



Date Approved/Released: 10-4-18

Date Approved/Hold: \_\_\_\_\_

School Committee Chair: Huggett

### SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Interim Superintendent Interviews

Thursday, August 9, 2018

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor - Town Hall Auditorium

#### 1. Call to order: 6:00 pm/ Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Greg Vine, Dawn Fronte, Larry Murphy, Roann Demanche, Felicia Nurmsen (Abs)

#### 2. Audio/Video Disclosure: Barrie Martins, Recording Secretary

3. G. Vine informed the candidates that the meeting is being aired live on the Local Access Channel. The waiting area for the candidates not being interviewed will be on the 4<sup>th</sup>-floor conference room. G. Vine thanked D. Fronte as Chair of the search committee, which included M. J. Galat, Renee Eldredge, Ryan Forsythe, Bridget Marinelli, Keith Hickey, Mary Aker, Pamela Steffenberg, Jessica Vezina, Mary Smith and Thad King. G. Vine reviewed the search process, noting he felt heartened that 19 people submitted applications.

- a. **Mark Prince** reviewed his personal, academic and professional history. His experience includes working in Japan and the Pacific region doing Leadership Development for the military schools for the Department of Defense. He also worked in Boston Public Schools where he was a District Administrator and as Assistant Superintendent in Framingham, MA. He also served as the Director of Curriculum Grant Assessment and Instruction in Northampton, MA. Responding to the School Committee's list of prepared questions, Mr. Prince explained his experience setting district goals and action plans to move the Framingham district from Level 3 to Level 2. He stressed the importance of following targeted goals and analyzing data. He explained his goals for the district, which included working with the administration and maintaining a strong, positive relationship with the municipal government. He would build a profile of a permanent superintendent and present documentation to the school committee, noting it would remove the financial search burden from the community. He noted STEM opportunities the district could pursue. He is interested in being the permanent superintendent. He reviewed his negotiations experience, noting he does not have the full picture of the financial information. He stressed the importance of transparent communication, to make parents and the community feel connected to the schools.

- b. **Joan Landers:** G. Vine thanked her for applying and considering the position. Ms. Landers noted she has been Superintendent for 11 years, working in the Wakefield Public School District as Interim Superintendent and Superintendent for 5 years out of 10 years there. She was also the Assistant Superintendent and the Director of Student Services, the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction/Curriculum prior to becoming Superintendent. She was the Superintendent in North Middlesex for 6 years. She is familiar with Winchendon which led her to apply for the position. Responding to the committee's questions, she noted that she has gone through a strategic planning process and was trained in a process that is inclusive of the entire community with all stakeholders involved. She explained the action plan and benchmarks, and stressed that the district's mission statement is a living document and the goal/initiatives must be aligned to the school budget. She partnered with the DOE using the Planning for Success model. Everything must also be aligned to the School Improvement Plan and the District Improvement Plan. The School Committee should be apprised of how the district is progressing on a regular basis. Her goals as a Superintendent are aligned with the goals of the district. She noted that she has reviewed many documents from the district website and the press from the last year. She has outlined an entry plan (if chosen) and puts student achievement as the first priority. She is interested in applying for the permanent position. She has experiences with all types of negotiations and evaluations. She is familiar with the WPS budget and some of the issues in the past, and feels the district is moving in the right direction. She noted the importance of being visible and celebrating the successes. Communication is one of her strengths.
- c. **Suzanne Scallion** has worked in education at all grade levels for 40 years, much of it in Massachusetts and 11 years in California. She has been retired for 2 years while also coaching new superintendents, and thought her experience and perspective would be useful. She explained her experience working with boards and setting district goals in Westfield, MA that were manageable, and worked hard to meet them, always for the benefit of the kids in the system. Her priority goal as interim and for the district would be to get a sense of the school committee's interests and those of the community, the taxpayers. She stressed the importance of timely interventions for students struggling academically, acting as an advocate for the students. She noted she can bring a new perspective and would make a findings report at end of interim term. Goals should be common to all teacher and departments and be streamlined. She has been involved in Principals salary negotiations, the cost of IEP's and is aware of the debilitating effect of budget cuts. Curriculum is a great passion of hers and she stressed the importance of communication used at all levels. She would be a very visible superintendent in the community.

7:47 pm. D. Fronte moved to go into Executive Session #2 to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiation with a non-union personnel, and will return to open session with a decision or vote. Second by L. Murphy. R. Demanche – Aye; L. Murphy – Aye; D. Fronte – Aye; G. Vine – Aye. Approved 4-0-0.

8:25 pm. D. Fronte moved to adjourn from Executive Session. Second by L. Murphy, R. Demanche – Aye; L. Murphy – Aye; D. Fronte – Aye; G. Vine – Aye. Approved 4-0-0.

G. Vine thanked the great candidates; he is grateful for their willingness to come out here and their initiative to apply. He asked for a motion or nomination for the position of Interim Superintendent.

D. Fronte moved that we offer the position of Interim Superintendent to Joan Landers and to open to negotiations. Second by L. Murphy. R. Demanche – Aye; L. Murphy – Aye; D. Fronte – Aye; G. Vine – Aye. Approved 4-0-0. G. Vine will call the candidates with the decision.

Adjournment: 8:28 pm. L. Murphy moved to adjourn. Second by D. Fronte. Approved 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted: Barrie E. Martins, School Committee Recording Secretary

**List of Documents and Exhibits used:**

- Questions sheet