



LANCASTER BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Meeting Minutes
Of February 17, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jay M. Moody called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to Order at 6:00 P.M. via ZOOM™. Present were Selectmen Walter F. Sendrowski, Jason A. Allison and Town Administrator Orlando Pacheco.

Meeting ID
892 1859 1336

Invite Link
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89218591336>

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

6:00 P.M. Opportunity for public to address their concerns, make comment and offer suggestions on operations or programs, except personnel matters. Complaints or criticism directed at staff, volunteers, or other officials shall not be permitted.

Chairman Moody read the following from Marcia Sands, Assistant Treasurer for the Town of Lancaster. (*see attached*).

Chairman Moody responded that he has attended meetings seeing budgets of most Town Departments and their makeup and have also talked with the Library, the Police Department and have communicated with the DPW and a board member. Mr. Moody further commented that he thinks about what most departments do. The Finance Committee has had most departments explain their budgets, but do not have the Town Hall and the Administration present a budget. He noted with the 5% cut from most departments, that the Town Hall and Administration would present and explain their budget, which is the reason why he wanted job descriptions.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that he had submitted a budget that was in line with the Finance Committee's request and are meeting with Finance Committee on February 23rd.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Review and take action on Regular Meeting Minutes of February 1, 2021

Selectman Sendrowski moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 1, 2021. Selectman Allison Seconded. Jason A. Allison vote Aye, Jay M. Moody vote Aye and Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye. [3-0-0]

IV. SCHEDULED APPEARANCES & PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

V. BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS REPORTS - NONE

- Statement and discussion of the Public Records request of the Town regarding Selectman Jason Allison. *(See Attached)*

VI. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Town Administrator Orlando Pacheco will update the Board on the status of current projects pending.

1. Shirley Water District

Town Administrator Pacheco spoke to the Shirley Water District following the Board's last meeting. Currently Shirley Water District is no pursuing bringing the well on line in or to focus on the reduction of the un-accounted water level. Mr. Pacheco noted that there are still long term plans to bring the well on line some point in the future, but the Shirley Water District was not prepared to meet until they deal with the existing issues withing the distribution system.

2. Lunenburg Water District

Mr. Pacheco reported that the Lunenburg Water District is still looking to expand the withdrawal capacity of its existing well, which is right over the border. He stated that he did ask them to keep in mind utilizing some of the capacity to service parts of North Lancaster not serviced by the Shirley Water District, particularly the homes/businesses along Lunenburg Road.

3. MDI Grant Report

Town Administrator noted that the draft Mass Downtown Initiative Project has submitted its draft for review. A copy will be provided to the Planning Board as well. He further noted that they are hoping to compile any additional comments to the consultant to create a final report in the coming weeks. A copy will be placed on the Planning Department's web page.

4. DLTA

Town Administrator Pacheco reported that the Town did submit a District Local Technical Assistance Grant application (DLTA) to MRPC to continue to support the current 40R Smart Growth Planning Initiative that is on-going. The re-zoning study will utilize some of the information provided in the Mass Downtown Initiative Grant as well as potentially encompass some direction on implementation with the new Housing Choice Law.

5. Cyber Security Audit

The Town received a score of 78% on its cybersecurity audit, 1% below the state average. Mr. Pacheco stated that they have reviewed the results and will be working with the State IT office on the next round of additional trainings being offered.

VII. ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET, AND POLICY

1. Continue Review Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Lancaster and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 93, Local 3720. *(Vote may be taken)*

Selectman Allison asked if there are any changes from the last meeting.

Town Administrator Pacheco noted that the only difference is adding the snow policy in terms of closing the building, noting that always struggled to do without having a clear policy. He further stated that Lancaster Residents do not really know when the Town Buildings are open, as well as calling staff, in which he noted that you do not want staff coming to work in unsafe conditions. Mr. Pacheco stated that in a snowstorm it does allow the DPW to keep the roads open until such a time as they can get to the parking lots for Town and Schools.

Town Administrator commented that that was the big change, referring to the snow policy and the cost of living adjustments that have come across the board for all the unions.

Selectman Allison noted that it was a really good point about putting the snow policy in place and align this snow policy with the schools' policy. Mr. Allison would like to know what other Towns are doing; or is there a better approach the town should consider. He further asked what would be the impact of being closed during a snowstorm.

Town Administrator Pacheco noted that doing inclement weather, the Town would make sure everybody has access to what they can do remotely. He further noted that 80% of residents pay online.

Selectman Allison noted that he agrees with all it, but his concern would if they wanted to change the policy, since it would be part of the Union Contract, would that mean impact bargaining.

Selectman Allison further asked if it would be possible to pull the policy outside of the Union Contract and the policy in the town, but not make it part of the Union Contract.

Town Administrator Pacheco noted that he would have to go back to Union regarding that matter.

Selectman Allison asked that the other Selectmen thought about this issue.

Selectman Sendrowski stated that he thinks they should approve the Memorandum of Agreement as written; noting that the Selectmen are not negotiators.

Town Administrator noted that if the Town does have a snow policy, it would be included in the Union's contract to give guidance. He further noted that he would be happy to go before the Union.

Chairman Moody noted that if the Town already has a town policy that it would not make much of a difference whether it is in the contract or not.

Selectman Allison stated that if the Town wanted to change the snow policy and does it change the policy inside the Union Contract; in which he finds problematic.

Heidi Lamb, Union Steward for the Clerical Union, stated that reason for doing this is it only affects the people that are in this contract, it does not affect the Fire, Police or DPW.

Selectman Allison asked the Town Administrator if he could find out what other Towns are doing, noting that this policy kind of inhibits the Town.

Ms. Lamb noted that the Town of Berlin and the City of Fitchburg does this as well as many other Towns.

Selectman Allison asked Town Administrator Pacheco if it is reasonable to just table this for the meeting and just have a little bit more information regarding this matter.

Ms. Lamb responded that the Clerical Union has been going over this contract for over a year and noted that this will be pushed out again for another couple of weeks. She further commented that they are eight months in the budget, and the Clerical Union has not received their cost of living.

Selectman Sendrowski would like to move his Motion to approve the Clerical Union Memorandum of Agreement.

Selectman Allison stated that he is not going to Second his Motion, noting that he is concerned about the Selectmen's ability to future impact bargain regarding this Snow Policy.

Principal Assessor Deborah Sanders, member of the Clerical Union, stated that in December the Board of Selectmen signed three (3) Union Contracts and this is the last contract with the smallest budget. She further stated that this came before the Board two (2) weeks ago, and the Board tabled this as they wanted the job descriptions to review.

Further discussion on the Selectmen meeting the employees in the Prescott Building. Selectman Allison noted that he was asked by his fellow Selectmen not to interfere with the day to day operations.

Selectman Sendrowski asked the Move the Motion on approving the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Lancaster and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 93, Local 3720.

Selectman Allison asked Town Administrator Pacheco regarding the putting the policy inside the Union Contract. Mr. Pacheco noted that given the discussion this evening, if you approve the Memorandum, he will speak to the Clerical Union about developing a side agreement to remove the policy.

Chairman Moody commented that he has no problem with the policy as it is now and if the Selectmen want to change the policy, they can before the next round of negotiations.

Selectman Allison Seconded the Motion. Jason A. Allison vote Aye, Jay M. Moody vote Aye and Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye. [3-0-0]

Town Administrator Pacheco noted that when the integrations are done with Labor Counsel, he will have it ready for the Selectmen to execute.

2. Continue discussion to set time for open board seats to be advertised, candidate to submit letter of application and Town Administrator to arrange interview and notify chairman of committee in writing of interview and voting date. (Vote may be taken)

Chairman Moody wanted to continue the discussion to set a time for open board seats to be advertised, candidates to submit letter of application and the Town Administrator to arrange an interview and notify the chairman of the Committee in writing of the interview and voting date.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that what he will do is get this on the board and committee vacancy website, the portion of the website where the applicant has an understanding. He stated that what he is trying to do is to bridge the disconnect between what the Selectmen's Policies and Procedures are and what the past practice has been, and what the expectation is when somebody submits a letter.

Selectman Allison stated that in his opinion the right thing to do is follow the bylaws until there's a bylaw change.

Town Administrator commented that he can take the section of the policies and procedures and just put them on the board and committee vacancy portion of the website.

Chairman Moody agreed to have that section of the policies and procedures regarding appointments for Boards and Committees be place on the website.

Selectman Allison agreed that the easiest way is to just follow the bylaws, it's the right thing to do.

3. Review Intermunicipal Agreement between City of Leominster and Town of Lancaster for the Provision of Water Service. (Vote may be taken)

Town Administrator Pacheco explained that the Intermunicipal Agreement between the City of Leominster and Town of Lancaster for the Provision of Water Service had come before the Board of Selectmen a couple of meetings ago. Mr. Pacheco noted that the Town did receive a legal opinion regarding the matter. He stated that over the last couple of weeks they have developed an Intermunicipal Agreement, which specifically addresses the 702, LLC. Mr. Pacheco also noted that the insurance language is clearly spelled out, as it was in the spelled out in the 702 LLC agreement.

Selectman Sendrowski moved the approve the Intermunicipal Agreement between City of Leominster and Town of Lancaster for the Provision of Water Service.

Selectman Allison noted that there was no mention of any structured pump house and just want confirmation on that there's no expectation of something like that.

Town Administrator Pacheco commented that he has not seen the full set of design drawings, however whatever is in place is not going to be Lancaster's responsibility to maintain.

Selectman Allison had several questions regarding if the Capital Group sells the property.

Town Administrator Pacheco clarified some of concerns in the Agreement.

Chairman Moody stated this current agreement is much better that the first one by far.

Selectman Allison Seconded the Motion with exuberance. Jason A. Allison vote Aye, Jay M. Moody vote Aye and Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye. [3-0-0]

4. Discussion and review Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity (Land) Program. (Vote may be taken)

Town Administrator explained that this Program is for the twenty-eight (28) parcel the Town is purchasing from Atlantic Union College (AUC). He further explained that for most part this grant application pretty straight forward, however there are some things the Town needs to do. He noted the main one is putting up the sign, which is a requirement of the grant, however cannot be in place until spring. He stated that the Agreement then goes to the Conservation Commission for their approval and hoping to close by the end of the month.

Selectman Sendrowski moved to approve the Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity (Land) Program. Selectman Allison Seconded. Jason A. Allison vote Aye, Jay M. Moody vote Aye and Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye. [3-0-0]

5. Discussion on reforming the Personnel Board (Vote may be taken) (J. Allison)

Selectman Sendrowski read the following statement (see attached)

Selectman Allison explained why he wanted this on the agenda. He stated that while he agrees with most of Selectman's Sendrowski's statement, he has concerns if they do not hire a Human

Resource Director (HR) in a timely fashion, a planning director has yet to be hired and it has been open for over eight (8) months. He further noted that he does not want to be involved in the Human Resource (HR) stuff. He also does not understand that the existing bylaw for personnel board has not existed for ten (10) years.

Selectman Sendrowski suggested that this agenda item be postponed and let the Town Administrator see what he can present to the Board for Human Resource Director candidates.

Selectman Allison agreed with Selectman Sendrowski noting that he does not want a personnel board and is looking forward to getting rid of that bylaw and getting a Human Resource Director. Mr. Allison stated that he just looking for a stopgap measure and would be happy to postpone any vote until the next meeting.

Town Administrator Pacheco noted that one rule is to make sure the advertisement is up when we are trying to search for an employee, and usually place the ad for thirty (30) days. Mr. Pacheco noted however, that if the position is a Union position, the Union Contracts has specific language into how their advertisements are done.

Selectman Allison asked Chairman Moody that in the future, before a Selectman is allowed to read a statement regarding an agenda item, he would like to have the agenda item that was presented by a Selectman start first.

6. Update from Town Administrator on Lancaster COVID vaccination strategy (J. Allison)

Selectman Allison stated that he has received really good feedback to Town Administrator Pacheco, Chief Hanson Board of Health Chair, John Farnsworth regarding the COVID vaccination. He noted that they are assembling a plan and is very optimistic regarding this matter.

Mr. Allison further explained that he wanted this as an agenda item to a conduit for communication for the board and to speak collectively and communicate to the residents.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that they can communicate certain things, but he felt there is a misconception because one town may done one thing for specific group of people that is somehow the norm. He noted it is not anything the Town of Lancaster did not do it, pointing to the fact that Board of Health members are volunteers and the Town is grateful for their work over the past year. Mr. Pacheco noted that the State is changing their strategy, realizing they cannot provide 351 different locations with the vaccines. What the State now realized is they need to use larger regional sites where they can store massive quantities in one location. He noted that most of the Town are not longer getting the vaccines they were already promised, because of the shift. He stated that there is a letter that went out to the Governor executed by 17 Town Administrators and Town Managers in the region asking for and advocating for regional center at Devens.

Jeff Paster, member of the Board of Health, agreed with Town Administrator Pacheco's assessment of the vaccines' rollout. He noted that what the Commonwealth is doing is very utilitarian aesthetic point of view which is appropriate for the greatest good for the greatest number. Mr. Paster stated that he hopes the number of those vaccine doses are going to increase dramatically as more manufacturers are approved from the FDA Emergency.

7. Discuss possible changes to Tri-Town meeting format (J. Allison)

Selectman Allison stated that he had a conversation with the Regional School District representative from Lancaster in his opinion regarding how to improve the Tri Town Meetings and engagement of the School Committee in Tri Town Meetings. The individual's opinion is his and

the opinion of the Board. Mr. Allison stated that they had a conversation around how could Tri Town improve the engagement of the School Committee. There were two (2) minor points:

- 1.) The recommendation was to have agenda items be discreet, and rather explicit, so the agenda items are not so broad for engagement with the School Committee; and
- 2.) Each of the agenda items be in a timeframe, not so open ended, so the agenda items could not be for forty-five (45) minutes but rather restricted to fifteen (15) minutes or five (5) minutes.

Selectman Allison would present that at Tri Town Meeting.

Selectman Sendrowski stated that was a good idea.

Chairman Moody stated that he thought that was a really good job, he wanted to see more positive things rather than negative items on the agenda.

Town Administrator Pacheco noted that it would help to get more engaged again.

8. Discussion around existing "Annual Town Goals and Objectives"(J. Allison)

Selectman Allison stated this agenda item is the same as agenda item #11, but it is his understanding as part of the Town Administrator's yearly performance is to achieve those goals for that year.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that this correct but noted that he does not pursue goals that the Board of Selectmen do not necessarily support.

Selectman Allison asked what were the previous goals and objectives that did get achieved and does the Board still need to talk about them. He further noted that he does not want to add new objectives if there are old ones that they are still working on.

Chairman Moody would like to see rezoning for the whole town not just North Lancaster.

Selectman Sendrowski would like to see the development of North Lancaster.

Selectman Allison goals for the Town Administrator are as follows:

- . Fill Town Planner role
- . Fill HR rep role
- . Complete all defined duties and obligations as part of the Town Administrator Employment Contract, e.g., Performance reviews
- . Complete all defined duties and obligations as part of the BOS policies and procedures
- . Document and track any outstanding requests by the BOS
- . Ensure all town bylaws/rules and regulations are followed for all town process and procedures
- . Provide an updated status to each of the above items at each BOS meeting
- . Create a plan for AUC and Lancaster's path forward
- . Create a plan for Memorial School and its path forward
- . Document the towns Covid vaccination strategy

9. Ad for Human Resource Director and information on any other town which may be interested in joining Lancaster, and wording of whom the Human Resource Director is to be responsible to. (J. Moody)

Chairman Moody would like to make sure that the position of the Human Resource Director is a shared one.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that he has reached out to many towns and trying to be flexible with the applicants and making sure the town is communicating our long term strategy to them. He noted that there is a lot of potential interest. Mr. Pacheco further noted that the Town of Pepperell has showed some interest in sharing this position with Lancaster.

10. Remote guidelines (J. Moody)

Chairman Moody would like to see this on the agenda, and he did not.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that he did not want to make any changes until after the Board met. Mr. Pacheco will make sure that language is on the Remote Guidelines.

11. Town Administrator goals for rest of this year (J. Moody)

Refer to agenda item #8

12. Employee performance appraisal system evaluations from Mary Flanders Aicardi, Senior Associate Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management. (J. Moody)

Chairman Moody would like to have the Town Administrator do the Employee Performance Appraisal. He noted the Police Chief does an evaluation on his police officers.

Town Administrator Pacheco will be happy to do this.

Selectman Allison noted that this is part of the Town Administrator's job, noting that the Town Administrator administers the town personnel bylaw and policies including the maintenance of centralized personnel records, preparation of annual evaluation of town employees and recommendation of compensation. He further noted he expects this to be done.

Town Administrator Pacheco stated that if this can be done cleanly and believes this will be a valuable tool.

VIII. APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Resignation:

Town Clerk: Dianne Reardon, effective Friday, February 26, 2021

The Selectmen thanked Dianne Reardon for her time as Town Clerk and wished her well.

Chairman Moody would like to see a Search Committee created for the Town Clerk position. He would like to see Mark Grasso, former Selectman, Sue Thompson, former Town Clerk and Marybeth Eugene, Chair of the Animal Control Committee to be considered on the Search Committee.

Town Administrator Pacheco suggested to include a Town Clerk from another Community and at least one Town Employee.

Further discussion about possible participants on the Town Clerk Search Committee.

Selectman Sendrowski asked that they should not pick anyone at this meeting.

Town Administrator noted that this is not on the agenda for this meeting; and cautioned that a discussion of a search committee from an open meeting law perspective.

Discussion concerning not leaving this position open for too long.

Discussion on having a special meeting regarding the position of the Town Clerk.

Appointments:

Acting Town Clerk, Acting Burial Agent and Acting Board of Registrar

Chairman Moody moved to appoint Melissa Pelletier, as Acting Town Clerk, Acting Burial Agent and Acting Board of Registrar, effective Friday, February 26, 2021. Selectman Sendrowski Seconded. Jason A. Allison vote Aye, Jay M. Moody vote Aye and Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye. [3-0-0]

Forest Town Committee;

- Frank Streeter, term to expire June 30, 2021

Mr. Streeter asked that you hold on this and wait for and investigate the new applicant.

Economic Development Committee

Selectman Sendrowski moved to appoint Mark A. Grasso, Jr., term to expire June 30, 2022 Joe D'Eramo, term to expire June 30, 2022 and George Franz, term to expire June 30, 2023, to the Economic Development Committee. Selectman Allison Seconded. Jason A. Allison vote Aye, Jay M. Moody vote Aye and Walter F. Sendrowski vote Aye. [3-0-0]

IX. LICENSES AND PERMITS - NONE

X. NEW BUSINESS *

**This item is included to acknowledge that there may be matters not reasonable anticipated by the Chair.*

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

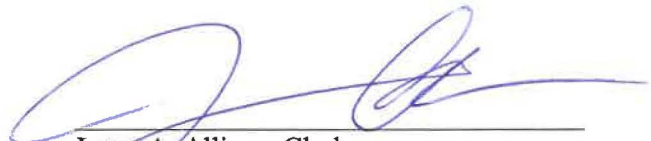
- Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting will be held on Monday, March 1, 2021 at 6:00pm via ZOOM.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, on Motion by Selectman Sendrowski, seconded by Selectman Allison, it was unanimously voted. The Board of Selectmen adjourned at 8:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Rocco
Executive Assistant


Jason A. Allison, Clerk
Approved and accepted: 3/1/21

Kathi Rocco

From: Marcia Sands <redgateinn@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2021 9:59 AM
To: Kathi Rocco
Subject: Fwd: Question regarding Monday nights (Feb 1, 2021) Lancaster MA Selectmen's Meeting

Here is the original letter

-----Original Message-----

From: Marcia Sands <redgateinn@aol.com>
To: wtimmons@afscme93.org <wtimmons@afscme93.org>
Cc: jaymdy@comcast.net <jaymdy@comcast.net>; jallison@lancasterma.net <jallison@lancasterma.net>; wsendrowski@lancasterma.net <wsendrowski@lancasterma.net>; jmoody@lancasterma.net <jmoody@lancasterma.net>; opacheco@lancasterma.net <opacheco@lancasterma.net>; krocco@lancasterma.net <krocco@lancasterma.net>
Sent: Wed, Feb 3, 2021 1:05 pm
Subject: Question regarding Monday nights (Feb 1, 2021) Lancaster MA Selectmen's Meeting

Hi Wendy,

I was hoping you could clarify something for me. I attended Monday nights selectmen's meeting via zoom. The ratification of clerical bargaining units contract was on the agenda. The chairman of the board has requested to review ALL of the job descriptions for our bargaining unit prior to voting on our contract.

My question is this - has this request been made of all the other bargaining units? I do not believe this to be the case. Why do they feel they need all of our job descriptions? It is concerning that the request was only made of our unit which is almost entirely comprised of women (with the exception of one part time night employee) while the units that are predominately male have been signed without this request.

If you have any further details that you can share with me it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Marcia Sands

Statement and discussion of the Public Records request of the Town regarding Selectman Jason Allison

On February 3rd of this year my fellow Selectman Walter Sendrowski made a Public Records request of the Town for all emails, sent and received, by both my Lancaster BOS email address and my private GMAIL address, for the timeframe of May 1, 2019 through present.

First, I would like to say this is a lawful request. Selectman Sendrowski is well within his legal right, as are all citizens, to make a public records request like this. In addition the law does not require Selectman Sendrowski to provide a reason or basis for this type of request.

After reflecting on Selectman Sendrowski's request, I want to say it makes me sad. It makes me sad that one of my teammates thought so little of me as to request all of my emails, public and private, without a single attempt to discuss the topic with me. I'm sad that after my six months in the role of Selectman I have failed to develop enough trust with Selectman Sendrowski that he was either too afraid, or too angry, to ask me something directly. Instead, Selectman Sendrowski chose to weaponize our public records law, to search for who knows what, while in the process likely spending thousands of dollars of the town's money and his money, all when he could have simply asked me, face to face in this very meeting, what it is he wanted to know.

As of the writing of this statement, I have 1,649 total emails in my Selectman email inbox since May 1, 2019. Through the same timeframe in my private email, I have 12,915 emails. With regard to how the law works, the town will need to review each email, which will likely require town counsel's time, to ensure each email is appropriate for public release, does not require redaction, does not contain personal details, nor does each it contain other privileged conversation. This action alone will likely cost the town thousands of dollars. For the next part of his request, me myself will be required to go through all 12,915 of my private emails to determine which are of town business and which are not. For this part Selectman Sendrowski will be required to pay for my time which will likely cost him thousands of dollars.

When this is all said and done, Selectman Sendrowski will have publicly releasable copies of 6 months of my Board of Selectman emails, and about ~1.25 years of my Lancaster Town Forest emails. All for what may I ask? I have no idea as none of this makes any sense to me.

As I finish my statement, I would be remiss as to not take this opportunity to try and save our town, and Selectman Sendrowski, thousands of dollars, not to mention hours upon hours of my personal time. Selectman Sendrowski, let's be better than this. I'm asking you Walter, what is it you want to know? What questions can I answer for you? Thank you.

I have been thinking about this a lot lately and I would like to read what I have prepared. I will submit this to Kathi for the minutes after the meeting.

Gentlemen, I cannot understand why, when we just authorized the hiring of an HR Director, we now have this item on the agenda. It has been made very clear to us by people with substantially more expertise in the field that the personnel board is not the appropriate way to deal with human resource management.

It is clear that there are other, probably more political objectives, with this agenda item. Re-creating a Board that has not met in over 10 years to me says that someone is looking to create a political, non-objective manner in which to deal with whatever the issues are.

At this time I am requesting the Board of Selectmen schedule a special meeting with Town Counsel to help better understand what is the appropriate role and involvement from the Board of Selectmen. Also, we should, through Town Counsel, have a climate assessment done to have a handle on how our behaviors are impacting the people who work for the Town. We have received letters from teachers, emails from employees, and some of the agenda items, specifically with regards to the Town Clerks office in the last meeting, raise a lot of concerns about who and how the board conducts its business and if we should be doing this directly.

If we want to develop a good HR system, lets listen to the professionals and lets understand what the true role of a Board of Selectmen is.

Why hiring a human resources professional would benefit the Lancaster
more than appointing a Personnel Board:

- Hiring an HR professional would give the Town the benefit of having access to the most current best practices, advice, and human resources insights when administering the Town's personnel policies and practices. A lack of current HR knowledge can impede consistent treatment across employees and can result in liability and unnecessary expense for the town.
- It's acknowledged that the town does not need a full time HR professional resource. The possibility of sharing a resource with other towns or municipalities would give the additional benefit of having some insight into the best policies and practices successfully used by other towns.
- An appointed Personnel Board could be subject to actual, or perceived, lack of independent judgement. This could come from loyalty to the Board who appointed the individuals, or it could come from existing relationships with the very town employees for whom the human resources policies, practices, and decisions need to be made. If the Personnel Board had a conflict of interest that interfered with their lack of independent judgement, or was even perceived to have a lack of independence in their decision-making, the credibility and effectiveness of the Personnel Board would be diminished.
- An outside human resources professional would be less likely to be subject to actual or perceived conflicts of interest. This individual's accountability would be to remain current in his/her knowledge, and to administer policies, practices, and discipline in a consistent manner.
- Likewise, if decisions about employee issues need to wait for the Board to convene, discuss, and make decisions, the administration of policies and practices is much slower than when a professional is readily available to review situations and advise appropriate parties on the right course of action.