

**PLANNING BOARD
RINDGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
April 30, 2013**

DATE: April 30, 2013 **TYPE:** Public Meeting **APPROVED:** June 4, 2013

TIME: 7:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER:

ROLL CALL MEMBERS: Chairman Kirk Stenersen, Hank Whitney, Phil Simeone, Bruce Donati, Charlie Eicher, Vice Chair Kim McCummings (7:25pm),

ROLL CALL ALTERNATES:

EX OFFICIO: Roberta Oeser

PLANNING DIRECTOR:

PLANNING SECRETARY: Susan Hoyland

APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

OTHERS PRESENT: None

Chairman Stenersen called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

1. Budget Discussion

Chairman Stenersen said that the basic purpose of this special meeting was to address the budget numbers relevant to the Planning Director position and to share each board member's concrete plan for filling the vacancy left by the planning director. He said there will be a joint meeting tomorrow evening of the BOS/BAC at which time the Planning Board will need to present their budget request. Chairman Stenersen said that this evening's discussion would take place in public session and asked members to refrain from mentioning any potential candidates by name, reserving that part of the discussion for future Non-Public Sessions.

Chairman Stenersen said that Burt Goodrich was unable to be here this evening. Chairman Stenersen read an email he had received from Burt:

1. Review the packet of all applications we recently received and
 - A. Invite for interview some who did not already get interviewed
 - B. Invite for a second interview some we already met
2. Consider hiring a Planning Director that
 - A. does not have all the broad qualifications we desire, but with good credentials for some areas such as planning or economic development. Their strengths could help us and we could hire additional consulting help for specific projects.
 - B. will be sufficient for less than full time; perhaps 1/2 time or 3/4 time
 - C. will be sufficient for an interim period of up to 1-2 years

An interim will keep Rindge moving ahead and give the Planning Board time to figure out the next steps. The interim might only want work for a short period of time. School districts often do this for superintendents.

3. Increase the work hours of the Planning Department Secretary to 32 hours per week. This will give stability and coverage for all the routine office secretarial duties, keep the office open, and available to serve the public.

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Chairman Stenersen asked Roberta Oeser to share her suggestions:

Roberta Oeser said she had spoken with Carol Ogilvie, Community Planner in Peterborough, NH. Carol has tendered her resignation and will be available as a freelancer.

Roberta Oeser outlined her plan as follows:

- Take care of the plan review process immediately by sending plans out. This would require holding a public hearing to revise our fee schedule. Roberta Oeser said the plan review is really a benefit to the applicant and the financial burden for this task should not be placed on the taxpayer.
- In the interim, contract for services for planning and for economic development. By contracting for services, we would not have to pay for benefits.
- Once the plan is reviewed, the Planning Board will review the application for aesthetics and for keeping with the Master Plan.
- Increasing the secretarial hours (but keeping it under 32 hours to not pay benefits). This would cover day-to-day operations in conjunction with whatever consultant we hire who could be in the office two-three days a week.

Chairman Stenersen asked Phil Simeone to share his plan.

Phil Simeone said:

- Hire a planning director.
- Hire an interim person (as Burt had suggested) if one could be found.
- Review the list of applicants that we already have, and offer the position to one of them, on an interim basis.

Chairman Stenersen asked Hank Whitney to share his plan.

Hank Whitney said:

- Hire a planning director.
- Do not take a step down or a step backward, but move forward with what we need.
- Have one or two more interviews, from that list of candidates who have already applied but who have not been invited for interviews, perhaps we've missed someone.
- Planning is more than just plan review, it is about looking ahead, about economic development, contact with developers, reaching out to consultants, charettes, grant writing.
- We need to sell this to the Board of Selectmen We need a reasonable salary to get what we need for a very important department within this town. It's not as if we are spending \$3500 to hire a consultant. We have been very frugal by doing the search ourselves.

Chairman Stenersen asked Charlie Eicher to present his plan.

Charlie Eicher said:

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- Include a proper wage package in the budget. Meet with the BOS in non-public if necessary, to explain the need for a planning director.

If that does not work:

- Hire a trainable director for day-to-day. Put money in training/travel line to educate director in the planning function. Pay a consultant to mentor if needed.

If that does not work

- Outsource the day-to day. Put planning capacity on hold for one year.

If that does not work.

- Refer all day-to-day and planning to the Selectmen's office. Isn't the Planning Board a 'review and approve' function? I don't think the Planning Board can continue to do the planning director job. Nor can Susan.

Chairman Stenersen asked Bruce Donati for his plan.

Bruce Donati said:

- It might be beneficial to review those applicants who were not interviewed yet. He agrees with Hank Whitney, that you cannot always tell the caliber of a person from a piece of paper.
- He hasn't been here long enough to offer any other suggestions at this time.

Chairman Stenersen said that both Dave Tower and Jed Brummer had recommended a candidate who had not been interviewed. Roberta Oeser said there was one candidate who they had interviewed who she would reconsider.

The Board discussed the pros and cons of sending out plans, hiring for an interim position, hiring consultants and came to the general consensus that funding for the purpose of hiring a planning director was what they wanted to pursue.

Vice Chair Kim McCummings arrived.

The Board discussed the budget figures and arrived at the following:

- \$34,440 for seven months of a planning director (based on \$59,000 per annum)
- \$19,500 for twelve months of a planning secretary (based on 25 hours @ \$15/hr.)

Bottom line: \$53,940 for wages plus \$19,700 for operating expenses.

The Planning Board will ask Ellen Smith, accountant, to calculate the benefits and payroll tax portion of the budget. Roberta Oeser said that, using these numbers, the Planning Board is under budget for this year.

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Hank Whitney and Vice Chair Kim McCummings agreed to attend the BOS/BAC meeting tomorrow.

Chairman Stenersen asked if the Planning Board was able to do anything about hiring someone in consideration of the lack of a budget.

Roberta Oeser said to wait until after tomorrow night and perhaps discuss it at that meeting.

Planning Office Report

Chairman Stenersen asked the Board for volunteers to help out in the office. Wednesdays or Thursdays following Tuesday meetings would be good days to have someone in the office to field questions so that Susan can work on secretarial duties. Chairman Stenersen asked Susan to send out an email outlining what days she may need help, asking anyone who replies to REPLY ALL so that all members know who has answered and what days are taken.

Chairman Stenersen said we have no new applications for May so far. We do have several conceptual reviews and two continued hearings.

Chairman Stenersen said that he has no problem continuing to review plans until a Planning Director is found. Vice Chair McCummings said that the checklists are a good tool and that it is not a problem to review these plans in house until such time as we have a planning director. Chairman Stenersen said he would rather not change the process right now. Roberta Oeser said we could still have the public hearing to change the process so that we have the option of sending plans out if that presents itself. Charlie Eicher said doing an in house review is also good for the applicant.

Roberta Oeser asked about updates to the website. Susan Hoyland replied that some of this is completed and some of this is on her "to do" list and will be completed. Without a planning director, it is most difficult to keep up with the day to day work.

Adjournment: 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hoyland
Planning Secretary