ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – 2023

The Personnel Committee makes recommendations to the Selectboard and Finance Committee on all personnel matters on a wide variety of topics including annual cost-of-living adjustments and individual salary adjustments to personnel policies and employee working conditions. The Committee consists of two members appointed by the Moderator, one member of the Selectboard, a member of the Finance Committee and one employee elected by town staff. The Town Administrator serves as a non-voting member.

The Committee uses a benchmark of ten communities previously identified as comparable to Whately with characteristics such as population, location, road mileage and equalized valuation. Those communities are Shelburne, Westhampton, Ashfield, Buckland, Conway, Hatfield, Hinsdale, Leverett, Pelham and Shutesbury.

The Committee undertakes a salary survey each year and, as an additional resource, reviews the annual Franklin Regional Council of Governments annual survey of municipal positions. The Committee endeavors to bring and/or keep Whately employees at the median of the wage scales for similar positions. It further reviews the CPI for the Northeast and New England region to recommend a cost-of-living adjustment. Retention and recruitment of qualified employees remains a challenge for our small community so having a competitive wage and good working conditions is more important than ever.

The Committee made the following recommendations to the Finance Committee and Selectboard:

To increase the hourly wage rate of the Custodian from $19.11 to $19.73
To increase the hourly wage rate of the Senior Operator/Laborer from $28.21 to $30.60
To increase the hourly wage rate of the Operator/Laborer (3+ years) from $25.76 to $27.98
To increase the hourly wage rate of the Operator Laborer (0-3 years) from $24.94 to $27.08
To increase the annual stipend of the Animal Inspector from $460 to $1,153.50
To increase the annual salary of the Highway Supt. from $83,916.95 to $84,224.30
To increase the hourly wage of part-time Police officer from $22.48 to $22.45
To increase the annual wage of a full-time Police officer from $51,568 to $52,124.80

The Committee notes that to remain competitive with other communities, positions in the Highway and Police Department must be increased in consecutive years along with the COLA. Adoption of a wage and classification plan would mitigate these type of adjustments.

The Personnel Committee recommended an annual cost of living increase of 3%.

Much of the committee’s time the past year was devoted to reviewing and revising a personnel policies document. We are hopeful that this much needed resource, once adopted by the Selectboard, will be in full use in the next year.
Committee members express their gratitude and appreciation to former Town Administrator Brian Domina for his help and assistance over the past several years.