

**Rochester Council on Aging (RCOA)**  
**Special Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**67 Dexter Lane**  
**Rochester, MA 02770**

**January 31, 2024**

**In Attendance:** Pauline Munroe (President), Eric Poulin (Director), Carol Galante-Dias (Administrative Assistant), Sandy Charron, Michael Daniel, Sue Norton (Vice President), Pat Joy, Mary Bessey (Treasurer), Marjorie O'Brien (Secretary), Marjorie Barrows

**Absent:** Andrew Revell (excused/working)

**Guests:** Glen Cannon (Rochester Town Administrator), Paul Ciaburri (Select Board), Adam Murphy (Select Board), Kristine Nash (Chair of Rochester Personnel Board)

The meeting was **Called to Order** by Pauline Munroe at 11:00 a.m. with confirmation of a quorum (8 of 9 Board members were present).

**\*Town of Rochester Personnel By-Law (for review & possible vote)**

Eric Poulin began by stating that we are meeting to discuss only one agenda item, that being the "Rochester Personnel By-Law." He continued by giving a brief history of events leading to this point. He added that although at the May 2023 Town Meeting the COA was voted out of the old Classification & Compensation Plan upon the advice of the town's new attorneys, he has been using that to prepare budgets, etc. based on feedback from the Town Administrator and also continuing to follow all of the current Personnel By-Laws. Glen Cannon, Town Administrator, reaffirmed such.

At the regular meeting of the COA Board in October 2023, the Board met with the Town Administrator and an attorney for the town and believed they were going to come back to the Board at a later date with a document for review and a possible vote. No additional follow-up occurred until there was an agenda item on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting (Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> at R.M.S., at 7 p.m.) that read that the Select Board would hire COA employees in place of the COA Board. Select Board Member Adam Murphy indicated that was an error that was made by the attorneys/the language was written incorrectly and that was why the Select Board had wanted to table it. (The voters asked to vote on it instead and the language/change failed to pass at Town Meeting.)

Eric went through the existing Personnel By-Laws page by page, illustrating that the only part in question is found on Page 6 where a single sentence regarding hiring appears to be problematic as it indicates that the Personnel Board hires but for the COA there is a town bylaw that says that the COA Board hires its employees. Those gathered including Select

Board Members, Town Administrator, etc. reassured the COA Board that the COA by-law supersedes in this instance. Kristine Nash, Chair of the town's Personnel Board asked that before we go on, we should all be aware that as we speak, "radically revised" Personnel By-Laws are being reviewed by Town Counsel to potentially be voted on at the May 2024 Town Meeting. Kristine Nash explained that in the revised version, the COA Director and the COA Board would still find their candidates for hire, interview and choose their candidate. Then they would bring that name and paperwork to the Personnel Board for final approval. Unless there are glaring issues such as missing documents, the individual would be approved.

Adam Murphy said that he is very much invested in the COA. He apologized for the lack of communication that may have occurred. He wants to open the lines of communication and move forward. The COA Director and COA Board were agreeable but asked about the next steps?

Kristine Nash will get the COA Director a copy of the **revised** version of the Personnel By-Laws, and she invited him to the Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> Personnel Board meeting. In the meantime, Glen Cannon, Town Administrator, asked that the COA Board take a formal vote to adopt the current Personnel By-Laws because the new attorneys for the town had indicated that, in their opinion, the COA wasn't subject to the bylaws meaning that the COA didn't have to follow it although the COA had continued to follow it. Paul Ciaburri stated that for the record, the Select Board has NO interest in being a part of the hiring for ANY department because they have more than enough on their plate.

A **MOTION** was made by Sue Norton to adopt the current Rochester Personnel By-Laws and to collaborate with the Personnel Board and others on the language of the newly revised version prior to the May Town Meeting. The motion was **SECONDED** by Sandy Charron and **PASSED** unanimously. (Sue indicated that she hoped that all the parties involved would work with the COA Board in good faith.)

**\*Adjournment-** With no further business a **MOTION TO ADJOURN** was made by Margie Barrows, **SECONDED** by Margie O'Brien, and **PASSED** unanimously. The meeting **ADJOURNED at 12:25 p.m.**