

Concord Town Manager Search Committee Minutes
Tuesday, February 19, 2019

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Concord Town Manager Search Committee was held at 3:00 p.m. in the Select Board Room at the Town House.

Present were Peggy Briggs, Bouzha Cookman, Alice Kaufman, Michael Lawson, Pauline (Polly) Reeve, Steve Verrill (remotely), and Deena Whitfield.

Absent from the Committee: Jeffery Collins, James DiGiovanni,

Present from outside the Committee:

Amy Foley, Human Resources Director, Town of Concord

Robert Mercier, Senior Consultant, Municipal Resources, Inc.

Reginald (Buzz) Stapczynski, Consultant, Municipal Resources, Inc.

Mr. Lawson called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm

Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded the Board voted to accept the minutes of January 24, 2019 as read.

Peggy Briggs	aye
Bouzha Cookman	aye
Alice Kaufman	aye
Michael Lawson	aye
Pauline Reeve	aye
Steve Verrill	abstained
Deena Whitfield	aye

Update from MRI on Applicant Flow

MRI advises that we are into the second week of advertising and have just under 20 applicants although more are in process. Five are out of state; the rest are from MA, RI, and NY. This is in line with expectations. The majority are engaged in government. MRI has reached out to those prospective candidates that they met at the MMA conference in January with differing results. They are also actively recruiting candidates who they know by reputation and are believed to have the qualities and experience we are looking for. MRI also notified us that Randolph and North Andover are in the process of recruiting a new town manager; Dedham will be starting their search soon.

Review and Approval of Essay Questions

Mike directed the committee that our role is to provide input regarding the questions (see attached) and to pare the number down from eight to five and/or add additional questions that we believe are important. Bob and Buzz will use our input to draft the final five questions which will be reviewed by Alice and Deena. Once the questions have been finalized and sent to the candidates they will also be posted on the town website.

The five topics we agreed upon were (in no special order):

1. Government efficiency – balancing town expenditures with the burden of taxation and dealing with the tension that creates. Give examples.
2. Promoting a diverse housing stock – for all segments of the population. Give examples.
3. Conflict Management – How were your conflict resolution skills used?
4. Environment, ecological, and energy sustainability and resilience. How have you demonstrated leadership in this area? Examples. How might you do so in Concord?
5. Promoting a vibrant business sector which might include small business, office/business parks, hospitals, private schools, and tourism and historical sites. Building partnerships that benefit the community. How have you done this; how might you envision doing this?

Confirm Future Meeting Dates

Thursday, April 4th at 7:30 AM – We will meet in executive session to review the binders of candidates (resumes, answers to essay questions) and pare down the group to 6-8 who will be invited to interview with the search committee. We will also review the standard questions that will be asked of all candidates. Bob and Buzz will work on this common questions.

Thursday, April 25 at 8:00 AM – We will meet in executive session to interview the selected candidates. Mike and Alice will develop a schedule that will provide for 1-hour interviews with a 15-minute recess between interviews.

Friday, April 25 at 7:30 AM – If necessary, we will hold that date and time for further deliberations regarding the finalists.

There was also some conversation regarding how we would handle the expenses for a candidate who comes from a distance. We agreed to investigate this further with the town manager if the situation arises.

Other Business

MRI will be meeting with town employees on Wednesday, February 27 from 7:30-9:30 AM. The format is drop-in and the place is TBD by Amy. A second opportunity will be on Thursday, February 28 from 2:30-4:30 PM with a similar format. Again, the location is TBD by Amy. The letter inviting employees to these drop-in sessions will be signed by Alice on behalf of the committee. MRI representatives and Committee members agreed to attend the sessions. Input gleaned from these conversations will help inform the search committee as they move forward.

Citizen Comments

Bob Grom, Chair of the School Committee, but speaking for himself as a private citizen, spoke about the qualities he thinks are important for a town manager: honesty and integrity which leads to transparency and full disclosure to the degree that it is appropriate; a good communication skills with a strong presence; and sensitivity to all constituencies. Bob is looking for someone who will engender trust. He likes the process we are using and the direction the search committee is going.

Linda Escobedo, member of the Select Board, but speaking for herself as a private citizen, questioned what materials the Select Board would receive prior to interviewing the finalists. The answer is that they will receive the binders of the finalists that would include resumes and answers to the essays questions.

Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board moved to adjourn at 4:22 PM.

Peggy Briggs	aye
Bouzha Cookman	aye
Alice Kaufman	aye
Michael Lawson	aye
Pauline Reeve	aye
Steve Verrill	aye
Deena Whitfield	aye

Respectfully Submitted,
Deena Whitfield, Clerk