

Over the past year, the Board of Selectmen have worked with the other two departments of Baldwin town government, the Clerk/Treasure/Tax Collector, and the Road Commissioner, to develop a uniform personnel policy for all Town employees. The three departments have held two publicly announced joint meetings to review and refine the draft ordinance. The next step is to hold a public hearing to present the ordinance to the citizens and gather feedback, and after that hold a town meeting to vote on the ordinance. The public hearing is currently scheduled for 7:00 PM on 17 August and the Town Meeting to vote on the ordinance is scheduled for 7:00 PM on 31 August 2017.

Why is a Personnel Policy needed?

Every organization or business of just about any size has personnel policies that help inform management and employees about categories of employees, organizations rules, benefits of employment, and most other needed organizational rules to guide employees and management. Our insurance company (MMA) expects the Town to have a current and complete personnel policy, as do a number of state and federal statutes. We have heard questions about what rules apply for a number of issues, good questions for which we did not have good answers.

What Personnel Policy Existed in the Past?

There exists a 2009 Personnel Policy developed by the Board of Selectmen. It was a good start but it was incomplete and needed updating to reflect current rules and guidance on a large array of personnel issues. It was unsigned and town employees generally didn't know it existed. There was disparate treatment of employees depending on the department they worked for. Other policies existed only as spoken instructions.

Why an Ordinance and not a Policy?

Maine Municipal Association (MMA) legal counsel has advised the Town that a policy signed by the Board of Selectmen would not have jurisdiction over the other two departments of Town government. As an alternative, each department head could develop their own policies but all three departments expressed a desire to codify a uniform set of personnel policies which have been approved by the citizens. This ordinance, if approved, accomplishes this. Any changes to the ordinance would then need approval at a subsequent town meeting.

As the sponsors of this effort, the Board of Selectmen believe that this ordinance is a way to provide our supervisors, the citizens who elect us, visibility of and a say in, the policies by which we operate. A lot of effort has gone into it. We hope you will participate in the hearing on 17 August and then come out to vote at the Town Meeting on 31 August 2017.

Sincerely

Baldwin Board of Selectmen