

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FEBRUARY 20, 2014

Present Selectmen Elizabeth Gorski, Joseph D'Amore and Chairman Donald Greaney.

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. at Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to interview three applicants for the Finance Director position.

6:00 P.M. – Andrew Vanni – currently works for Town of Middleton as Chief Financial Officer. Vanni told the Board he supervises Treasurer/Collector and on occasion had filled in for that position when the previous Treasurer left. Chairman Greaney asked Andrew if he has any IT experience. Vanni responded that he does; that Middleton uses the Munis System and he has responsibility of all computers; that he and one other employee changed Middleton's system over to the Munis system. Chairman Greaney asked whether he has the ability to help people trouble shoot computer problems with their pc's and Andrew responded yes he can. Andrew also told the Board he is certified as Accountant and Assessor.

Selectman Gorski asked whether Vanni has experience in procurement and he responded that he is not the CPO but is familiar with 30B; that they just built an elementary school and tore down the old and built new. D'Amore asked Vanni what his experience is with the budget process and Vanni told the Board that he prepares the budget for the town and the school submits their budget to him for review; that Middleton is part of a regional school system and they also belong to Essex Aggie and North Shore Community. Selectman Gorski asked Andrew what his thoughts were about regionalizing certain services and he responded that Middleton did join Sheriff Cousins regionalized dispatching but it's too early to determine the results.

Chairman Greaney asked how Vanni fills his role with Middleton and Vanni told the Board that he supervises the Treasurer, performs IT work, is the Accountant and wears lots of hats; that he enjoys having responsibility; that if he was offered this job it would extend his duties even more due to the town not having a Town Administrator. When asked whether Middleton taxpayers pay a CPA percentage, Vanni told the Board that their taxpayers pay 1% and he feels it's a good program. Chairman Greaney responded that there is some good merit to it.

Chairman Greaney asked Andrew whether he's familiar with enterprise funds and Andrew responded that Middleton's Electric Department is enterprise and is a plus to the community; that he allocates their cost for payroll taxes, retirement, insurance and administration costs; that electric collects their own bills and pays an annual in lieu of tax payment.

The Selectmen thanked Vanni for meeting with them this evening and asked that he email or call their Assistant's office if he has any questions later.

6:40 P.M. – Mark Cousins – Business Manager for Ipswich Electric Department. Told Selectmen he prepares enterprise budgets; that he sat on committees at Triton Regional for redoing regional agreement three or four years ago. Cousins told the Board that he would have limited help for computer problems. Chairman Greaney told Mark that the current Finance Director probably has the town's budget already projected and prepared for a few years going

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forward; that he wears many hats and shovels, changes light bulbs, helps with projects, etc. Greaney told Cousins that when they put a project out to bid the Finance Director oversees our projects. Cousins told the Board that he has overseen a lot of projects and is able to write grants, as needed. Mark told the Board that he has prepared a 5 year Capital Plan on Water and Sewer and Road work, and did budgeting for capital projects. Greaney asked whether Cousins has a lot of interruptions during his day and Mark responded that he does by phone, staff and citizens.

Mark told the Selectmen he has put together bids for construction and infrastructure and an automated reading system; that has put bids together, ranked bidders and been through training and will be certified in 30B.

Selectmen D'Amore asked what Cousins skill set is with technology and Mark responded that he uses Microsoft Office and Excel for spreadsheets. D'Amore asked what kind of experience did he have collecting delinquent bills and Mark responded that he has a lot of experience and that you need to tread lightly with certain; that you can't make exceptions. Cousins told the Board that he is not afraid of doing extras outside the job description like changing bulbs, sweeping floors, shoveling, overseeing CPA and other projects.

Cousins also told the Board he has worked with the Assessors' Office and DOR; that he has been working at his current position for the last eight years and is able to do all functions of his staff, and that he tries to get the citizen to walk away less unhappy.

Chairman Greaney thanked Cousins for taking the time to meet with the Board and asked that if he has any questions later to email or call the Board's Assistant.

7:05 P.M. – Denise Dembkoski – Treasurer/Collector for Town of Swampscott. Selectman Greaney asked Ms. Dembkoski to tell the Board a little about herself. Ms. Dembkoski told the Board she has worked in Swampscott for over 14 years as their Computer Analyst, Treasurer/Collector and oversees cable access and the phone system. Denise stated she performs all Treasurer/Collector work, processes payroll in house and handles employee benefits; that she oversees 3 employees and 20 bank accounts. She told the Board that she works with Accountant Office to produce the town budget but has limited experience with regional school district budgets, and she is one of three (Treasurer/Collector, Accountant and Assessor who provide details for preparation of the tax recap. Denise mentioned that she does not have grant writing experience.

Ms. Dembowski told the Selectmen that she feels the Finance Director position would be a good fit for her. Chairman Greaney told her that the current Finance Director and the Board's Assistant run the day to day operation of town hall.

Chairman Greaney told Denise that she would be responsible for putting CPA funded projects out to bid and would have oversight over the projects; that she would need to oversee the financial side of the current Pines project and the borrowing and financial needs of current land purchases. Greaney also told Ms. Dembkoski the makeup of our government, explaining that a lot of offices are limited to one staff person; that the town has good people and the Selectmen care about their employees; that we are a member of a regional school system; our payroll is

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prepared by an outside payroll company, our fire department is a call department with a part-time Fire Chief, and the Police Department is made up of a Chief, Deputy, two Sergeants, a Detective and four full-time Patrolmen, and good equipment and personnel on the Highway Department; that our Water/Sewer Department and Light Department are enterprise funds.

Selectman Gorski mentioned that the position requires some night meetings with Selectmen, the Finance Board, Capital Improvement meetings and Town Meetings. Denise responded that she has no issues with meetings.

Selectman D'Amore told Dembkoski that he is anticipating an override request for school modified green project at Pentucket Middle School and fix old High School; that State was offering low interest loans and 42% reimbursement. He also told Denise that they need help with the light department paying more back to the town or lowering the users rates.

Denise told the Board that she loves the job she does, loves municipal government and loves working with the public, and feels that she would be a good fit for Groveland's Finance Director position, thanking the Board for their time.

Chairman Greaney thanked Dembkoski for coming in to meet with the Board and asked her to call or email the Board's Assistant if she finds she has questions after leaving.

At the close of the interviews, the Board discussed the six candidates and following discussion, Gorski moved, D'Amore seconded, and it was

VOTED: That Chairman Greaney telephone Ms. Dembkoski the next day and offer her the position of Finance Director; and if she is no longer interested, that he call Andrew Vanni and offer the position to him.

Moved Gorski, seconded D'Amore, and it was

VOTED: To adjourn.
Adjourned at 7:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Lewandowski, Administrative Assistant