

**Enfield Board of Selectmen
Enfield, New Hampshire**

MINUTES of May 25, 2005

Board of Selectmen: Dominic Albanese, Chairman; Nancy Scovner; Curtis Payne

Administrative Staff: Alisa D. Bonnette, Secretary

Others: Don Jutton, Municipal Resources, Inc.; Kristen Fountain, Valley News

Mr. Albanese called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm and introductions were made.

Mr. Albanese explained that the Board of Selectmen chose not to renew April Whittaker's contract. The contract required 6 months notice and will be expired in October.

The Selectmen will interview both Don Jutton of Municipal Resources, but also Donetta Haley of the Local Government Center for professional recruitment services.

Mr. Albanese wished to make it clear that the Board is not looking to Municipal Resources to provide town manager services, but to potentially provide professional services as a recruiter.

Don Jutton explained that there is a dramatic difference between the services provided by his firm versus that provided by the Local Government Center.

Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) would interview the Board of Selectmen to find out what the next 5 years might look like, the challenges facing the town, etc. They also recommend three panels: a citizen panel, a professional panel, and an employee panel. The citizen and employee panels would be brought together early in the process.

Mr. Payne inquired into the number of people typically on a citizen panel. Mr. Jutton replied that the number of people on the citizen panel would depend on how fragmented the townspeople are. The employee panel typically would have 4 to 6 members.

Mrs. Scovner asked about the necessity of a citizen panel. Mr. Jutton recommends a citizen panel, which not only provides citizens the opportunity to participate, but the citizens also help the Town Manager to get settled in town. Mr. Jutton recommends, after narrowing down the field, inviting the finalist and his or her family for a weekend for a social event. He would like the event to be attended by a wide array of individuals from various groups in the community – civic, school, religious, etc.

The professional panel would likely include area managers, Pat MacQueen, Don Jutton and other managers for a panel of 4 or 5 individuals. The role of the professional panel would be to determine if any of the candidates have the skills to do the job.

The employee panel would include department heads and a few members of the staff that the others trust. The role of the employee panel would be to determine if the candidate is the kind of person they could follow. A decision would not be based solely on the desires of the employee panel, but their opinions would be considered.

The role of the citizen panel would be to look at the values, philosophy, background and attitude of the candidate to determine if they feel it would be a good fit.

The position would be advertised in major newspapers and in the ICMA newsletter, and posted to several websites. Advertising can be local, regional (New England) or national. Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of each. Mr. Jutton explained that a national search can state that people with experience in New England are preferred.

Travel costs can be determined by the Selectboard and can include paying all travel costs for candidates, paying no travel costs, or paying a portion of the travel costs.

The Selectmen will have the opportunity to participate as much or as little as they want. The Board would approve the ad and placement of the ad (with costs known in advance). It would probably take about 60 days to get the ad out and begin receiving resumes.

MRI has a computer-based system that can be set up for citizen input. A "results lab" can be set up using 15 to 20 computers. Citizens can be scheduled to come in and answer questions on the system. The information provided by the citizens would then be compiled and translated into what they're looking for in a Town Manager. Seventy-five to 100 citizens can typically participate in a session.

Mr. Jutton explained MRI's profiling system that determines on the job behavior and values based on answers to a number of questions. The town will want a manager that is complementary to staff rather than having competing skills with staff.

Mr. Jutton stressed the need for realistic expectations at the beginning of the process.

In response to Mrs. Scovner's inquiry, Mr. Jutton explained that the process would take about 4 or 5 months to complete. It is possible to get the ad placed early in the process and to conduct other portions of the process while awaiting responses.

Discussion ensued regarding experience in the public sector. Mr. Jutton stated that they don't necessarily want to limit the candidates to public managers. Local government is more about process. Mr. Jutton named some towns and cities that have managers that previously were employed in the private sector, including the telephone company and retail.

Mr. Jutton noted that different individuals could be equally good managers but have very different styles. It's important to get the right fit between what the town needs and what an individual can provide.

MRI would interview the Board of Selectmen, get the advertisement placed, do the results lab and then interview department heads and key employees in order to validate or refute what the Selectmen say. They want to find out what the community thinks.

Education and employment verification is done early on. Reference checks are done later in the process. If the Board purchases the comprehensive service MRI will also do a full background check. Mr. Albanese responded that the only concern he's heard voiced about MRI is that their background checks aren't as deep as they can be.

Mr. Jutton stated that if "the fix is in" the process would be a waste of time. The Board assured him they had no one in mind for the position.

MRI would have 4 or 5 of their staff review the resumes and rank them. They would then look at the raw scores and rank them as those that definitely should have an interview, those that should be looked at further, and those that are clearly not a good fit and don't require further consideration.

A preliminary phone interview with 2 or 3 MRI staff members would take place and would include questions such as: "Why are you leaving?" "Have you ever spent a winter in New England?" "Is there anything in your background that might be embarrassing?"

Copies of the candidate's college transcript and degree would be required. And MRI would verify employment.

While the Selectboard wants to maintain an open process and Mr. Jutton agreed that could be done, there are limits to the information that can be disclosed, particularly early in the process. The candidates must be protected in order not to jeopardize their current employment. Mr. Jutton stated that there has been a member of the press on one of the panels on a previous job, and it has proven to be helpful. The reporter is then able to report on the process.

Mr. Albanese expects the Selectboard would get some criticism for hiring a recruiter and MRI. He would like to be as open and direct as the Board can be without hurting any of the candidates. Mr. Jutton said the Board just needs to recognize the candidates' privacy. The candidates will be informed during the telephone interview that there is going to be a citizens panel.

Mrs. Scovner asked what Town Manager's are getting paid now-a-days and was informed by Mr. Jutton that for a town this size, about \$60,000 - \$70,000.

Once the initial list of candidates is ranked and narrowed down, questionnaires are sent with questions framed around the challenges posed by Enfield as determined by the interview with the Board of Selectmen. Some individuals are more articulate in writing than verbally, or the reverse. There's a need to be sure there's depth and substance. What is their management style?

Mr. Jutton expects between 6 & 10 interviews beginning with the telephone interviews, then three panel interviews. The employee group will be asked to self-nominate representatives, someone who understands what's going on and who others trust. In some cases the employee panel will perform formal interviews, in others it is more of a tour of facilities. The Selectboard

had already discussed the possibility of a tour. The Board also hoped the Police Chief and Director of Public Works could have some one-on-one time with the potential candidates.

Early in the process the Board of Selectmen are welcome to observe, but it's not recommended they participate. Out of the process one or two (rarely 3 or 4) candidates are brought to the Selectboard. At this point the process is ad different as the personalities involved.

Contract preparation and negotiation was discussed. MRI would assist to whatever degree the Selectboard chooses. There is also a role in the contract preparation for the Town's attorney.

Discussion of cost for these professional services ensued. A complete package, with all available assistance, would run approximately \$14,000, assuming the candidate is from out of state. The Selectboard can choose from a variety of options to get the package they want. With a complete package the only thing town staff will have to do is coordinate the results lab appointments.

Mr. Jutton explained that MRI's job is to make sure people's expectations are real and the personality of the individual and their managing style is the correct fit for the town.

Mr. Jutton will provide the Selectmen with a detailed proposal by the end of the week.

The Board thanked Mr. Jutton for coming.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.