

Ordinance, Charter & Rules Committee meeting minutes

July 31, 2017

Woburn City Hall

Committee Room

Voting members: Chairman Michael Anderson, Michael Concannon, Mark Gaffney, Lindsay Higgins and Darlene Mercer-Bruen (absent)

Non-voting members present: Joanne Campbell, Edward Tedesco and Richard Gately

1. On the order to amend Woburn Municipal Code Section 2-194(H) relative to the Deputy Superintendent of Public Works: Alderman Anderson submitted a revised version of the Deputy Superintendent's job description that was developed with input from Human Resources Director Elaine Pruyne. Alderman Gately suggested the inclusion into the job description of a requirement of at least five years of experience with repairs of underground utilities, since he estimates 65-70 percent of the job involves construction. Alderman Campbell said the council may have an issue attracting candidates with that qualification following the recent reduction in the salary for the position. Alderman Anderson suggested the council include the phrase "preferred familiarity" with aforementioned the job qualification, since it will be difficult to find candidates who fulfill all of the requirements. The committee voted, 4-0-1, with Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent, to suspend its rules to open the discussion to the public. DPW Highway Foreman Christopher Doherty told the committee the job description ought to include construction experience and the job ought to be given to someone who is able to perform construction work in the field rather than someone who is more likely to remain in the office. Doherty noted that of the 41 DPW employees, 13 are either foremen or involved in a supervisory role. Alderman Concannon asked with that low number of personnel whether the city actually needs to hire a Deputy Superintendent, and asked whether the City Council ought to be involved in the hiring process at all. Concannon said he would like to have a conversation with DPW Supt. Jay Duran about what type of candidate Duran is looking for in a Deputy Superintendent. Alderman Anderson noted an addition to the job description is the requirement of a valid motor vehicle operator's license, which he said he couldn't believe was not already a requirement. A motion was made and seconded to include the phrase "preferred familiarity with the installation, maintenance and repair of underground infrastructure," to the job description, and approved on a 4-0-1 vote, with Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent. Alderman Concannon asked if there was any appetite among the committee to change the process of who appoints the Deputy Superintendent, as having the council make the appointment would create a dysfunctional DPW. Alderman Anderson agreed the council does not want to create a dysfunctional DPW, but said the council does not want to remove itself as the appointing authority for the position. Alderman Campbell noted the city is very large and needs a Deputy Superintendent in the DPW. Alderman Gaffney said he has received a lot of complaints about the current situation at the DPW and that it is not running as well as it

should be. Alderman Campbell said as Chairman of the Personnel Committee she will make sure Jay Duran is part of the selection process for the Deputy Superintendent, since the department cannot afford to have to have a Deputy Superintendent with whom Duran does not get along. Motion was made and seconded to recommend the revised text of the job description “ought to pass,” and approved on a 3-1-1 vote, with Alderman Concannon opposed and Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent.

H. Deputy Superintendent of Public Works shall be appointed by the City Council with a recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Works and the Human Resources Director. This individual under direction of Superintendent of Public Works: Supervises on-going daily work activities of DPW including Water, Sewer, Highway, Public Buildings and Maintenance Divisions, assigning work and making on-site reviews. Organize, direct, control and monitor policies and priorities for the above referenced programs. Coordinate with other City departments and agencies, as necessary to ensure that the City’s priorities are met and work is completed as required. Must be able to handle multiple projects, make quick and supportable decisions and supervise large groups to meet shifting priorities.

The position requires a valid motor vehicle operator’s license.

An advanced degree in civil engineering, environmental studies, construction management, public administration or similar field of study is preferred.

Licenses and/or certifications in Water Operations, and/or water distribution are preferred.

Experience in construction supervision, preferably in a municipal environment, or combination of relevant education and experience are preferred.

Essential functions include:

- Ability to consult with State officials relative to Chapter 90 funding and obtaining grants.
- Ability to work with federal and state officials and agencies in the absence of the Superintendent and/or at the direction of the Superintendent.
- Ability to supervise the street light program, assess and anticipate the ongoing condition and needs of the public buildings in the City as it relates to general maintenance, including the maintenance of mechanical and electrical systems.

- Ability to communicate clearly and concisely verbally and in writing;
- Knowledge and familiarity with the use of computers and software including AutoCAD, GIS, Excel, and Word;
- Ability to evaluate, document and address issues that arise through the complaint tracker system. Respond to customer requests, complaints, investigate issues and develop solutions to resolve problems and prevent future issues. Communicate and coordinate with other town departments, contractors, and the public to provide responsive and high quality service;
- Oversee the implementation of long-range maintenance and repair plans for the town's roads, sidewalks, drainage systems, water and sewer systems and fleets.
- Ability to assess and evaluate the department fleet and equipment as well as future regulatory requirements relating to emissions.
- Ability to work beyond normal business hours to attend meetings, make presentations, or other needs as determined by the Director of DPW.
- General knowledge of DPW, water and sewer operations and the applicable laws and regulations related to public works.
- Direct the implementation of construction projects, maintenance activities, and other work on public infrastructure including roads, storm water systems, parks and grounds, trees, cemetery, and fleet maintenance.
- Ensure all necessary materials, supplies, and equipment are available for projects and activities planned. Maintain and inventory of resources and proactively identify needs, shortages, and issues, on a timely basis.
- Preferred familiarity with the installation, maintenance, and repair of underground utilities.
- Perform project management duties for various special City Projects. Job responsibilities include supervision of public safety efforts, including snow removal, water control, etc,
- Any other duties as delegated by the Superintendent of Public Works.

2. Order to amend Woburn Municipal Code Section 13.2.14.3 relative to water rates in multi-family dwellings.

The committee voted, 4-0-1, with Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent, to accept as a “working draft” of the proposed ordinance from Alderman Tedesco, who had consulted with City Solicitor Ellen Callahan Doucette about revisions.

Alderman Tedesco suggested changing the text in the first sentence of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph to read “with six or more units” to clarify the language. Alderman Tedesco also suggested restoring for the sake of consistency the phrase “and sewer” in three references in the second and third paragraphs, of which Callahan Doucette had recommended the deletion. Alderman Gaffney said there are only two developments in the city that fall under the jurisdiction of the ordinance where a second meter gets billed as a commercial rate, and they will end up paying a lower rate if the change to the ordinance is adopted. Alderman Tedesco noted those two developments are in North Woburn and Hammond Square. In both instances, the developers never told representatives from the respective condo associations they were going to be charged a commercial rate for water. Alderman Anderson agreed those homeowners are paying large water bills. Alderman Concannon said the adoption of the ordinance change could result in the significant impact to the water billing dynamic and he is getting concerned about setting different rates for different classifications of residential property. He said if he lives in a condo and was told he was being charged a commercial rate for water, he’d get upset. Motion was made and seconded to restore the phrase “and sewer” from the working draft of the ordinance, and approved, 4-0-1, with Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent. Motion was made and seconded to change the language in the first sentence of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph to read “with six or more units,” and approved, 4-0-1, with Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent. Motion was made and seconded to send the revised ordinance “back for action” following final review and comment from DPW Supt. Jay Duran, and approved, 4-0-1, with Alderman Mercer-Bruen absent.

The amended ordinance reads as follows: “Multi-family dwelling with six (6) or more units, including condominiums and townhouses, shall be equipped with such meter and meter reading devices, in the manner as the Superintendent of Public Works shall direct. In addition, a separate water meter and meter reading device shall be installed on all services lines for outdoor water use such as irrigation lines, pool houses, etc. in the manner as the Superintendent shall direct.

“Multi-family dwelling units with six (6) or more units, including condominiums and townhouses, shall be billed at the commercial water and sewer rates for outdoor water use. Multi-family dwelling units with five (5) or less units, including condominiums and townhouses, that have a separate service line for outdoor water use, shall be billed at the residential water and sewer rates for such use.

“Townhouse and condominium associations with more than one building on a lot for dwelling purposes shall be billed at the commercial water and sewer rates for outdoor water use.”

The Ordinance Committee meeting was convened at 6:26 p.m. and adjourned at 7:30 p.m. by Alderman Anderson.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees