

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2012 - 7:00 P.M.
SELECTMEN MEETING ROOM

Meeting came to order at 7:00 p.m. with Selectmen Troy E. Garron, Kim R. Roy present. Michael J. Schleiff was not in attendance.

The Board met with candidates for the position of Veterans Agent. Following is a synopsis of those interviews:

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

Wilford C. Corey

Roy began by saying that he has a pretty extensive resume and asked if he could tell them a little bit about himself. He started by saying that he is the Regional Leader of the Massachusetts HirePatriots and explained that this is a non profit 501(c) organization. He manages a website where local residents and businesses can post one day jobs either full time or part time positions for free. Off duty GIs, veterans and their families can pick up these jobs to earn money as well as businesses can post. This is not a full time position for Mr. Corey as he also is the owner of VET NET Plymouth, which instructs veterans on how to use the Mass JobQuest site to the fullest extent to acquire jobs.

Roy had also asked if he dealt with any Veterans' Agents before and if he was familiar with the role of a Veterans' Agent. He stated that he has worked with Mike Kelley at the Plymouth Career Center and was aware of the VA position.

Seeing as our current Veterans' Agent does a lot of social work Garron asked if he has had direct contact with V.A. Hospitals or any of the medical units. He stated that he has gone there for his own needs as well as sent others. Mr. Corey realizes that he has some reading to catch up on some things but for the most part has the feel for the benefits out there for veterans. Garron also asked how his computer skills were and he said pretty well and that he just has to brush up on excel.

Roy asked what his availability would be throughout the week if he was hired for the position and he said that he teaches classes Monday and Friday mornings but if needed on those mornings he had people who could help out and the rest of the week he can play around with.

Garron explained some other things that are part of the job in which is coordinating the Memorial Day Parade and that his hours may go beyond the office. He also asked him to explain a little about his military and leadership experience he had and he began by saying that he joined in 1981 at the age of twenty eight and was stationed in Germany working on tanks and in regards to leadership he stated he was a gunner on the company's commander tank and was put in command on the tank.

Garron also asked why should the Board choose him and he said that he brings a lot of passion, especially getting a veteran a job, which there is no better feeling. He realizes that here are lots of veterans who will not be able to work because of

injuries and issues that they have brought home with them so he will help them seek benefits in other ways.

Garron stated that he does not know if the Board is going to make a decision this evening seeing as one of the Board members was not in attendance but that Mr. Corey will hear back from them either way. Garron wanted to thank him for his service and knows that there are a lot of veterans who appreciate what he does for them.

Edward Fowler

Roy began by asking Mr. Fowler to tell them a little bit about himself and why he would like the job. He went on to say that he grew up in Abington and at the age of seventeen he joined the army and was out at age twenty five. He then moved to Europe to a bit and returned to the states. He attended Massasoit then transferred to Bridgewater State College where he received a degree in physiology. He worked for the Department of Mental Health in the treatment center for the sexually dangerous as an escort counselor. His job involved observing potential patients, who may be getting out, interacting with their families. He then worked for Department of Corrections at the woman's prison in Framingham as a Corrections Counselor. Mr. Fowler then started an Insurance Agency with nothing, which grew pretty fast and after five years sold the company, moved to Bridgewater, started a family, moved to Halifax six years ago and recently retired at age 62. He has a farm on Franklin Street with some farm animals and really enjoys it. Have 2 children both whom have graduated from Silver Lake and are attending college.

As for being a Veterans' Agent he thinks he can do some good for the veterans and has helped a couple of people already. One is his ninety year old neighbor who broke his hip. Mr. Fowler did some research and found some websites and approached the gentleman's daughter and offered her the information. He also took him to see a former Veterans' Agent, who volunteers at the veteran's center in Brockton, to help get him on the right track. Mr. Fowler is familiar with the benefits out there that veterans are not aware of. Roy asked if that was his first experience dealing with a Veterans' Agent and he said it was not and explained that he applied for disability a couple of years ago. He added that he was surprisingly happy as how things are working out and that once you understand the system you see that it is a great quality health care.

Roy noticed that he was a peer counselor and Mr. Fowler said that was a work study program and was there for two years. He remains in contact with the people to stay up on what is going on.

Garron asked what his experience in the military was and he stated he was a medic. To start off he was Korea then Vietnam then in Germany. He thinks that he can do some good for people and he looked at what the veteran job entailed and what the VSO organization should be and what the State says it should be. He thinks that the numbers of veterans will increase due to the enormous amount of people serving multiple tours.

Garron said that the position not only deals with helping the veterans but involves coordinating the Memorial Day Parade, the flags for the fallen veterans in town, and social work. He was asked if he was good with the computer and he said yes and does okay with excel.

Garron asked how his experience was with the military. Mr. Fowler began saying that initially it was very good in Korea and liked that tour. Vietnam was different it was 1969-70 and things were beginning to fall apart and when he came back it was like a different world and it was if he was placed in a different country and he did not know how to react.

Garron asked what does he brings to the table that maybe the other candidates might not. He said he brings a lot of years of management where he was involved dealing with independent people and getting them in the direction that he wants them to go in and in order to do that you need to listen to what they have to say and see what their thoughts are. He never thought he would be doing this and began by stating why his dad was big into the VFW and loved marching and organizing the parades. He really did not like doing that and would rather help people directly.

He continued to say that he realizes that issues do not surface for years as it did for him and he wants to be there to help that person. Lots of veterans hold it together because they feel that is the way it should be. Things have changed over the years and now people go over as units and come back as units and there is discomposure time and before there wasn't.

Garron added that we have a couple of applicants and that it is a difficult job for the Board because they all are very qualified and each of them brings a certain balance to the position. Mr. Fowler had asked if Tuesday evening as well as some day time hours would be available for him to work if given the position and the Board stated that the hours are flexible. Garron explained Gary (current VSO) has done a wonderful job and has put a lot the time in, learnt the system and done a lot of leg work and hopes that Gary will have the time to show the next VSO the ropes.

The Board thanked him for coming in and said that they will be in touch which may not be for another week as one of the Board members was not present this evening.

Carin L. Smith

Roy began the interview by asking her why she was interested in being the Veterans' Service Officer for Halifax and her experience. Ms. Smith began by saying that she has been out of the military for about a year after being in for twenty-one years. She continued by stating she was the go to person/mom of her battalions/problem solver. Ms. Smith has spent time volunteering with Nathan Hale Veterans Foundation as an Outreach Coordinator and Customer Service Representative. She also has volunteered at the Career Center and through the center she met Mr. Hart and then starting volunteering with him at the Veteran's Outreach Center. She has also been spending one day a week working with Paul Provencher, the Middleboro VSO, to become more knowledgeable about the position. In addition she started a small support group through *LinkedIn* where

military personnel can post comments and ask questions and she uses the resources she has to help them. She admitted that she doesn't know a lot about the system or the VS1 database but explained that she can do database and added that with her background as an administrative supervisor and excellent customer service skills she would be a great fit for this position. Ms. Smith stated that this is the first job that she has interviewed for in a long time because promotions in the military are based on your record.

Roy asked what she did in the military and she stated that she held many jobs starting with being a truck driver, progressed to supplies, worked in administration and then ended in operations. When working in operations the job entailed lots of budget forms, schools, took care of entire battalions needs, worked with the medical records and was familiar with all the regulations.

Garron then asked what she could bring to the job and she said she is very positive, extremely organized, always wants to get things done and finish, can multi task and will take that extra step to find the answer.

Garron asked her to tell him a little bit about the medals of honors she received. Ms. Smith said that the military is always giving awards that one does not feel they deserve such as one for time served or good conduct. She did earn a volunteer medal for the Honor Guard, which she was very proud of and she truly feels she deserved. She was ran the Honor Guard for six years which entailed attending funerals, parades and memorial dedications. Attending these events were done on you own time and required complete dedication.

Ms. Smith worked for the State and then transferred to Aviation to do administration and deployed 180 soldiers. She was in charge of all their records and personal paperwork, processed all travel vouchers, awards, tracked leave, vacation and sick time.

Garron ask Ms. Smith how familiar she was with DAV or the Veterans Administration regarding the paperwork for receiving benefits for disability. She stated that that is one of her weaknesses so she put together a book as a resource guide and have been reading up on it to help her better understand what is required.

Roy asked if she was familiar with the hours of the job and if she had any constraints. Ms. Smith said that she has no problem with home visits and she can work her schedule around others and that she has a great family support system. Roy mentioned the parades and the placing of the flags at the cemeteries and she said that she was fine with all that and has no problem organizing the parades.

Garron asked if she had any questions and she did asked if the current VSO would be around to help with training for the job and Garron said that it is his intention to help train the new VSO. Roy thanked her for her service to our country and explained that there is a third member on the Board who was unable to attend tonight's meeting who would need to review the resumes of the applicants who were interviewed. Garron thanked her for coming in and mentioned that they hope to have a decision by next week.

DISCUSSION ON THE APPLICANTS

Roy stated that all three candidates were great and Garron added that they all bring a special talent to the job and each one is unique. Garron is leaning towards #2 and number #3 and Roy agreed both a good fit but is leaning towards #3.

Garron said that he liked #1 but he did not have direct contact with the VA hospital where the second candidate did. He added that if you take into consideration an individual who does the research and paperwork you would lean towards #2 but for life experience, enthusiastic and someone who wants to take care of people it would be #3. He also said that they both indicated that they have done the research on the position. It was noted that they both had a career in the military.

Seelig mentioned that Schleiff could review tonight's tape and then could offer his input and Roy suggested that Gary also review the tape.

Roy will be going away and she is okay if Garron and Schleiff make a decision without her because she would be happy with either #2 or #3.

Seelig will talk with Schleiff and ask Gary that if he has the opportunity could he look at the tape.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Concession Stand

Seelig stated that opening day is on April 22nd and would like to recommend to the Board to give the okay for Halifax Baseball to open the concession for April 22nd, 23rd, and then on April 24th we have an appointment with them.

Roy had asked Garron if he would make the motion but before doing so he wanted to say that he is perturbed that no one from the organization showed up at the Board's last meeting.

Moved by Garron and seconded by Roy, the Board unanimously voted to allow the organization to use the concession stand for the first few days of their opening season until they meet with the Board of Selectmen on April 24th.

There being no further business, moved by Garron and seconded Roy, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Michael J. Schleiff
Clerk

/pjm