

From: Bethany Mielke <bmielkemonterey@gmail.com>
Subject: **Concerning article and minutes**
Date: October 25, 2014 3:58:34 PM EDT
To: Wayne Burkhart <wdburkharts@gmail.com>, aussie001 <aussie001@wildblue.net>, Kenn Basler <kennhb@gmail.com>
▶ 1 Attachment, 28.0 KB

October 25th, 2014

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this email in response to the Select Board Meeting Minutes from October 6th, 2014 as well as the article [Monterey mulls new payroll options](#) in the Berkshire Record dated October 24-30, 2014.

At this time, I have not received any "notice" from Ken regarding my absence. Nor did I receive any emails from employees that were trying to reach me while I was out. I posted a sign on the door that stated I would be out of the office and employees could reach me by email with any concerns. The reason I was not available for that Monday was because of an eye specialist appointment for my son in Springfield. These appointments are not easy to get, and must be taken when available. I went to the office Monday, but at a later time. Everything that is normally completed on a Monday night was done. The payroll warrant was attached in an email to the board, as it always is.

I understand the importance of posted hours, and being available on a regular basis for employees to reach me with any concerns. I would like to say that in the year or so I have had these hours, I have had maybe 5 visits from an employee. Most often, I am reached by email with a concern. Sometimes a question is posed, with which I cannot answer right away because it requires some research. However, I do to the best of my ability, respond with an answer.

Getting information from an outside vendor for payroll was brought to my attention a few months ago. Ken had informally approached me after leaving the post office about my thoughts on the idea. Having no real warning or time to really think about it, I responded with the idea that it never hurts to look into things. Then, my first question to him, however was why the select board wanted to look into it and if there was something I was doing (or not doing) that created concern. He quickly stated that it had nothing to do with me or my performance, just something that was being considered to save time. Since then, I have been under that impression. I am very discouraged to have to learn from a newspaper article that my performance was exactly why a payroll company is being considered. At a later date, I was told that the payroll company would be attending an evening Select Board meeting so that I would be able to participate and learn what the companies had to offer. Then, with minimal notice (days), I was told the matter couldn't wait any longer. The payroll companies would be coming during a Monday morning meeting which I was unable to attend because of my full time job.

My first year and a half as elected Treasurer has been tumultuous. The small town cohesiveness and support is missing. The town hall should have a team of helpful, trustworthy, understanding and supportive individuals. No one is perfect. Things happen. Telling everyone else what a person has done in error instead of trying to handle the situation respectfully face to face does not help anyone improve.

It seems as though each staff member is on their own team. In order to be considered successful at what we do we must knock down our opponents by pointing fingers, exploiting one another, and turning mole hills into mountains. On the other hand, I have been extremely grateful to receive support, guidance, patience, and understanding from Wayne Burkhart, Chair of the Select Board and Scott Jensen also a member of the board.

I understand this is a thankless job. I do not need praise or a reward for doing what I was elected to do. However, I would like to say, that I am doing what I am supposed to be doing. I am learning new things every week, month, quarter, and year. I am being reflective of my practices and doing my best to make adjustments and changes as I learn so that I can do this part time job the best that I can. I have been eager to learn and excited to be involved in my community. I understand mistakes must be avoided, be met head on, and resolved. But, with mistakes often come the largest areas of growth.

With all this being said, I am working hard, feeling personal success, keeping the funds safe and accounted for, balancing the bank statements, sending bills out, paying state federal and medicare, sending retirement reports, calculating child support, recording receipts from the tax collector, making interoffice deposits, decreasing the number of people in tax title, finding ways to save money, negotiating with banks about the cost of checks, updating our online banking systems, attending Treasury classes, submitting veteran's services, and completing payroll efficiently and on

time. I would like to make clear that this is a part time job. It is described as an 8-10 hour a week position, with which many weeks have been more hours than that.

Please consider this letter a request for responses to the following concerns. A retraction of the article from the Berkshire Record. An explanation regarding the "unacceptability" of my recent absence. Details explaining why the Treasurer's position should transition from being elected to appointed. Lastly, why concerns regarding my work are always brought to a meeting before being brought to my attention so I have a chance to resolve them. I would like to have these matters discussed at Monday's Select Board meeting on October 27th.

Regards,

Bethany Mielke

*I have also attached a word document of this letter if you are interested in printing it.

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Treasurer
Town of Monterey

[Letter to the ...odt \(28.0 KB\)](#)