



TOWN OF NORTON
SELECT BOARD
MUNICIPAL CENTER
70 EAST MAIN STREET
NORTON, MA 02766

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Select Board
Meeting Minutes
EXECUTIVE SESSION
May 5, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The May 5, 2021, Executive Session of the Select Board was called to order by Mr. Jack Conway, at 6:14 P.M., held remotely (Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88047022644>; Phone: +1 646-558-8656; Meeting ID: 880 4702 2644 Passcode: 820225).

ROLL CALL: Mr. Jack Conway, Mr. Michael Toole, Ms. Renee Deley, Ms. Megan Artz and Ms. Christine Deveau were present.

1. To discuss strategy with respect to negotiations with non-union personnel, i.e., Town Manager pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a)(2).

Mr. Toole spoke to eight of twelve direct reports under the Town Manager to understand their jobs. Reported that Town Manager has inconsistent reviews, no goals for direct reports ever set in writing, and does not review many direct reports. When Town Manager and direct reports have meetings, they are not considered reviews and only occur when discussing budgets. Town Manager has a tone of ridicule towards others and created an unsafe work environment. Mr. Toole also stated that the town needs a Human Resources representative because right now, there is no safe place for employees to discuss issues. He stated that the current Town Manager would make a great Assistant Town Manager and he is not looking at the big picture for the town.

Mr. Conway stated that a hostile, toxic work environment was created, not necessarily by the Town Manager directly, but also from individuals that the Town Manager brought in to work under him. He stated that the Town Manager interacts differently with male and female employees, his management style is a liability, and selectively chooses what information to share with departments rather than share all the information that is known. Mr. Conway stated that this has negatively impacted the relationship with the town.

Ms. Deley stated that she personally experienced an issue in regard to the Reed & Barton in which the Town Manager did not disclose facts about the level of contamination and potential significant costs to the town that he learned months earlier. She feels that the Town Manager in that situation was not looking out for the best interest of the town and made other boards and commissions look untrustworthy. Ms. Deley also stated that information is requested before a meeting in order to be fully informed for discussions and Town Manager does not get information in a timely manner to be

prepared. She stated that the Town Manager is supposed to be representing the Select Board and does not feel that he is doing that part of his job. Ms. Deley stated that we are living in a time where revenue is unknown and has requested previously that she wants to see a five year projection for the town, yet she has not received this projection from the Town Manager. She also stated that the Town Manager fosters the “municipality versus school” tension.

Mr. Conway stated that he cannot trust what the Town Manager is saying in Finance Committee meetings without the Select Board being present. He feels that the facts are not consistent with all meetings and across all boards.

Ms. Deley stated that she feels the Town Manager is targeting employees who do not comply with him and his work style. She stated that multiple employees have complaints about the Town Manager but do not have a safe place to go to express these issues.

Mr. Toole stated that the Town Manager has a lack of empathy towards town officials and employees.

Ms. Deley stated that there was an issue about raises with a department head at a Finance Committee meeting that led to bad relations and false information. She stated that the Town Manager creates constant roadblocks that slow things getting done in the town. For the pandemic, there was no support initially from the Board of Health and Town Manager regarding getting employees fully remote and running meetings remotely. Ms. Deley also stated that when employees asked to do a hybrid working situation, the Town Manager refused this option and required employees to return back to work in the office full time. She stated that the Town Manager became more responsive since the Select Board’s review.

Ms. Artz stated that since she started in the pandemic and has not been on the board long enough, she does not feel that she can give an opinion or make a decision on the Town Manager’s job future. She stated that she has been on both the receiving end and has delivered bad news. She stated that there needs to be clear goals or else people will not function properly. She also feels that she was never properly introduced to town government.

Mr. Toole stated that the Town Manager should be setting own goals. He stated that the Town Manager is only looking at the present moment not into the future.

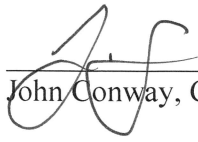
Mr. Conway stated that the Town Manager did not send his personal review until after the Select Board conducted their review.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Ms. Renee Deley to adjourn 7:09 P.M. Seconded by Mr. Toole. Vote: Ms. Deveau – Yes; Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conwy – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

Respectfully Submitted by: Christine Deveau, Clerk

**SELECT BOARD
EXECUTIVE MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 5, 2021**

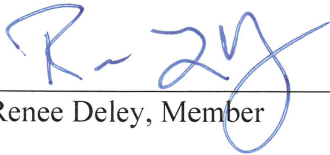


John Conway, Chair

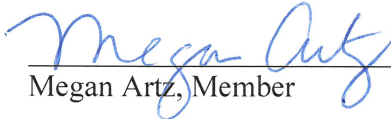
Michael Toole, Vice-Chair



Christine Deveau, Clerk



Renee Deley, Member



Megan Artz, Member

Minutes Approved by Board on: April 27, 2022