

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES  
MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2019 6:30 P.M.  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Robinson-Broadhurst Conference Room  
109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present:

Audrey LaBrie, Chairwoman  
Barbara Anderson, Vice-Chair  
Michael Barbaro  
Amy Salter  
Rick Ward

Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager  
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant

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List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Draft Memorandum of Agreement By and Between Town of Winchendon and Police Chief
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Exemption # 2 to conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel

Chairwoman LaBrie called Executive Session to order at 8:02 p.m.

Town Manager Keith Hickey reminded the Board this was a continuation of an agenda item from July. He explained Police Chief Dave Walsh currently has a three year contract with the Town that includes three weeks of vacation buyback. The Chief has learned that the vacation buyback is not included towards his retirement calculation and came to speak with him about renegotiating his contract to eliminate the three weeks paid vacation buyback and to add in two of those weeks to his base pay. Mr. Hickey said he cannot tell what the future cost will be for the Town. If the Chief's base pay goes up, there will be a small amount of money charged to the Town as the wages reported to the retirement system will be greater. The Chief understands that so with this proposal he is adding only two weeks and will forego one week of his vacation buyback. That one week is worth about \$2,000 and he is willing to walk away from it to get some amount of money in his retirement pay when he does retire.

Hickey informed the Board this has been done in the past during contract renewals where they have added value to base pay to cut vacation buyback. This is doing the same thing with the exception that this is midyear in a three year contract and not during the renewal period. He explained how he reached the contract number in the Memorandum of Agreement.

Board members agreed the Chief was doing a good job but some didn't want to set precedence with opening up a contract mid-term and would prefer to wait until the renewal in a year and half. Salter was also concerned this was manipulating the system.

Hickey respectfully said to the Board that he is not trying to be combative or disrespectful and wants the Board to be on board with this amendment. There was some discussion on the Board having the option to reject any employee contracts within fifteen days per the Town Charter.

Barbaro stated he does not have a problem with this. The Chief is going to give up \$2,000 with his third week of vacation buyback. He is giving up something to get something.

LaBrie said the Town Manager is working hard to align contracts and agreements. Salter agreed but to clean up at the end of the contract.

Hickey said he believes because there is no financial impact to the town, he has the ability to modify this but he will speak with Town Counsel and provide a written answer for the Board including his authority to amend the contract and if the Selectmen have the purview to reject it.

Hickey expressed his appreciation for the Board's feedback.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Barbaro moved to adjourn from Executive Session; Anderson seconded. With a roll call vote of all aye, Executive Session adjourned at 8:28 p.m.**

**Barbaro moved to adjourn from Open Session; Anderson seconded. With a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Daigle".

Linda Daigle  
Executive Assistant