

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

MINUTES of May 27, 2005

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

Administrative Staff: Alisa D. Bonnette, Secretary

Others: Donetta Haley, Local Government Center

Mr. Albanese called the meeting to order at 5:07 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.

Ms. Haley was informed that both she and Don Jutton of Municipal Resources, Inc., were being interviewed for professional recruitment services. The Board would like to move ahead aggressively and plans to have a decision by next week. What the Board is looking for from Ms. Haley is the process, deliverables and cost for recruitment by the Local Government Center (LGC).

Ms. Haley passed out brochures of LGC recruitment services and a proposal.

Ms. Haley stated that LGC would do everything. They would look at the town's needs, help prepare a job description, draft an ad, place the ad wherever the Board would like, post the job on their website, get the word out to the Municipal Manager's Association, then sit back and wait for resumes. Each resume would be acknowledged, reviewed by 2 or 3 staff members and then their ratings would be compared. Copies of all of the resumes come back to the Board of Selectmen with LGC's suggestions and recommendations. The Selectboard has the opportunity to look them all over if they like.

LGC would set up interviews. They can also do them with the Selectmen if they like. LGC can provide a list of sample questions and guide the town through the interview process.

Mr. Albanese asked if the first level interview was just with the Selectmen. Ms. Haley replied that more communities are going with just the Selectboard. Others have had school members, business community members, former Selectmen and/or clergy. One had department heads involved, while another had 7-8 citizens on a committee and wanted them to narrow down the field to 2 or 3 candidates.

Mrs. Scovner asked about having people who work for the town interviewing as well. Ms. Haley replied that had been done and worked out well. They can bring a good perspective.

Mrs. Scovner asked if the candidates could come to Enfield to meet with department heads, see the area, etc. Ms. Haley said that was doable, though the town might want to wait until the field was narrowed down. This has helped candidates decide if it's a community they want to move to.

Mrs. Scovner asked if April Whittaker's position on the LGC Board, and not renewing her contract, would jaundice the recruitment. Mr. Payne asked if Ms. Haley saw a conflict. Ms. Haley assured that the Board that she did not.

Mr. Albanese asked if the Selectmen were to get pushed on the issues, what would be her method of isolation? Ms. Haley responded that LGC is a professional organization and they work for the town. She would be happy to have the Executive Director speak directly to them. All agreed there appears to be no conflict.

Mr. Albanese asked how Ms. Haley would describe the best search process. Ms. Haley asked, "How involved do the citizens want to be?" The Board does not know how involved the citizens would like to be, but agree they should be involved. The Board will be looking for a lot of input from the citizenry.

Mr. Albanese would also like some one-on-one time with the department heads and candidates. One issue the new manager would have to face is growth from the direction of Lebanon and Hanover and what Enfield needs to do to prepare for that. Mr. Albanese's fear is pricing locals out of their homes with taxes.

Mr. Albanese said they probably want someone who's seasoned. Mr. Payne suggested a "people person." Mrs. Scovner suggested someone charismatic. Mr. Albanese went on to explain that the Chief of Police and Director of Public Works know how to run their departments. Someone is needed that will respect that knowledge, mentor them, etc.

Ms. Haley asked if the department heads were on board with this and was informed that, yes, they were. Mr. Albanese added that the staff would probably miss April Whittaker. Mrs. Whittaker was the first real town manager to bring down walls and paved the way for someone more seasoned to continue.

Ms. Haley explained that LGC would perform background checks. If a private investigator were to be requested by the Board it would be at the town's expense. LGC would do a criminal record check, motor vehicle check and credit check. LGC has 2 prior police chiefs on staff that would do a very good job. LGC would also check educational credentials.

Ms. Haley was asked if LGC has completed a town manager search recently. She responded that they've done a lot of administrators, who had varying degrees of responsibility, but would have to check on town managers. At the Selectmen's request, Ms. Haley will provide the board with references.

Mrs. Scovner asked if there would be enough of a pool of candidates in NH or if the Board would have to go outside the state. Ms. Haley has been disappointed with the pool for administrators. She hopes there will be a sufficient pool of candidates in New England. She would hate for the Board to have to go national. Mr. Albanese replied that the Board would be willing to take an administrator and that he'd prefer 5 to 7 years of experience. Discussion of specific individuals that might apply followed.

Ms. Haley explained that it's important to get a job description completed. LGC would be happy to help, but the Selectmen should have in mind specific duties, strengths, etc. Mr. Albanese feels a job description would be a benefit during the review process.

\$3,500 covers everything but the cost of advertising and travel expenses. It does include the background checks.

Mr. Albanese informed Ms. Haley that MRI is willing to do interviews and help the Selectmen figure out what they need in a manager. They would also set up a citizen's committee to welcome them.

Ms. Haley responded that she'd be happy to work with the Board at no extra charge. Ms. Haley went on to say that LGC could keep costs lower because they're a non-profit organization. They also have a wealth of resources at their fingertips.

Mrs. Scovner suggested that if the candidate is in NH or close by in Vermont, to take a day and go out on the street to talk to people. Ms. Haley responded that another town did that and found it very valuable.

Mr. Albanese asked if LGC had the resources to meet the town's timeline. Ms. Haley pointed out the timeline included in her proposal. Oftentimes people have contracts and have to give 30 days notice. Mrs. Scovner replied that 30 days either way would be OK.

Mr. Albanese asked if LGC would look at the contract to give the Selectmen opinions. Ms. Haley replied they would, but recommended review of the contract by the town's attorney.

MRI does phone interviews. Does LGC do any prescreening? Ms. Haley responded that yes, they've done that before and are happy to do it. This service would not be extra unless long trips were required.

LGC does all photocopying, acknowledgement letters, rejection letters, etc.

The Board had no additional questions for Ms. Haley.

Ms. Haley will send the Board some references.

Mr. Albanese stated that one thing the Board has committed to public is an open process. All meetings will be public. It is expected that no names will be mentioned until the final candidates are determined, and then only with their permission.

Ms. Haley replying to a question from Mr. Albanese said that LGC would negotiate for the town. A salary in the low \$70,000 range and the town's benefit package should be adequate.

Possible members of the citizen committee were discussed.

Ms. Haley was thanked for her time.

The Board discussed pros and cons of each firm, but would like to take time to consider the information they've received. A meeting was scheduled for Thursday, June 2, 2005 at 5:00 PM to continue discussion and make a decision.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM