

*BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, January 26, 2021  
Stow Town Building  
380 Great Road  
Stow, MA 01775*

ATTENDANCE: Chair Tom Ryan, Megan Birch-McMichael, and Ellen Sturgis participated in-person, while Cortni Frecha and Jim Salvie participated via Zoom.

Also in attendance was Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski

At 8:04pm, the Chair stated that in accordance with MGL c. 30A, sec.21 (a) (2), the Board will enter executive session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Michael Sallese, for the position of Police Chief, and then to conduct negotiations with appointed Chief Sallese. Additionally, he stated the Board would not return to open session. Chair Ryan then called for a motion.

Selectwoman Sturgis moved to convene in Executive Session, pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a) (2), to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Michael Sallese, for the position of Police Chief, and to conduct negotiations with appointed Chief Sallese, and to adjourn thereafter. Selectwoman Birch-McMichael seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ms. Dembkoski outlined the proposed contract and informed the Board it was a fairly standard Police Chief contract. She then articulated the reason for her negotiating certain aspects of the contract with Sallese. She discussed that she was recommending the salary she did, after reviewing the salaries of former chiefs, what Sallese was making as an acting chief, and a 3-year comparison of Sallese's earnings. She discussed several other items that were requested by Sallese that she tailored to match the language in her own contract that was recently negotiated.

Selectwoman Birch-McMichael had a question on the section on performance evaluations and stated she would like to see two (2) formal evaluations in the first year of the contract. The board discussed that and decided that the contract states "at least once annually" and that would cover having more than one performed and they would ask the Town Administrator to consider having a review at the 6-month mark to give Sallese some feedback. Ms. Dembkoski stated that wouldn't be a problem, but noted she is very hands on and communicates regularly with department heads and offers much more on-going feedback, good or bad.

In the same section, Selectwoman Sturgis asked that a new section "community engagement" be added as an evaluation items. All board members were in agreement of this request.

Selectwoman Sturgis had questions on the Resignation & Termination section of the contract. She would like to see more notice provided should Sallese chose to resign. The Board discussed changing a 30-day notice to 60 days. Chair Ryan agreed with that decision and stated that there is still language to agree to a shorter time period if need be.

Additionally, in the same section, the Board discussed the severance pay and the request of Sallese to have severance through the term of his contract should there be an involuntary resignation. Chair Ryan asked Ms. Dembkoski what was in her contract, as he remembers this being discussed when they negotiated with her. Ms. Dembkoski read the terms of her contract regarding severance as “severance pay for either the period of time which the Town Administrator remains unemployed as a town administrator or three months, whichever is less.” The Board liked that language and would like to propose that same language to Sallese.

No other changes were suggested, so Ms. Dembkoski stepped out to print up an amended contract and to bring Sallese into the meeting.

Mike Sallese entered the meeting and Ms. Dembkoski outlined the changes the Board is proposing to the contract. Sallese asked a few clarification questions, but stated he has no objections with those three changes.

Hearing no further comments, the Chair asked for a motion to approve the contract. Selectwoman Birch-McMichael made a motion to approve the presented contract, as amended. Seconded by Selectwoman Sturgis and it was unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

The Board congratulated Chief Sallese and Chief Sallese thanked the Board members and affirmed his enthusiasm to formally begin as Chief.

Selectwoman Sturgis made a motion to adjourn at 8:49pm, seconded by Selectwoman Birch-McMichael and it was unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

***Respectfully submitted,***  
*Denise M. Dembkoski*  
*Town Administrator*