

Erin Liese

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From: Christopher Kona <...@com>
Sent: Saturday, August 19, 2023 10:47 AM
To: Mark Trimmer; Rich Nassaney; Michael Colasante; Helen Sheehan; Samantha Wilcox; Karen Pinch
Cc: Erin Liese
Subject: Ordinances for onboarding employees must consider Richmond 2022 referendum results

Richmond Council Members, Ms. Pinch,

I am pleased to see the topic of updating ordinances on town hiring on the Council agenda. As the Council examines options for how to update the ordinances, I urge them to consider the opinions of the Richmond voters.

The opinion of the Richmond voters on the role of the Town Council in hiring is objectively documented from the November 2022 election, during which 69.4% of voters responded “yes” to the question:

“Shall the Charter be amended to prohibit Town Council members from attempting to influence the Town Manager’s decisions on hiring, promotion, and removal of Town employees?”

This figure represents 2,406 out of 3,467 voters. During the 15 August meeting, Councilor Sheehan remarked that Richmond did not vote her to Town Council to refrain from influencing hiring. This is factually incorrect – the residents of Richmond *did* vote for her and the other council members to office with the expectation that *they should not* influence town hiring and firing. In fact, more Richmond citizens voted in favor of preventing the Town Council from influencing hiring and firing decisions in the town than voted for any individual councilmember. It is more important to the voters of this town that whoever is on the council remains independent of staffing decisions than which individuals actually serve on the council.

The citizens in the town of Richmond have a very clearly documented mandate on the topic of how the town should address hiring, firing, and promotion of town employees. This question has been put to referendum and the citizens of the town agree – the council, solicitor, and town management should respond to enact the will of the voters.

Ms. Liese, request this letter be included in the packet for the next town meeting.

V/r,
Christopher Kona
Richmond, RI

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