

TOWN OF HOLLISTON STIPEND COMMITTEE

12/14/2020

6:00pm -7:14PM – Remote meeting with Select Board

Stipend Committee meeting called to order at 7:14 PM by Chair Joan Shaughnessy.

Present: Shelley Bochner, Tom Dumas, Erica Plunkett, Joan Shaughnessy, Daniel Whynot,

Also Present: Justin Keast (Town IT department)

Approval of Minutes:

Chair performed roll call. All accepted minutes from 11/5/20

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Discussion of Select Board Feedback

Our committee discussed a comment from the Select Board that perhaps we could offer a tax break instead of a stipend. Daniel Whynot reminded members that renters would not be eligible. Joan Shaughnessy asked whether we would need the legislature to allow that. Daniel Whynot remarked that the Board of Assessors determine property tax values and it would not look good to offer them a tax break.

Tom Dumas stated that no committee that he knows of requires meetings during daytime working hours other than the Board of Assessors.

Joan Shaughnessy noted that the Assessors require technical knowledge (a week of classes away from home as well as passing grade on an exam). This requires that they be either self employed, underemployed or have a flexible schedule.

Discussion of next steps:

Joan Shaughnessy will construct a survey to send to the Select Board and the Board of Assessors in Holliston asking:

- 1) Your elected position entitles you to a stipend from the Town. Was the existence of this stipend an incentive to your running for office?
- 2) If the current stipend in place was suspended, would it impact your decision to run for re-election?
- 3) What differentiates the Board/Committee on which you serve that could render it appropriate for a stipend from the Town?
- 4) Do you believe the existence of a stipend influences potential candidates to run for office? Why or why not?

Joan Shaughnessy will also outline a script that we will ask Travis Ahern to send to the towns that we researched. The email should go only to the Town Administrator of each of these towns.

- 1) Does your municipality offer stipends to any appointed or elected officials?
- 2) If your Town offers stipends, to which Committees/Boards are they offered?
- 3) If comfortable, will you share the amount of said stipends to each Committee/Board member?
- 4) If your Town offers stipends, do you believe the availability of the stipend impacts the fulfillment of those roles, i.e., serve as incentive to volunteer?
- 5) Are any of your elected or appointed volunteers offered benefits other than a stipend, i.e., health insurance?
- 6) Does your municipality have an elected or appointed volunteer Board of Assessors (with or without stipend).

- 7) If your Town does not offer stipends, did it ever, i.e., is there a history of stipends that was at one point rescinded?
- 8) If your Town has a history of offering stipends which no longer apply, did you/the Town notice an impact on candidates running for office/agree to appointments in those roles when the stipend was no longer offered?
- 9) Does your Town currently/have a history of unfilled elected/appointed positions?
- 10) Does the lack of volunteers on Boards/Committee impact your job?

Joan Shaughnessy will call the Holliston Assessor to ask about the role of the Board and what is her knowledge of other towns.

Joah Shaughnessy will have information for Travis Ahern by Wednesday Dec 16th.

We ask that all recipients answer our questions by Monday January 4th.

Tom Dumas recommended that the letter that Travis Ahern send to other towns states "if additional data is necessary you may be contacted by someone from the Stipend Committee". Our names would be printed at the bottom of this correspondence.

Meeting Schedule:

Joan Shaughnessy proposed a remote meeting for 7:00PM on Thursday January 7th 2021, which was agreed to.

Adjournment:

Shelley Bochner made a motion to adjourn. Second by Daniel Whynot. Roll call vote 5-0 at 8:26.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Shelley Bochner.