

Personnel Board Meeting
Wayland Town Building - Selectmen's Office/Selectmen's Meeting Room
Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2013

Members Present:

N. McCarthy (NM); N. Willard (NW); P. Schneider (PS); J. Green (JG)

NM called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Public Comment:

None

Discuss Meeting with BOS:

The members first reviewed a draft recommendation for the Board of Selectmen (BoS) regarding the Selection Committee. The draft recommendation established a 7-member Selection Committee which would be charged to conduct interviews and recommend up to 3 candidates to the BoS as finalists. The members discussed having 4 of the Selection Committee members be designated, one each, by the Personnel Board, Finance Committee, School Committee and Board of Public Works, and discussed ways that these 4 individuals could advertise for and select the 3 at-large members.

JG suggested that it would be useful for any consultant who is hired to have input from the BoS and the townspeople about the type of candidate being sought, so the consultant could target recruitment. The members discussed the Town Administrator job description and agreed that the Personnel Board and BoS should review it, and that the BoS in particular should have a discussion about how the members of the BoS interpret it. The members discussed the job description's relationship to the town by-laws.

PS stated that in reviewing the draft RFP that MP and JS had been working on for a consultant, he noticed statutory language allowing the town to select the consultant with a somewhat flexible, non-formulaic approach and that he hoped we could select a new Town Administrator in a similar manner that does not require a rigid, numeric formula.

M. Peabody arrived at 7:50 pm.

MP asked if any members had changes to suggest to the draft RFP. NM asked about the second bullet in the "Scope of Work" which relates to assistance with soliciting community input, and the importance of incorporating this aspect of work if the town decided to use the Collins Center, since Collin would not be subject to the RFP process.

NM asked about the advantages/disadvantages of selecting the Collins Center as the consultant, recognizing that this would be outside the RFP process because of its affiliation with the University of Massachusetts. All members discussed these issues. The members noted that there seemed to be a small number of consultants in this field in MA, that the Collins Center had

strong experience, and agreed that the town would save time by avoiding the RFP requirements. PS stated that the town loses the ability to hear other ideas if does not go through the RFP process. MP noted that the RFP is complicated but generally asks for the same information that consultants would already be including in their narrative submissions, and that the consultant the town used in the past to assist with the performance evaluation process (Morse) had some problems. MP stated that it bothered her that the Collins Center did not need to go through the RFP process while other competitor consultants did. All members agreed that if it was decided to move forward with the Collins Center, a representative from Collins would need to meet with BoS and PB for an interview prior to signing a contract, and that it would be possible to go through the RFP process afterwards if the group was dissatisfied with Collins. MP suggested finding out how many other searches were being conducted to make sure Collins had the capacity for Wayland's search. JG stated that we would also need to make sure Collins was not referring the same few candidates to a large number of towns at the same time. NM stated that the consensus of the Board was that while the market advantage the Collins Center had was bothersome, it was in the best interest of the town to move the process forward quickly, which merited consideration of the Collins Center outside of the RFP process.

The members discussed preliminary recommendations to the BoS about community involvement in the hiring of the new Town Administrator. The members discussed developing one questionnaire that could be used for eliciting opinions through all channels (for example open forum and electronic posting). NM stated that the public would be asked to return it by a set date so the consultant could interpret the results.

NM stated that she had spoken with Mary Antes from the League of Women Voters, who had agreed to work with the town if an open forum were to move forward, drawing on experience in holding candidates' nights and other open forums in town. NW agreed to assist Ms. Antes. The members discussed the format of an open forum and the importance of making sure that individual citizens' opinions were not double counted by responding multiple times. The members agreed that research/work on a questionnaire could commence prior to hiring a consultant but that a consultant could add value to the survey development process.

The members discussed recommendations to the BoS re: clarifying the competencies, attributes, and expectations of the new Town Administrator", in particular the importance of reviewing the job description and discussing what the language means in terms of behavior. The members also discussed a document illustrating how general language in a job description such as "communicate effectively" and "able to work cooperatively" needs to be fleshed out with specific examples of what the language means in practice.

The members joined BoS for a Joint Meeting at 8:40 pm.

Joint Meeting to Discuss the Hiring Process of the Town Administrator:

Board of Selectmen members present: Steve Correia (SC); Ed Collins (EC); Doug Leard (DL); Joe Nolan (JN); Tony Boschetto (TB).

Also present: John Senchyshyn

JS discussed the search for an interim Town Administrator. He stated that he had learned of 4 potential candidates, but that 2 had already exceeded their earnings limit for the year and one had not returned JS's call. JS included the resume of one potential candidate in the packet for the BoS. The Collins Center also provided a list of names of people who are interested in learning about interim assignments. JS sent an e-mail to this group and heard back from one person who had already reached the earnings cap for the year. He was expecting additional feedback from other potential candidates.

JS explained that he spoke with a representative from the Collins Center and learned that Collins is not subject to the 30B procurement procedure so it does not respond to RFPs, but rather submits its own 14-page statement. DL asked about the timing, and JS explained that John Moynihan had stated that to follow the procurement procedure we would need to place an ad in the paper, accept bids for about 2 weeks, open the bids, review them, then interview candidates, which would take at least one month. JS stated that Collins is experienced and has conducted many searches recently.

JN suggested taking a step back to focus on the near term priority of hiring an interim Town Administrator. He also suggested that while he was comfortable with the Town Administrator job description, other members of the Board had suggested a "new direction" and may not be, which could implicate the town's by-laws. DL stated that he agreed with the content of the job description but would like to see more definition and fine-tuning.

SC stated that there were 2 separate issues: (1) hiring an interim TA and (2) hiring for the permanent position, and that he would like to see more choices for an interim TA. The members discussed pursuing both at the same time.

NM stated that the Personnel Board (PB) recommended that the BoS walk through the TA job description and discuss what each line means to the members, to assist the BoS with coming to a collective vision about the new TA.

TB stated that the TA job description is not part of the town's by-laws and that the BoS can change the job description. SC asked if the job description should be fine-tuned for purposes of the interim TA or the permanent position. TB stated that JS had said the interim TA would primarily assist with BoS-related tasks - a limited subset of duties. JN stated that JS could be underestimating the duties for which interim assistance would be beneficial.

NM went over the PB's recommendations to the BoS about clarifying the expectations for the new TA and discussed the examples "communicate effectively" and "able to work cooperatively". DL stated that he would like to clarify "evaluation" in the job description as well as clarify the TA's involvement in contracts. He stated that the BoS needed to know what it was looking for in a new TA. EC stated that the existing job description was vague and meaningless. MP explained that it had been drafted through a very long process of over one year which gave input to the townspeople and all of the town's Boards.

SC stated that it was important for BoS to set the expectation of what the job means today rather than in 2004 when it was created.

TB agreed with the process of clarifying the competencies as laid out by NM but stated he wanted BoS to come to consensus after getting input from others. SC said that the consultant could help them. MP stated that BoS could start now and discuss it with the consultant later - she explained that the issue of what the TA does (set out in the job description) is separate from how they do it (which is what the BoS would clarify). TB stated that he thought both needed to be clarified.

JN suggested that BoS should go through the job description at the next meeting. Other members agreed.

JS and NM stated that it was possible to research additional ways to widen the search for an interim TA.

NM went through the PB's recommendations re: community involvement in the hiring of the new TA. TB asked that receiving feedback from town employees be added. DL said that it can be difficult to get information from town employees, and that possibly more information could be obtained if employees could submit it confidentially. JN stated that it would be beneficial for an outside consultant to gather the information from stakeholders and also to ensure that everyone's opinion is counted only once.

NM distributed the PB's recommendation about the Selection Committee. SC stated that he would like to see a town administrator, current or former, from a different town on the Selection Committee. TB stated he believed that department heads should be represented on the Selection Committee. JS stated that he strongly disagreed because it was very difficult to ask an employee to choose their boss, and that BoS had solicited input from department heads and received very little response. He suggested setting up an interview panel or group to include department heads. TB said he wanted to see a broader spectrum of public input on the Selection Committee. The group discussed how this might be possible, including increasing the committee to 9 members, which would make it more difficult to obtain a quorum. NM suggested that there were other ways to gather public input and provide it to the Selection Committee.

SC and JS discussed the School Committee's use of various panels in the search for a new superintendent. DL asked for more information on their process for next week.

NM distributed the draft RFP that JS and MP had been working on. TB asked if there were any drawbacks to going through the RFP process other than the time and effort involved. NM explained that the PB had discussed expediting the process but the BoS was expressing the view that more work needed to be done before beginning. She explained that if the BoS decided to pursue the Collins Center, the PB would recommend that their consultant meet with BoS and PB prior to signing the contract to make sure it was a good fit. She explained that there was a small group of potential consulting firms to choose from.

JN asked that the bullet point in the RFP about public involvement be clarified and expanded. JS explained that the details would come out in the interview process.

NM stated that if the BoS wanted to move in parallel, we would need to have the Collins Center come present to the Boards as well as clarify the RFP and get it out. DL and TB asked the PB to pursue the RFP process with the modifications re: public involvement. The members agreed that the RFP process did not need to run to conclusion if everyone agreed on the Collins Center prior to completing the RFP process.

JS stated that a representative from the Collins Center had told him that they will not begin an engagement until everyone knows what is being asked for in the search. The group agreed that at the next meeting, the job description would be discussed, and that perhaps the Collins Center would be invited to the following meeting.

The PB left the BoS meeting.

Follow-Up Discussion Regarding Joint Meeting with the BoS:

The members discussed reviewing the TA job description and by-laws to prepare for the next meeting.

Next Meeting:

The PB scheduled its next meeting for 9/30/13, time TBD based on where on the BoS agenda the BoS schedules the joint meeting with the PB.

NW moved to adjourn the meeting. Five members having voted in the affirmative, the motion passed. The Board adjourned at 9:50 pm

Jessica Green