

Selectboard Executive Session

Remote Meeting Via ZOOM

Date: Tuesday January 20, 2026

6:30 PM

Executive session in accordance with G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining relating to National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) locals if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Present: Selectboard Matt Lord, Marina Goldman, Richard Kuklewicz, Town Administrator Walter Ramsey

ML Declared the executive Session open at 6:30PM

WR: The purpose of this meeting is to discuss NAGE's requests for individual position upgrades and re-classifications following prior contract negotiations and a filed grievance. The requests were heard by Selectboard designee Matt Lord along with Walter R on January 8. At that meeting, NAGE **withdrew their grievance** at the outset in recognition that management and the union were meeting to discuss their requested issues. All parties agreed the meeting was **not intended to resolve classifications**, but to frame issues and plan next steps. Any re-classification would require bargaining with NAGE. Management emphasized the need to work **methodically and within the contract**, including job description review prior to reclassification.

Position-Specific Discussions

1. Communication Officer – Anna Moore

- **Request:** Step Increase from F1 to F2.
- **Issues raised by Union:**
 - 3 Years of service and extensive training. DOH 10/2/22
 - Performs payroll tasks, serves as backup to Dispatch Supervisor, covers shifts, and acts as a trainer (currently the only one).
 - The person she trained (hired 1/5/25) is now on the same step due to new raises to the dispatchers.

- Trainer Incentive pay had been raised previously but was denied in the last two contract negotiations. Notably was not discussed or proposed in the current negotiations.
- **Cost Impact:**
 - Approximately \$0.78/hour (~\$1,500 annually) to increase step
- **Funding Note:**
 - A 911 grant (~\$15,000) may be eligible for personnel expenses for FY26
- **Deliberation:**
 - AM received a 6.4% pay increase in FY26 due to adoption of new wages. Dispatchers got a significant bump overall.
 - A training stipend (a premium payment offered during training hours) is an alternative solution to the step increase. That would need to be negotiated and would not be retroactive but would provide benefit for the next time training happens. The Board opted against bargaining for a training stipend.

MOTION: by MG To recommend granting Communications Officer Anna Morin a step increase from F1 to F2 upon the next available pay period. Seconded by RK. RK-AYE, MG-AYE, ML AYE. Motion carried.

2. Assistant Treasurer – Charlene Aldrich

- **Request:** 2 Step increase in recognition of long-term service.
- **Background:**
 - 22 years of service.
 - CA is a F4 (\$54,720 annual) DOH 4/12/04. Was previously a 10 on old scale.
- **Issues raised by Union:**
 - Performs critical front-facing and financial responsibilities.
 - Regularly de-escalates public interactions (very effectively).
 - Handles licensing, payments, and paperwork (part of job description)
 - Acts as sole financial authority when Eileen is out (part of job description).
 - Department has shifted from 4 employees to 2 with Charlene absorbing many of the functions- (This has been a net cost savings for the town).
- **Cost Impact (Year one costs):**
 - Step 4 to 5: over \$1,500.
 - Step 4 to 6: additional \$1,583.
- **Budget:**
 - Department stated it could absorb the cost for current FY26. Would hit taxation in FY27.

- **Discussion:**

- Eileen provided comparable data for this position. Most examples are from the eastern part of the state.
- Employee receives an annual longevity payment of \$1,000.
- Board recognized her unique value to the town and wants to be as generous as they can in a constrained fiscal environment.

MOTION: by RK To recommend granting Assistant Treasurer Charlene Aldrich a step increase from F4 to F5 upon the next available pay period. Seconded by MG. RK- AYE, MG- AYE, ML AYE. Motion carried.

3. Dispatch Supervisor – Marsha Beckwith

- **Request:** Reclassification from Grade E to Grade D or restructuring of duties.
- **Key Issues raised by Union**
 - Performs **two distinct roles:** Dispatch Supervisor and Administrative Assistant to the Chief.
 - Has temporarily assumed additional duties following staffing changes (Vacant Lieutenant and transition to new Police Chief).
 - Handles payroll, accounting, IT coordination during critical incidents, and departmental management.
 - Has secured and managed over \$400,000 in grants over 20 years.
- **Comparative Data:**
 - Provided examples from other towns (Deerfield, Hopkinton, Greenfield) showing comparable or higher compensation for less complex roles.
- **Management Response:**
 - Acknowledged the role combines multiple jobs.
 - Concern that adjusting grade/step alone would not solve long-term structural issues.
 - Suggested re-examining the job description or separating roles.
 - Chief is one month onto the job and still is figuring out what he envisions the structure of the department to be. The Selectboard wants to see how this position fits into his vision.
- **Employee Position:**
 - Marsha stated she does not wish to continue indefinitely in the combined role and would prefer to remain in an administrative capacity if restructuring occurs.

- **Discussion:** 5% temporary out of duty pay for FY26 would cost about \$2,000 and could be covered by the 911 grant. Town Accountant to calculate the actual expense.

MOTION: by MG To recommend granting Dispatch Supervisor Marsha Beckwith 5% out of grade pay pursuant to NAGE CBA Article 17 Section C for the period 7/1/2025 to 12/31/2025. Seconded by RK. RK- AYE, MG- AYE, ML AYE. Motion carried.

MOTION: by RK to designate Marina Goldman as the Selectboard designee to advance discussion with Chief Haskins about drafting separate job descriptions for the Dispatch Manager and Office Administrator. Seconded by MG. RK- AYE, MG- AYE, ML AYE. Motion carried.

4. Assistant Planner –Suzanne Lomanto

- **Request:** Revise title, job description and move from grade F to E
- **Concerns raised by Union:**
 - Current job description overemphasizes administrative tasks and understates grant management, program development, and economic development impacts.
 - Role functions as an arts and culture/economic development position, not merely administrative support.
 - Wage study compared to Planners, not Cultural Directors
- **Evidence Presented:**
 - Comparative wage research showing she earns ~\$11/hour less than similar roles in Western MA. (compared to planners)
 - Documentation of grants secured and economic indicators such as meals tax, Airbnb tax growth (indirect correlation to position).
 - SL is currently a F4 \$54,720 Annual. DOH 7/9/18.
- **Management Response:**
 - Agreement that the current job description needs adjustment
 - Open to a title change
 - Open question whether the role should remain at Grade F or be reclassified as a higher-level/director-type position.
 - Acknowledged delays in the process (approximately 15 months).
- **Urgency:**
 - Suzanne stated that without resolution, she cannot continue delivering the same level of programming.
- **Next Step Identified:**

- Collaborative rewriting of the job description prior to classification decisions.

Discussion:

- Could potentially trigger a claim for other Dept Head "Assistants" to be regraded. This would not be consistent with the recommendations of the wage and class study.
- Grade E's include DPW Office Admin who administers a multimillion dollar budget, ch 90 funds, and 22+ employees and Dispatch Supervisor helps administer a \$450K budget and 5 employees and the 911 grant.
- Assistant Planner currently oversees no employees or committees and handles a \$15K grant (Cultural District) and various small grants.
- SL's Comparison communities are larger (Easthampton 16K and Noho 30K). The top of the E scale (\$33.83 hourly) meets what the Easthampton Cultural Director currently makes (\$33.76 hourly).
- Questions remains about workload of administrative workload of the Planning Department.

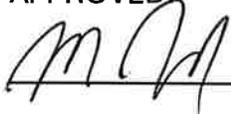
MOTION: by RK to designate Matt Lord as the Selectboard designee to advance discussion with Suzanne Lomanto about updating job description and title for the Assistant Planner position. Seconded by MG. RK-AYE, MG-AYE, ML AYE. Motion carried.

Board directed WR to place the approved re-grading on the next selectboard agenda under personnel board matters.

MOTION: by RK to close the executive session. Seconded by MG. RK-AYE, MG-AYE, ML AYE. Motion carried.

Executive Session adjourned 7:52PM

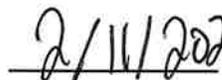
APPROVED:

 Lord

Release to the Public:

Yes

Not Yet

 Date