

**Town Manager Search Committee  
Minutes – October 11, 2023**

**Members Present:** Doug Delay, Karen Kast-McBride, Cindy Landanno, Jane LaPointe, Thom Schotanus

**Remote participation:** Tom Liao

**Absent:** Guy Corbosiero

**Others:** David Evertsen of Municipal Solutions via Zoom

**Meeting Called to Order:** 2:12 p.m.

**Agenda/Topics**

1. Approved Minutes

- Will wait to approve minutes from our Executive Session meetings

2. Business

- Updates from David Evertsen regarding meeting he and Guy had with BOS in BOS Executive Session
  - Reviewed statistics on number of candidates, etc. without names
  - Confirmed October 30<sup>th</sup> joint meeting with BOS where we will make our recommendations on finalists for BOS interviews
  - Confirmed November 5 & 6 for onsite meeting with finalist, town department personnel, community, panel interviews, etc. Funding for travel, etc. will come from ARPA

3. Executive Session

- The Committee unanimously voted to meet in Executive Session in accordance with MGL. C30A, Sec. 21(a) #8.
- Candidates: Each committee member shared their list of Yes – No – Maybe candidates from the list of 6 remaining candidates. Two of the original eight have taken other positions and have withdrawn their applications
  - After deliberation, the committee decided that there would be value in interviewing/talking with each of the remaining 6 candidates, to build on and drill down on the information that we have from the data gathering and interviews conducted by Municipal Solutions
  - **Action:**
    - David will contact one candidate to request that he complete the paper work over this weekend so that the committee can have that information as we prepare our interview questions
- Virtual Interview Schedule

- It was decided to hold the 6 interviews on Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. Motion by Doug, seconded by Tom; unanimously passes.
  - The committee will meet in person at 8:30 a.m. to confirm the flow of the day and how we will work through the interviews
  - Cindy will be traveling, and will be joining remotely, as will David, and all candidates, including the interim town manager. Motion by Jane, Cindy seconded; unanimously passed.
- These will be 45 minute interviews, with a 15 minute break/debrief between each. The interview schedule: 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 11 a.m.; 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m. David will manage the time and waiting room, etc.
- The committee will meet from 4 – 5:30 p.m. to debrief
- **Actions:**
  - **David** – notify candidates, set up schedule, provide them with zoom link from the town
  - **Guy** – arrange for the zoom link and other technology with Deb
  - **Jane** – draft and post the meeting notice (executive session) for Thursday, October 26
- Interview Questions
  - Committee members shared ideas on questions for the upcoming virtual interview. We determined that this meeting was not the ideal time to develop these questions. The following process was recommended:  
**Actions: for Committee Members – by early the week of 10/16**
    1. Review the sample interview questions provided by Municipal Solutions for ideas
    2. Review pages 1, 7 and 8 in the recruitment profile as reminders for what we are looking for in the ideal candidates
    3. Develop/draft question. This will include one round of standard questions for all candidates to answer and a second round of more free-style questions geared to individual candidates, to better understand what we have reviewed in the materials they have provided
    4. Send your draft question to Jane  
**Action: Jane** will aggregate the questions, using a template similar to what was used in the prior TM interview process; and distribute this draft to the individual committee members for edits, etc.  
**TBD** – if we'll need a posted meeting to finalize the questions
- November 6 - Interview Panels: Technical & Administrative
  - Panels will run concurrently on Monday morning, November 6. Each will be 45-50 minutes. Panel Interviews are open to the public to attend but not to participate in the questioning

- Each panel will ask the same questions of each candidate
    - **Action: committee** – will draft/finalize guidelines & questions at a future meeting
  - Each panel will include two committee members: a facilitator and a note-taker
- At the end of each panel session, the facilitator/note-taker will ask: what's the panel's take-away, report out on each candidate (the "+" & "-") - TBD. And, at the end of the 3 panels, they will ask: what's the panel's overall take-away on the candidates they've just met
  - Panel members will have received in advance the full files on each of the candidates to be interviewed – These will be made public shortly after 10/30 when the BOS makes its decision on the finalist candidates
- Recommended and pending members – to be finalized. \*\* Members will be contacted/recruited by the named committee members asap
  - Technical Panel – facilitator: Doug or Tom; note-taker: Jane
    - Tom Kane \*\* -- **Doug**
    - Doug Delay \*\*
    - Brian Crouteau \*\* - **Karen**
    - ? Other boards or committees: ZBA, Planning, etc.
    - ? Finance Director from a neighboring community
  - Administrative Panel – facilitator & note-taker: Karen & Cindy
    - Superintendent \*\* - **Karen**
    - Glen Hunt \*\* - **Cindy**
    - ? Police and/or Fire Chiefs
    - ? David Connor
    - ? Ashburnham Town Manager
- The question of how to involve citizens and/or members of civic/social organizations in a meaningful way was discussed and not fully resolved
  - All citizens can come to the November 5 candidate meet and greet as well as to the panel interviews. Ideas mentioned: set up the candidates at different tables on Nov 5 – work community involvement into the Sunday evening program/agenda
  - Note: All information of the finalists will be public following the BOS 10/30 decision and upon notification of the finalists
  - **Action: committee** – will revisit this question at a future meeting
- November 6 – Process for BOS
  - BOS will conduct their interviews with each of the finalists in open session.
    - Candidates will not be in the room while others are being interviewed
    - **Action: David ??** – work with the BOS to develop their questions

- Executive Session: the 2 committee members (facilitator and note-taker) from the panels will meet with the BOS to provide the panel perspectives in advance of the BOS decision
    - **Action: David or Guy?** – when it's time, coordinate with Audrey to ensure that the BOS agenda for November 6 is posted the prior week with the necessary items
- 4:37 - Motion to close Executive Session by Jane LaPointe, seconded by Tom Liao. All voted Aye.
- 4. Returned to regular session - Recap of Actions to be completed before 10/26
  - **Jane:**
    - Draft minutes with actions out to the committee Thursday, 10/12
    - Compile recommended questions from committee into an interview guide; distribute to committee for edits – by 10/20-21
    - Draft and submit meeting notice & agenda for 10/26
  - **Committee Members:** Draft questions and send to Jane by early week of 10/16
  - **Karen, Cindy, Doug:** reach out to assigned panel members to request their participation. Highlight, as needed, the significance of these panels in the final decision for our next TM; let them know that they'll get detailed information packets on each of the finalists
  - **Guy:** contact Deb to schedule conference room for all day October 26 and to set up room technology and provide the zoom link to Cindy and David
  - **Dave:**
    - Contact Dionne to submit completed information by the end of this weekend
    - Set up 10/26 interview schedule with 6 candidates; provide town zoom link
  - Adjourned 4:47 p.m. Motion made by Jane LaPointe, seconded by Tom Liao. All members voted Aye

Minutes Accepted and Approved for Release: November 20, 2023