

Members present: Kevin M. McCormick Christopher A. Rucho
John W. Hadley Siobhan M. Bohnson

Mr. McCormick convened the special meeting at 7:00 p.m., which is being held to conduct the final interim Town Administrator interview.

Brian Bullock, Candidate for Interim Town Administrator

Brian Bullock, 424 Chapel Street, Holden, Massachusetts, joined the Board. He has done six interim assignments since retirement and in all of them the role was the same, to carry on and provide continuity. His job is to carry forward until a permanent successor is made. The second role is to assist in the recruitment process for the next Town Administrator. In Hubbardston there philosophy was to be aggressive, they did cold calling, and resulted in receiving 40 applications, interviewing 29. He feels we have enough on our plate right now that it just needs to be continued. You have union negotiations with the police, the DPW is awaiting the new Town Administrator and you have an effort to unionize the Fire Department. For the Fire Department that first contract will be the most important. The decisions on that will be very important because they create past practice. You have building projects and you are going to town meeting. He worked on all those projects in Holden. You have RFPs out on a number of services including Assessing and IT. He has not participated in a Finance Director search. He would need to review those proposals and bring back an analysis to the Board as to whether it is the way to go. In Hubbardston they found firms outside of their budget. You have FEMA activity and we would want to maximize whatever we can for West Boylston and you have town meeting to get ready.

Ms. Bohnson. Why the Town of West Boylston, what is the interest?

Mr. Bullock. It is not my first assignment. I have worked in other communities over the past six years. Holden has worked with West Boylston on a number of projects over the years, the Holden/West Boylston sewer project, the Wachusett Regional Recycling Center, a natural fit for him.

Mr. Hadley. Do you feel your role would be more to get us ready for the next Town Administrator, or do you think the Board needs to do that.

Mr. Bullock. We will not have time or inclination to tackle new projects. What you have is going to be plenty busy enough. He wants to give the Board a very good recruitment effort. He thinks he could help with that and he doesn't think he would take on a lot of new things.

Mr. Rucho. What's the role of an Interim Town Administrator.

Mr. Bullock. Continuity and recruitment and to provide you with somebody who has had experience. My real job is did everything stay moving forward and did we get a good candidate.

Ms. Bohnson. On the reason you were in Hubbardston, you were supposed to be there two months and you stayed 2-1/2 years.

Mr. Bullock. They were going through the process of a Charter change. They kept asking him to extend and the process to create a Charter took longer.

Ms. Bohnson. What do you see as the top two challenges we are looking at besides recruiting.

Mr. Bullock. Union negotiations. They can have long-term impact. You have a 40B project you are dealing with. Those are the things you need to stay on top of. First is town meeting, after that it is union negotiations, buildings and 40B. If there is an area for me to be of assistance.

Mr. Rucho. Through the years you have been a Town Administrator, what stands out as a mistake that you made.

Mr. Bullock. Not trusting town meeting. After you stay in the business long enough some things you wanted to have happen didn't happen and then it turns out that that is why it should have happened. My job now was to expand the playing field. We would try some things, some would go and some would not. If you were with a Board that allowed for mistakes it would be town meeting votes. He doesn't regret having made the mistake.

Mr. Hadley. Are you more of a money man, financial skills.

Mr. Bullock. It is critical it is what we do. My legacy in Holden was financial management. The only time they had financial hardship was with the schools. His financial skills are on par with anyone. In Hubbardston they moved forward projects.

Mr. McCormick. How would you characterize your management style.

Mr. Bullock. In Hubbardston I started the first staff meetings. Involvement with the folks I work with. They work with me, you need flow of communication, we learned from each other, collaborative.

Mr. Rucho. What have you done for economic development

Mr. Bullock. That is a tough one. We have tried to rezone. We have an industrial park in Holden. Worked with businesses to attract them. It is something I am a fan of. West Boylston has some good road access to I-90 and Holden does not. You have a major asset that you have your own light department and the ability to run fiber. There are things that can be done. If you have maximized some of the easy low hanging fruit, what is on Route 12, then the next step is what can I provide a business. It is not easy for a small residential community to do.

Ms. Bohnson. As an interim, what is most challenging?

Mr. Bullock. Getting to know people. You have to meet people quickly. He would get to know people. If you have a summer town meeting there would be time for that. The upside of interim is you get to be very honest. I am not in a position that I have to be concerned about.

Ms. Bohnson. If I were to call Sterling, what three words would they use to describe you.

Mr. Bullock. Proactive, out of the office to try to move a project forward by any means. He was in Sterling as a consultant on a golf course purchase. They would tell you it was a very active, aggressive, get out and meeting people and get input.

Ms. Bohnson. What kind of schedule would you keep.

Mr. Bullock. He thinks it is a 2-day a week position.

Mr. McCormick. He thinks we should have a discussion with Mrs. Lucier.

Mr. Bullock. I did go through the minutes and in one set Ms. Lucier indicated she would not be interested in the interim position. He thinks this would be a two-day assignment because you have somebody of Mrs. Lucier's caliber.

Mr. McCormick advised that the Board will be making their decision tomorrow night and we will be in touch.

Motion Mr. Rucho at 7:25 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hadley, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: May 20, 2015

Nancy E. Lucier, Municipal Assistant

Kevin M. McCormick, Chairman

John W. Hadley, Vice Chairman

Christopher A. Rucho, Clerk

Siobhan M. Bohnson, Selectman