, it's a little over $7,000 increase for the hourly positions.

Mr. Gennette: That's what we're bickering over?

Mr. Goncalves: Seven thousand what?

Ms. Ribeiro: $7,000, that's only for the hourly. We haven't talked about the management yet.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, annually that's $7,000?

Ms. Ribeiro: Annually, but we haven't talked about the management. That's only based on the hourly employees.

Mr. Goncalves: So, what's the $17,521 at the bottom?

Ms. Ribeiro: That's if you brought everybody up to a top step for the year, okay?

Mr. Gennette: But, we're not talking about that.

Ms. Ribeiro: We're not talking about that. That's if you brought everybody up to a top step.

Mr. Goncalves: So, $7,000 is at the five percent?

Mr. Gennette: Look at the last page.

Mr. Rosenblum: Go to the last page.

Mr. Goncalves: I'm getting there, I'm getting there.

Ms. Ribeiro: No, he's good. He's following along.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12: 17
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: I'm actually making believe it's my money so I'm asking questions.

Ms. Ribeiro: Right, so the way that HRS, the way that she presented to us, the recommended pay increases, which she took; that's what we are going to get to next; the positions that were out whack with retail market rate, she bumped them to the highest step. That's what she did. So, last time I was here, we looked at those positions. We started looking at them a little bit and I think it was just way too much presented to you at once. So, we were kind of confused and we didn't, she did not create a scale like this for us. She only gave us minimum and maximum. So, now we've created this and then we can kind of plug in some of the changes into the scale whereas before we didn't really have that data. So, the next one, the proposed management, these are the changes. These were the positions as a result of the HRS study that were really out of whack and needed adjustments in pay. Okay. So, if you go down you'll see the obviously the department, the position, the hours a week, their current grade level now, their current hourly wage and their annual wage. In the green column is their current annual wage, what they are making today as we speak. After the black line is the proposed grade. So, that would go with you, this schedule here that I showed your earlier. The M3, M4, M5, M6, M2 and then it shows the minimum and maximum and the increase to the minimum wage is what HRS proposed and like I just said that is giving, it should say to the maximum wage. So, the increase to the maximum step is what she proposed in that column. The last two columns are the proposed new step. So, if you take the first individual which would be the superintendent of the golf course, you put them at an M3 and you give them a step 6 that obviously maxes that individual out in that class and that warrants the $5800 increase.

Mr. Goncalves: That's the difference between the green column and the new maximum annual?

Ms. Ribeiro: Correct. Not in every case though. So, like in the next positions case, it all depends on where, most of these positions that we're looking at except for one, two, three are maxed out in the current pay scale they're on. So, if they were maxed out on the current pay scale that they were on then most of them, the recommendation was to go to the top step but I didn't do it that way in the last two columns. I proposed a new step to cut down on costs a little bit and then that way it gives the individuals another step the following year. You following me on that? Okay. So, I don't know if you want to talk about every position or you just want to look at them and again this is just a recommendation. The total proposed changes here, increasing to the step, not the maximum as HRS, is a little over $52,500 and then with the additional $7,000 for hourly.

Mr. Gennette: Do you agree with these?

Ms. Ribeiro: Most of them, yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Most of them, interesting, which ones don't you?
Ms. Ribeiro: We do have one position on here that is a fairly new employee that I don't think, I think we could leave alone.

Mr. Goncalves: Special services.

Ms. Ribeiro: The rest of them I will say are tenured employees that have been here for a long time and have not received adjustments and are long overdue. Especially you know, Council on Aging, Vets Director.

Mr. DeBarge: I don't even agree with that proposed grade.

Ms. Ribeiro: Right, again it can change, you can sit here tonight and say no M4 & 5 you know,

Mr. DeBarge: Yes.

Ms. Ribeiro: so this doesn't have to be,

Mr. Gennette: This is a pretty good bump though. I mean I get it,

Talking over each other.

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2023 MAR 28 P 12: 17
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. DeBarge: I mean if we're going to go with what you, I don't know how you want to do this if we all have our own little hooks on it or if we want to go over everyone but. I know you asked, what do you think about this?

Ms. Ribeiro: What do I think about?

Mr. DeBarge: All of this, the number, the total, the five percent all of it?

Ms. Ribiero: Well, I think obviously with the hourly non-union, it's peanuts money. I mean you're talking you know keeping individuals and keeping them happy and retaining employees. I'm not even so sure at the lower levels that's going to cut it to be honest with you.

Mr. DeBarge: I agree.

Ms. Ribeiro: I really think we could even look at doing better than that, but I say bare minimum with the hourly. I mean you are not talking tons of money. It's not a huge cost.

Mr. Goncalves: How many employees are we short in town hall?

Ms. Ribeiro: Short?

Mr. Goncalves: How many people could walk in tomorrow with a good resume and there's an opening for them here in town hall right now?

Ms. Ribeiro: In town hall? Any type of employee?

Mr. Goncalves: Well which ones and how many?

Ms. Ribeiro: In town hall there would only be two positions right now that are. We are working on posting, getting ready to post another one so three.

Mr. Goncalves: Which positions?

Ms. Ribeiro: We've got building, I have a part time admin not on here and then the health department has a full-time position as a result of the health inspector promotion. An admin. It's not posted yet because we're analyzing and vetting that job description right now.

Mr. Goncalves: That was Tim becoming the inspector?

Ms. Ribeiro: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: So, his position is open?

Ms. Ribeiro: Right, but I mean townwide there's other positions. There's quite a few positions open. Here there are three.

Mr. Goncalves: So, what other townwide, give me an example.

Mr. Strange: Lots in the DPW.

Mr. Goncalves: The library job, right?

Ms. Ribeiro: There's a library tech over there, yes. We've been getting a few applications for that. The Director at the DPW.

Mr. Goncalves: I think we're good. We know there's a lot of them over there. Janitorial, janitors were okay and all the schools as of right now.

Ms. Ribeiro: As of right now, we're okay. I don't know about the schools. I can't speak for the schools.

Mr. Goncalves: Jodie's okay down there.

Ms. Ribeiro: No, we're looking for a van driver and an activities assistant part time. We have those posted.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:11
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: People left or they're new?

Ms. Ribeiro: Those are new positions. Other than that, the DPW is where most of the positions are.

Mr. Goncalves: Like just in the last year have we lost people because we didn't pay enough?

Ms. Ribeiro: As a result of these positions?

Mr. Goncalves: Yes, anything we're looking at in general right now that we're talking about. If people left and said hey I'm going to work at McDonald's because I don't get enough money. You know what I mean.

Ms. Ribeiro: I don't recall that specific situation, but I think that we are losing people in other departments. We're bleeding at the PD. We're bleeding at the DPW. We have DPW employees,

Mr. DeBarge: We lost nurses.

Ms. Ribeiro: Yes, nurses have left. The DPW has gone over to another close by town and that pays a lot more. So, they'll probably continue to get recruited out if things don't change. So, I mean those aren't positions that are on here. So, again there are people leaving these jobs because of money I can't sit here and say oh yeah, we're short because, but at the same time there are complaints on a regular basis about you know the lack thereof marketable pay for what people do.

Mr. DeBarge: I'll go back to the custodians. Take the custodians, they take care of the most intimate areas of our buildings and they're paid the same as fast food. You know, we have to get better.

Mr. Gennette: When they get overlooked by the contracts too. You know, we spend all our budgets on the contracts, and we don't leave any money left over for the people that need it.

Ms. Ribeiro: That's exactly what happens, it really is. You know, I understand there's larger groups, there's you know public safety is a huge part of the town but these are department heads. These are management level employees that have a lot of responsibility every day and unfortunately they've

gotten overseen and I do know there's people on this proposed increases that have received other job offers.

Mr. Goncalves: So, just so I know for the elected, there are three elected positions here. So, was the $76,000 or $79,000 a couple of those positions make, was that the same four or five years ago?

Ms. Ribeiro: No. No, that is including the cost-of-living increase that they get every year.

Mr. Gennette: Yes, that's COLA.

Mr. Goncalves: So, it's only been the COLA, nothing else?

Ms. Ribeiro: No, unless they are a step, so you've got, like I said earlier, a couple of people the Town Clerk, the Building Commissioner and the Library Director are still in step. Everybody else is maxed out on the scale.

Mr. Goncalves: Library Director is not an elected right?

Ms. Ribeiro: No.

Mr. Goncalves: I'm just thinking more the three elected positions.

Ms. Ribeiro: No, they've been maxed out, I mean Fred clearly has been maxed out for quite some time, Elsa, so those positions have been maxed out for a while.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12:15
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: The total proposed reclass on this page here is fifty two and change?

Ms. Ribeiro: That's if you put them at the, keep all these positions as proposed at the grade level that's here in front of you into that new step. Now you could get creative and you can take some of these positions and put them to the max. You could reclass some and say oh I don't think that's enough or once we reclass them they're going to be maxed out, we could put them to the next grade level. So, they actually start going through the step scales.

Mr. Goncalves: So, work with me here because I want to follow this. So, this is included in the minimum wage, so we are here,

Ms. Ribeiro: That's what Sandy from HRS,

Mr. Goncalves: and now we go to proposed new step. So, we're proposing a bigger step for everybody if we went this way and now it's an additional this amount?

Ms. Ribeiro: No, no.

Mr. Goncalves: Because here I've got $11,000 for instance here I got $7,300.

Mr. Ribeiro: Right, so the $11,000 was HRS' recommendation. She took those positions and she bumped everybody to the top step. I added the last two columns. Once we created these scales, HRS didn't have these, I created these. So, now that we have these steps I proposed a new step of where these people would go based on where they are at now.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay.

Ms. Ribeiro: Okay.

Mr. Goncalves: What's this number then?

Ms. Ribeiro: That's the maximum of the scale, the new proposed scale. That would the increase to the maximum step.

Mr. Goncalves: So, if we're using this, we are going to be this plus this?

Ms. Ribeiro: Correct. Yes.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, annual plus the last one.

Mr. Goncalves: Plus, the last column and that gives us this number?

Ms. Ribeiro: Exactly as it's proposed there or like I said you can manipulate that as,

Mr. Gennette: Now I need a little clarity? So, what we're doing is were changing the value of the scale, of all the steps we're changing what each one of those are?

Ms. Ribeiro: Not each one, just the new ones.

Mr. Gennette: So, the news ones, which are automatically going to give the people in those positions an increase just by changing because we haven't changed their step. What we are doing is changing the value of that step, correct?

Ms. Ribiero: Not everybody would get an increase. There's only, so we originally had five scales in the classification scale. Now we have eight. So, the people that are staying on the existing scale will only get the COLA still.

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2022 NOV 24 P 12:20
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette: What I'm saying is it sounds like we're doing two different things here, we're changing what the value is of each step and we're doing step increases.

Ms. Ribeiro: We didn't change the value of each step. We created, so class one is the same it coincides with the G.L. two right now.

Mr. Gennette: Okay, so we're not doing, okay.

Ms. Ribeiro: No, not in everyone. No.

Mr. Gennette: So, we're just talking about bumping up steps. I just want to make sure we weren't doubling down on one,

Ms. Ribiero: So, that's a good point because if you look at this one okay. If you look at this last one that just has all the, this has all the positions on it and everything in blue was either not part of the study or is unfilled at this point. That's why it's in blue. So, if you look down and where it says total increase in management salaries and it's $142,278. That's if you took every single position that was part of the classification plan and bump them to the highest step that was proposed.

Mr. Goncalves: Not to where you had the other one. Okay.

Ms. Ribeiro: Correct. This is if you gave everybody on the classification plan a top step, not just the ones that were very out of whack and what was recommended by HRS, which is this.

Mr. Gennette: I got you.

Ms. Ribeiro: But, if you want to you can go ahead and give everybody on this scale an increase.

Mr. Gennette: I like you fight for everybody.

Ms. Ribeiro: Right.

Mr. Gennette: So, as far as our step sixes here that are maxed out, we're talking that there's going to be an availability to go to seven and eight?

Ms. Ribeiro: No, there's only six steps.

Mr. Gennette: Oh, I thought we were doing seven and eight?

Ms. Ribeiro: No, those are the hourly.

Mr. Gennette: Okay. Alright.

Ms. Ribeiro: I mean we could, this is something that Marc and I talked about, I don't really recommend another step. If you get past six steps, you could do seven, something we could talk about.

Mr. Gennette: That's a different conversation anyway. I'm just trying to hone in on this, so.

Mr. DeBarge: It's a lot to unpack.

Mr. Goncalves: I'm personally I can't make motions for a vote. I need to absorb this before I can make an educated vote...

Mr. Gennette: I'm in the same boat.

Mr. Rosenblum: I get it, I work with this stuff so it's basically management would be $142,000 but we're proposing closer to $52,500.

Ms. Ribeiro: Right, this has every single position part of the study, where they are currently at, a proposed, the highs the lows and what the increase would be and the total. Obviously, we are not looking to do that. There's people on here, if you look at this one that there's adjustments the other way, obviously we're not going to do that.

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2023 MAR 24 P12:28
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Goncalves: Exactly.

Mr. Strange: So, it seems like really it's this chart right, this is the chart. These are the positions that were identified as being underpaid right now and the question is how do you, where do you want to put him on the management scale, M1 through 8 and what kind of bump do you want to give him?

Mr. Goncalves: Underpaid according to the study.

Mr. Strange: Correct.

Mr. DeBarge: Also, the hourly.

Mr. Goncalves: Right.

Mr. Rosenblum: That's like it says it's the proposed one, that's proposed looking at everything instead of going over here, which would be another $90,000 is going this is where we would be with the management reclassifications plus hourly. Yes. So, I guess the point was like Mr. Goncalves was asking or Mr. DeBarge, how do you feel where these people probably on the management scale, probably the hourly ones probably need it because they've been grossly underpaid for so long. Just wondering and I can sit here and say and I'm not picking on it because it's what I do, I can see like the golf course superintendents been here for a long time. So, I can see with him, where you are going with saying a max with him.

Mr. Gennette: Do you agree with the value of that position? What they're asking?

Mr. Rosenblum: Oh yes. There's superintendents that make over a $100,000.

Mr. Gennette: So, you think this is worth the money?

Mr. Rosenblum: At a max out at $85,000, yeah, I mean the assistant superintendent maxing out is only about $20,000 less and I know there's assistant superintendent positions out there for $75,000. So, again to the point of Ms. Ribeiro's making is even your superintendent at $85,000 or $86,000 maxed out, there's jobs out there at $100,000. Being that we know he is in town and things of that nature, is he willing to make that move, but I'm just saying yes there's higher paying positions in those.

Ms. Ribeiro: I mean as we look at this too, we can also again, if we look and say okay well, we put them at step six they're going to be maxed out at that scale already and then they're just going to get COLAs and be back where they are already. We can also look at bumping up to the next scale and then that way they're going to go into the next step process a little bit more.

Mr. Silva: The one thing we're not going to understand is if you look at the positions where we had them at level threes, now the level fours and we'll have some at level threes that are staying at M3's and like they kind of flip flop some of them and we're not going to understand the reason that they did that. Why, you know.

Mr. Goncalves: It's comparison to other communities. That's probably where these positions were coming in in other places.

Mr. Silva: Well, technically it should be in comparison to the job description, what the job is. Based on, if you take the superintendent for instance if you take his level three and then you look at somebody else that's a level three, what are his duties compare to others? Why are they a level four and this one isn't. I don't care what the other communities get.

Mr. Goncalves: But I think the study was done on other communities because they had to see what each individual person,

Mr. Silva: But is the superintendent's position for instance a lot harder or is he doing more than say, don't know the town planner for instance and yet the town planner went up to a four where the superintendent stayed at a level three.

Mr. Goncalves: And ones working thirty-five hours and the other is working forty.

Mr. Gennette: Yes, but those are two different positions though.

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2023 MAR 24 P 12: 20
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Silva: I understand, but why the change? You got to have something that if you're at a level three, you have to have something that made your position more necessary to upgrade.

Mr. Gennette: Well, inflation.

Mr. DeBarge: Well, I think a good example of what Manny is talking about at least in my opinion is I've been an advocate for the Director of the Council on Aging because if you at the amount of employees and you look at the amount of people that come through there, 178 the other day I was there for lunch. All of the classes, all of the stuff that moves in and out of there with a lot of interaction with out senior public. I would personally move that to an M5 with the amount of responsibility there but again to you, how do you, I know what my conviction is that position because of all the people, all the responsibility but I think that's why we probably need another...I know I can be back next meeting prepared for all of this but I understand the apprehension to just approve tonight when we see,

Mr. Silva: Just take the building commissioner and the library director for instance. I know they're different jobs but they were both level fours and now the library director went to level five and yet the building commissioner stayed at level four. Really we don't, I don't understand the reason why one went up and the other one stayed the same but if that's their recommendation and they know better than,

Ms. Ribeiro: No, it's based on comparable in the towns that we used and comparable in the job descriptions and the data that each department head had supplied to Sandy from HRS because there's, I can give you job descriptions for every one of these positions were all updated.

Mr. Rosenblum: So, this is fiscal 24 so this doesn't kick in until July 1st, correct?

Ms. Ribeiro: That's an option, right. You can easily I mean I don't know that there's money laying around for these increases to happen now.

Mr. Rosenblum: No, that's what I'm saying, it says proposed fiscal 24, so this would be a July 1st. So, I mean obviously if everyone wants to chew on it, I don't think it's urgent that we do it this meeting if,

correct me if I'm wrong, if we need one more meeting that have everyone have a couple of weeks just to kind of sit down and look at them. I mean I would, me personally would just go down the positions myself and kind of go yes, yes, no because again if we're going to go back to something I can guarantee you right now and Derek can probably attest to this and Tony and you is that I'm guessing that the superintendent of the golf course is working more than forty hours a week.

Mr. DeBarge: No doubt.

Mr. Rosenblum: So, looking at his pay scale and knowing what that job entails for nine to ten months, yes, January he might be working forty hours but during June and July, he's probably doing sixty.

Mr. Silva: Not only that, one of the components on these things and I went through a couple of them where I worked, weather had a lot to do with it. It really had a lot to do with it,

Talking over each other.

Mr. DeBarge: But even that, to your point with that position that golf course is looking like a private course. So, I mean the condition the way it looks, the way it plays, has to be a factor in it as well. I mean if it looked like a cow pasture we wouldn't be doing this.

Ms. Ribeiro: Well, right and these are the things that she didn't go out and walk the golf course. I mean these are things and the level of detail that she is not going to know. So, again this is not, this is the way it's proposed to this board. It's not cut and dry, there are certainly tweaks and adjustments that can be made anyway you see fit. We can make any changes to this classification scale.

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Silva: Is there any narrative to just these positions here, their decision making,

Ms. Ribeiro: No. She gave us a report, which I think you've received but there was nothing specific to each individual position. I mean, I can give you the job descriptions, but there was no...

Mr. Strange: Wasn't it just a numerical comparison, you know these are these ten communities and this is the average.

Ms. Ribeiro: Yes.

Mr. Silva: So, I am a little mistaken in how they did that because the ones I went to, they went to every department, every job and they questioned who you're supervising, how many supervisors, what you know,

Ms. Ribeiro: She did all that but as far as comparing, she didn't compare positions in town against each other. She compared them to other towns.

Mr. Goncalves: And then she came up with a grade probably based on the responsibility level, right?

Ms. Ribeiro: It was a low, high and then she came in with a median average.

Mr. Silva: That's my dilemma, does you know, does the library director warrant a better M5 position than all of those?

Mr. Goncalves: What does the library director do? I'd be curious.

Mr. Rosenblum: I'm sure that's all factored in, it's just a matter of us looking at tenure and things of that nature to see if are they worthy of that class and step.

Mr. Goncalves: I still want to know what the library director does versus the building inspector.

Ms. Ribeiro: Well, I think we need to be careful with tenure. We pay for longevity for tenure. So, I think we have to be careful with that. That's included, there's people that aren't maxed out here and you'll see that their increases are less because of that reason because they're still in steps. So, I think we have to be careful of tenure. We pay longevity for that, but as far as, I mean the library director oversees

quite a bit. He oversees the whole library. He's got the building over there. There's a lot of grant writing. Feel free to pick up the phone and call and reach out to these individuals as well if you have questions. You know I work a lot with the library and there's a lot that gets done over there. Same with the building commissioner but I think if there's specific questions, I can give you the job descriptions or the best thing to do would be to reach out to each individual and,

Mr. Gennette: You know for me it's fair market value. I don't think you can really compare a building inspector to a library director. I think you got to do apples to apples, oranges to oranges. There are positions out there, library directors that you can, I think that's what they went by to get a value for this. You can go to the U.S. Department of Labor and Statistics that tells you exactly what all these are supposed to be. Inflation rates go up and people are supposed to get a fair wage for what they're doing right now. Right now, it looks like they're not getting what they're supposed to get. I like the new numbers, but I want to get my head wrapped around it myself. But we got to compare the same position to the same position because what you value in the building inspector, you may not value in a library director.

Mr. Silva: Yes, I agree, but I will tell you, you get a lot of dissention within the town if you don't treat, and I know what you're saying. I went through it. We had a lot of people and department heads that were completely outraged that this department head is getting this amount and why is that when I do this and this and this and you know what I mean. You get a lot of it. that's all I'm saying. I'm trying to be equitable.

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2022 NOV 14 P 12:20
TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette: I understand completely. I just think that if it's got to be fact based, it can't be opinion based. So, if we have the facts and that's what the going rate is for the position then,

Talking over each other.

Mr. Strange: One last thing. So, this is kind of an impersonal survey of a golf course superintendent, a town clerk, etcetera, all of those positions. So, this is the market range. There are conversations that you need to have or evaluations you need to make based upon the dynamics within the town, right. So, you know the COA director in one of the communities that was surveyed might have been smaller or whatever it is. So, I think there is a modicum of subjectivity to this. Absolutely.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you. So, do we have any questions on this last page for Carrie before we move on? Are we in agreement that we probably leave this alone, discuss at a later date right?

Mr. DeBarge: I'll be ready next meeting. I will do my own due diligence and I'll be ready the next meeting if you want.

Mr. Goncalves: We can put it on and just make sure everybody else and,

Ms. Ribeiro: We could probably postpone it a little bit, but I know we are talking budgets right now too. So, we want to make sure those numbers are accurate.

Mr. Strange: Right, so just not to confuse the issue, if we bumped this to December 6th, on December 20th we are going to be coming in with new positions and re-classification requests relative to the budget. Not to be confused with these reclassifications.

Mr. DeBarge: So, what's your suggestion?

Mr. Strange: Well, I think we don't have a choice but to you know table it to the 6th, but we should wrap it up on the 6th knowing that there's going to be another agenda item on the 20th that's also reclassification, which is not the same as this.

Mr. Goncalves: Very good heads up. Thank you. Good work.

Mr. Gennette: Yes, thank you Carrie.

Board to sign fee agreement with Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC.

Mr. Gennette explained that he was blown away after meeting with these attorneys. They were very proactive and a lot of them have been elected officials as well. One of the founding members was a previous Mayor. They had a lot of municipal knowledge.

Mr. Goncalves stated that James and himself met with the potential outgoing attorney's and he agreed that they were getting away from the direction of being municipal attorney's. They had less people with experience and as Marc stated it was taking too long to get questions answered from them. This new group of attorneys specializes in municipalities. They are involved heavily at the state level with legislation that is happening. One of the founding members was a judge in Newbury Port for several years and a city counselor. They have planning board members also. It will be a huge upgrade. They will be available in person, on zoom or on the phone seven days a week and this will be very helpful to the town. There was three methods by which the town could take them under contract. One was an ala-cart with no guarantees of any kind. One was a bunch of guarantees plus litigation and one was all litigation, you're all in. There was one circumstance which was one in a million chance of it happening. So, we went for the deluxe contract on this and our legal bills stop, whether it takes ten meetings or one meeting we won't pay anymore for anything. Mr. Goncalves also stated that Rose Crowley, who is the current town council agreed with this decision as well.

Mr. Strange also commented that the contract will start December 1st. Initially all requests need to go through the Board of Selectmen's office until he has a handle as to what is going on. He will also send an email out to all department heads.

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Gennette asked if there are current claims being handled by Rose, will she continue handling these?

Mr. Strange stated that she will unless it's a claim that is in the beginning stages then it may transfer over to the new council.

Moved by Mr. Gennette, to approve and sign the contract between the Town of Ludlow and Mead, Talerman and Costa LLC for town council services, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Board to approve a request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Firefighter as a result of an incident that occurred on October 29, 2022.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to approve a request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Firefighter as a result of an incident that occurred on October 29, 2022, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to set date and open warrant for Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Strange stated that they are looking at January 9th, which is a Monday at 7 p.m. at Ludlow High School. The Special Town Meeting has to be at least sixty days before the town election, which is around March 28th. Sixty days before it would be January 16th but that is a holiday. The only other requirement we have is to send out the warrant within two weeks.

Moved by Mr. Silva to schedule the Special Town Meeting for January 9th at 7 p.m. at Ludlow High School, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Silva to open the warrant for the Special Town Meeting effective immediately, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to sign Ludlow Community Center Lease Agreement.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to sign the Ludlow Community Center Lease Agreement, seconded by Mr. Gennette. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to approve a request for to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by two Firefighters as a result of an incident that occurred on November 5,

2022.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to approve a request for to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by two Firefighters as a result of an incident that occurred on November 5, 2022.

Board to discuss and vote to dissolve the Energy Research Committee.

Mr. Gennette stated that the board has made several attempts to get the committee together to meet and the just have not met in a very long time and a lot of the members do not live in Ludlow anymore. At this point, it is defunct. Anything that has to go before the energy committee can be relayed through the Selectmen's office. Most of the committee members were under the Town Administrator's authority anyways because they were employees of the town.

Moved by Mr. Gennette to dissolve the energy research committee, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Rosenblum asked if the town has anyone that shops around for energy prices and delivery fees?

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

Mr. Strange stated that the town has brokers, and he can bring them in but the town would have to pay them.

Mr. Gennette stated that the prior Town Administrator did the negotiations for the energy not the research committee.

Board to appoint Kathy Demetrius, School Administration; Amy Kurtz, LATOSS; and Angela Kramer, Nursing to the Insurance Advisory Committee.

Moved by Mr. Silva to appoint Kathy Demetrius, School Administration; Amy Kurtz, LATOSS; and Angela Kramer, Nursing to the Insurance Advisory Committee, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Board to vote to schedule a Tax Classification Hearing for December 6, 2022.

Mr. Goncalves asked if they will be ready for that?

Mr. Strange stated that he spoke to Joe Alves and the plan is to set it for the 6th and if they are not ready to keep it open for the 20th because it's getting really close to the end of the year.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to schedule a tax classification hearing for December 6, 2022, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Rosenblum congratulated the fall athletic teams. The Monday after Thanksgiving they will get into the winter sports season.

Mr. Silva asked when the town will be starting to beautify the East Street corridor. He believes the town received $75,000 to help with this project. Some of the trees are gone, others are in the middle of the sidewalk and the grates are lifted, and people are tripping on them. He wanted to let the residents know that the town is working on getting this done.

Mr. DeBarge let Mr. Silva know that they recently did an experiment with one of the trees in front of Pieroways. They took the grates out and cleaned up around the tree and added stuff around it. That is one way to fix the problem, by taking this all the way down East Street. There are some easy fixes and those grates are a huge safety hazard. The Veterans Day ceremony on Friday morning had a great turn out, about 200 people. The middle school students writing about patriotism and veterans was great. It was nice to be in a room with like-minded people. Between the Veterans Day ceremony at the high school, that night there was a comedy show at the Portugues Club and then on Saturday there was a pig roast at Vanished Valley and all of these were hosted by our director. A lot of hours for our director and a busy time for him. Christmas tree lighting ceremony in town is set for December 4th. The tree lighting

will be in front of the town hall, there will be stuff in the parking lot, and toys for tots marines will be there.

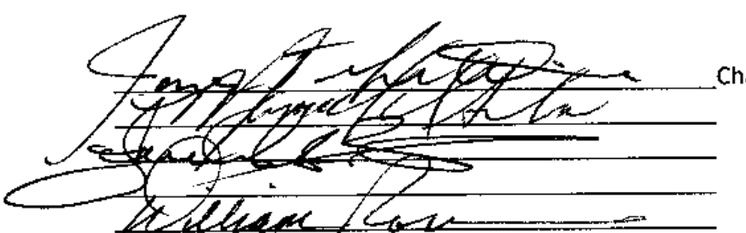
There will also be a parade with Santa and Mrs. Clause. He also mentioned that Wreaths Across America will be happening December 16th.

Mr. Gennette also mentioned that the park benches on East Street are all rotted out as well. He wanted to let the residents know that he knows what is going on but also that the Board is restricted as to what they can do.

Mr. Goncalves thanked Derek for all of his hard work with the town and the Veterans and everything he does in town. Luso Federal Credit Union gave out $72,000 in scholarships to Ludlow High School students. They have given out about $850,000 over the last 30 years since it started. Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, to adjourn this meeting at 7:30 p.m., not return to open session, and to enter into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigating position of the public body, seconded by Mr. Gennette.

Mr. DeBarge, yes, Mr. Gennette, yes, Mr. Silva, yes, Mr. Rosenblum, yes, Mr. Goncalves, yes. Vote 5-0. All in favor.



Chairman

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

All related documents can be viewed at the Board of Selectmen's Office during regular business hours.

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