

Town of Berkley - Accountant

From: Town of Berkley - Accountant <townaccountant@berkleyma.us>
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 12:01 PM
To: 'selectmen@berkleyma.us'; 'assistant.treasurer@berkleyma.us'; 'selectmen.clerk@berkleyma.us'; 'Jfreitasbos@berkleyma.us'; 'TMCCROHANbos@BERKLEYMA.US'; 'treasurer@berkleyma.us'
Subject: RE: Treasurer Office
Flag Status: Flagged

Good Morning All,

I hope everyone enjoyed their snow day!

I have a few concerns about the below email, and respectfully, I feel as though I deserve the opportunity to clarify any conversation that was had between me and Wendy in regards to Molly's pay. Furthermore, I would like to understand why I was not included on the original email, if what your gripe is about not being included in conversations to do with your office, by your logic this is exactly what has been done to me.

With that said, I appreciate your communication and the opportunity to address the concerns you've raised. I would like to clarify some points and express my viewpoint on the matters at hand.

Regarding the recent conversation with the Town Administrator, I would like to mention that my discussion with the Town Administrator did not involve any intention to undermine or exclude you. In fact as I clearly stated during this conversation I feel it is necessary to have all the details before presenting a case. This is to cut out any confusion and misinformation, which is what I intended on doing with Kara, alas I was not afforded that opportunity but instead was yelled at on the phone by Wendy that she has been patient enough and my office is holding her up. (Also false) The conversation I had with Wendy went quite differently than what is described below, and I feel as though I should be awarded the same to clarify what was said.

I have noted any discrepancy in this email with my rebuttal,

It has been brought to my attention that one member of the Board and the Town Accountant have had a conversation with the Town Administrator regarding the Treasurer office. This was not a discussion, this was me (As I stated originally) I was not stepping on your toes, but asked Matt to reach out to legal to find anything in any bylaws or contracts of out of grid pay. I did this as a direct result of being approached, not to cause harm, but to allow Matt the chance to learn a little bit more about the processes in municipalities when coming to compensations. You were out on vacation the first week the assistant tax collector left, so I wasn't able to bring it to your attention at that point. But I felt the frustration and at this point in order for me to do my job accurately I need competent individuals in that office, therefore I rely heavily on Molly to do this. Additionally, I was approached with concerns, my question was what will help, and the answer was more money.

Although I fear, at a certain point no amount of money will make it ok to work in a hostile environment.

To clarify the above, a text message was sent by Wendy to a group of us on Monday night, with a meme stating "I was ride or die" for people that didn't think twice about running me over" This was after our conversation and prior to me even knowing about this email.

Recently, I was told by multiple neighbors that this person was told by A Selectmen that she should run and it is only a one hour job and that the support staff do all the work. If people think that my assistant does all the work why would this person be squawking and telling people I have not tried to get her more money for extra duties when I clearly have tried. You told me you reached out and talked to this woman. In my opinion that is highly unprofessional, and could border on harassment. Thus, continuing the hostile work environment. Let's be honest now, the person

squawking is not who you're alluding to, the purpose of not post for clerk was a direct result of you claiming your asst has no work to do. As an elected employee you know that at any time someone can pull papers for any elected position, someone requesting information from a BOS member on the process of running for an elected position, this does not constitute someone actively pursuing

The bottom line is if anyone approaches the Town Admin. I am not sure why my department or employees would be discussed without me being present. The bottom line is, you're a difficult person to work with and the majority of the time the information provided is inaccurate therefore creating more work. A perfect example is, for the DOR balance sheet on the treasurer's side, you entered in actual bank balance for 6/30. These are not reconciled figures, which resulting in me trying to match to those figures and waste a week stressing about it. Molly and I figured it out with the help of the auditor.

If this Selectmen had the best interest of my assistant, she would not be seeking my replacement with someone that has no municipal experience. I find this very hypercritical when she has tried to get these positions appointed so we can get experience. Defies all the words that she has said. The DOR in 2005 had noted Treasurer/Tax Collector should be merged and appointed, this is the way the majority of municipalities in Massachusetts operate. So, it's not a personal attack, it is what it is.

I am very disappointed that I am being talked about without my presence to the Town Admin.

Yet, this is done time and time again by you. I was never approached professionally to discuss my office. Instead, I was taken into a meeting that was built on untruths. Which I will state below:

1. Molly is upset that my office turns over warrants to late therefore Molly has to stay late to fund the checks, print the checks etc. This in fact was a bold face lie. I approached Molly and apologized profusely that it would never happen again. Warrants will be printed in time for Wednesday meetings, and checks will be ready to print on Thursday mornings. To which I was met with, I've never had to stay late because of Accounting. The thing that really gets me with this, is at no time has accounting ever sent checks to be printed late in the day, additionally we are respectful and always offer to help with the checks if the Treasurer's office is busy.
2. FY2022 Cash was still not reconciled. This was false, as I reconciled June 2022 cash when I was first hired in November 2022. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to submit for free cash. A Treasurer would know this.
3. I was also told the Treasurer cannot provide her "courtesy quarterly reconciliations" This too was a lie, and unless it is something out of the realm of accounting or DOR and banking, there is no where you would provide "courtesy quarterly reconciliations".

Wendy has mentioned to me before that she doesn't know everything and if there is something she isn't doing right to let her know, but at this point it is not my responsibility to tell someone in such a position for a lengthy period of time how to do their job. I am constantly being told Kathy or Rachel did it for you, I would like to point out that I am not Kathy or Rachel and will not be doing your job.

As we continue to work together, I believe it is essential to establish clear communication guidelines to ensure a focused and professional working environment. Please consider the following points:

Private Conversations: Moving forward, all conversations involving Wendy should include a third party. This measure aims to prevent misunderstandings and interruptions during work hours.

Non-Work-related Communication: To optimize efficiency, I will no longer respond to text messages unrelated to work matters. If there are any work-related issues, I am available during our established hours of operation.

Phone Calls: Work-related phone calls will be addressed during business hours. Please ensure that any calls are pertinent to our professional responsibilities.

These guidelines are designed to enhance our professional interactions and maintain a productive work atmosphere. I appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

Wendy, you have created an environment that for me has become uncomfortable and nearly unmanageable, I am afraid to defend myself for fear of retaliation or using any of my personal information to discredit myself and the hard work I have done.

I pride myself of being professional and am sickened that I allowed it to ever go this far. I sincerely apologize for anyone that this may have affected, as this was never my intention.

I appreciate you taking the time to allow me to defend myself and appreciate any feedback,

Thank you,



Ashleigh Haslam

Town of Berkley
Town Accountant

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From: treasurer@berkleyma.us <treasurer@berkleyma.us>

Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 1:13 PM

To: selectmen@berkleyma.us; Jfreitasbos@berkleyma.us; tmccrohanbos@berkleyma.us; selectmen.clerk@berkleyma.us; 'Molly Lima - Town Of Berkley' <assistant.treasurer@berkleyma.us>

Subject: Treasurer Office

Good afternoon,

It has been brought to my attention that one member of the Board and the Town Accountant have had a conversation with the Town Administrator regarding the Treasurer office.

We all know that there has been some transition in the department and even doing what this Selectmen asked of me and not post. I am still in the WRONG some how.

I chose not to post the position of the clerk to better organize the duties, Unbeknown to me, One of the Selectmen has approached a VP of Bay Coast Bank to run for the Treasurer. This Selectmen had already told me I was being shady in having a succession plan when I advised the Board that my plan was to run again and in the 3 rd year after my assistant has been certified I would resign and possibly the Selectmen would appoint her to fill the term until the next election.

Recently, I was told by multiple neighbors that this person was told by A Selectmen that she should run and it is only a one hour job and that the support staff do all the work . If people think that my assistant does all the work why would this person be squawking and telling people I have not tried to get her more money for extra duties when I clearly have tried.

The bottom line is if anyone approaches the Town Admin. I am not sure why my department or employees would be discussed without me being present.

If this Selectmen had the best interest of my assistant she would not be seeking my replacement with someone that has no municipal experience. I find this very hypercritical when she has tried to get these positions appointed so we can get experience. Defies all the words that she has said.

I am very disappointed that I am being talked about without my presence to the Town Admin.

I am available to speak to anyone that cares to talk to me .

Just for the record, I have had this conversation with both Selectmen and was told that it had to stay on a grid.

Wendy