



Planning Board Meeting Minutes Friday, January 13, 2023, at 1:00 pm – Remote Participation

Members Present: Diab Jerius, Chair
I-Ching Scott
Kurt Spring
Sally Dale, Vice Chair/Clerk
Nicholas Rossettos

Others Attending: Jack LeMenager
Richard Rohan
Ellen Spencer
Michelle McCarthy

A quorum being in attendance, Chair Jerius calls the Winchester Planning Board (PB) meeting to order at 1:00 pm, noting that the meeting is being recorded via Zoom. Roll call of PB members: Dale, Rossettos, Scott, Spring, Jerius in attendance.

1. Job Posting and Position Description for Town Planner:

Chair Jerius: The focus is to review and approve the Job Posting created to accompany the Position Description for the Town Planner (TP). The Job Posting is intended to provide information on matters currently in PB's and Planning Department's current work plans and to give more detail regarding the level of support and amount of time the new TP will be expected to provide to the Historical Commission (HC) and the Design Review Committee (DRC). The Job Posting was developed in response to HC and DRC concerns about the TP Position Description that was rewritten by the PB to be more concise and organized, and less prescriptive at an executional level. The executional-level details are to be included in the TP's yearly Goals & Objectives against which the TP's annual performance will be evaluated.

Discussion with PB and Attendees:

Mr. Rossettos objected to the removal of language from the prior TP Position Description related to the level of support and time the TP will provide to the HC and the DRC. The concerns are:

- how many HC meetings per year the TP is expected to attend.
- the TP's grant writing support for the HC's ongoing survey work grants.
- staffing assistance for Local Historic District Committees and specialized Working Groups.
- the DRC's access to the TP for advice and expertise as needed.

Chair Jerius reminded the PB that it had previously voted unanimously to adopt the current Position Description, and that the intended level of support for the HC and DRC is not proposed to change. He explained that the Job Posting fully confirms the PB's commitment to ensuring that the TP supports the HC, DRC, and other boards as described in that document.

Ms. Scott noted that position descriptions are widely viewed as multi-year documents that capture the job's responsibilities at a high level, above the specific year-to-year demands of the job.

Ms. Dale stated that at the recent Personnel Board meeting, it was noted that a Position Description is not intended to be used as the checklist for an annual performance review, a practice that was cited as a prior PB practice. Annual goals and objectives that reflect the PB's and Planning Department's yearly priorities are the basis for performance evaluations.

Chair Jerius noted that the Position Description is not intended to be a policy document. The PB will maintain the policy of the TP supporting the HC and DRC. The PB seeks to limit the number of

weekday evening meetings the TP is expected to attend per month. The PB also continues to struggle with the Town's significant shortage of funds, in particular for hiring an Assistant Town Planner which would expand the Planning Department's ability to respond to HC and DRC requests for support.

Mr. Rossettos noted that the HC and DRC are not likely to get further dedicated staff support in the town's current fiscal environment.

Chair Jerius agreed and added that advocacy for more funding for the Planning Department would be more effective coming as a unified call from all three boards. The Personnel Board will be meeting on Thursday, January 19th. He identified two options:

- to change the language of /amend the Position Description, or
- to select Mr. Cheimets' (Chair of the Personnel Board) proposal to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the HC and DRC that assures them that the PB's policy decision has not changed.

Mr. LeMenager (Chair of the HC) supported the creation of an MOU. The other HC members would need to review and approve the document.

Ms. McCarthy (member, HC) supported the creation of an MOU. She noted that

- Winchester is a historic town.
- Explicit references in the Position Description to the importance of Historic Preservation to the Town of Winchester will attract a pool of experienced and preservation-focused planners.
- The HC's Historic Preservation Plan (2004) should have been listed in the Job Posting along with the Climate Action Plan, Housing Production Plan, and 2030 Master Plan.
- Town Meeting, in a recent year, increased the TP salary specifically so the TP could attend HC evening meetings.

Chair Jerius noted that the PB has not been aware of the Historic Preservation Plan (2004) and will add it to the list of current Plans in the Job Posting. Also, the increase in salary was in response to a large increase in scope of duties of the TP job since it was originally graded.

Ms. Spencer (Chair of the DRC) also objected to the PB's exclusion of the DCR and HC in the rewriting of the Position Description.

- The work of the DRC has expanded dramatically, particularly with the creation of the Central Business District in which both HC and DRC reviews are central to permitting.
- The TP has rarely been asked to attend DRC meetings but has always been available and helpful to the DRC.
- The DRC and the HC were not invited to review the Position Description when it was re-written last year. (Ms. Dale noted that due to a procedural problem in Town Hall, the rewritten Position Description was not properly routed for vetting at that time.)
- An MOU can be the way to proceed.

Chair Jerius pointed out that the word "expertise" in the Position Description includes by definition providing "consultation" as requested by the DRC. The PB did not intend or believe that the revised Position Description changed the level of support the TP is to provide the HC and DRC.

Conclusion: Chair Jerius will draft an MOU and send to Mr. LeMenager and Ms. Spencer over this weekend.

Chair Jerius: The narrative Job Posting to accompany the Position Description describes the Town and its current needs. The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager and Personnel Board have received this document.

Ms. Spencer noted she had not seen document. (Chair Jerius noted he would send to Ms. Spencer, Mr. LeMenager, and Ms. McCarthy.)

Ms. Dale moved that the PB authorize Chair Jerius to work with the Chairs of the DRC and HC to create, to their collective satisfaction, an MOU regarding the relationship of the TP to the two committees and that the MOU, with the current Job Posting and Position Description, will be approved by all three boards prior to the scheduled Personnel Board meeting on Thursday, January 19th to get the Job Posting, Position Description, and MOU publicly posted quickly. Ms. Scott second the Motion. Vote: Dale, Rossettos, Scott, Spring, Jerius in favor. Motion passes 5-0-0.

2. Adjourn:

Ms. Scott moved to adjourn the PB meeting of January 13, 2023. Ms. Dale second the Motion. Vote: Dale, Rossettos, Scott, Spring, Jerius in favor. Motion passes 5-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Nancy Polcari, Recording Secretary

Sally Dale, Clerk