



# TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

June 1, 2016

MEMO TO: Board of Selectmen  
FROM: Blythe C. Robinson  
Town Manager  
RE: Conservation Agent Appointment Recommendation

As you know, Conservation Agent position was advertised to be filled earlier this year after the departure of the Ashland agent that we had contracted for at 10 hours/week. Ashland notified us that their workload had increased and they were no longer in a position to continue providing us with an Agent. We reached out to our neighbors and identified an opportunity with the Town of Northbridge to share an agent for a total of 19 hours per week, 11 to be utilized by Upton, and the balance by Northbridge. We utilized the State's website for Conservation, and two different newspapers to get the word out, receiving 9 applications, of which six were qualified by the Personnel Board. As a result of the joint interview process between Upton and Northbridge, a background check, references and other pre-employment requirements I recommend that Mr. David Pickart be hired to fill this position.

The interview panel (three Upton Conservation Commission Members, Northbridge Conservation Commission Chairman Bill Dausey and Debbie Amorelli, Personnel Board Chairman) invited five of the candidates for an interview to determine their knowledge and technical skills needed for the job. Four candidates accepted the interview and the Committee unanimously recommended that Mr. Pickart's candidacy be further considered.

Both Chris Scott and Mr. Dausey performed reference checks after the offer was made to Mr. Pickart. The comments received back from various sources describe Mr. Pickart as "easy to work with", "incredibly knowledgeable" and able to convey that knowledge to others with a great deal of patience. They confirmed that Mr. Pickart is "very, very good with laws and regulations" and has been able to develop a strong positive relationship with DEP, and the respect that he has earned with that agency. The panel was impressed by his experience in developing management plans for conservation land, and his knowledge and experience with wetlands, and his very professional manner. They noted that it is important for someone in this position to be able to explain wetlands regulations clearly and gently to homeowners. Of

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
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importance to Northbridge is his ability to be a good teaching resource for their commissioners and others involved with the Conservation Commission, as this will be the Town's first agent.

Jessica's education includes a Master's degree in environmental geology and many years of experience in wetlands, engineering and environmental applications. Currently he is running his own company and has the flexibility to serve our two communities along with his other work load.

Based upon this information I have made a conditional offer of employment to Mr. Pickart which he has accepted, and he is in the process of taking his pre-employment physical and drug test. As long as those results are satisfactory I ask that you affirm my decision to offer him this position, and waive the 15 day waiting period. He intends to start work on Monday, June 13, 2016. Enclosed with this memo is a copy of his application for employment. I would be happy to discuss this further with you at our next meeting and answer any questions you may have about this appointment.

Cc: Upton Conservation Commission  
Northbridge Conservation Commission

Enclosures