1. Agenda
   Documents:

   2023.04.27 TMSC AGENDA.PDF

2. Meeting Materials
   Documents:

   CLS FEEDBACK APRIL 24_25_26_2023.PDF
Town of Hartford

Town Manager Search Committee

Meeting: Thursday, April 27, 2023, 6:00 pm

Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction

AGENDA

1. Call to Order, Chair 6:00

2. Additions or deletions to Agenda

3. Review and determine Committee communication process with Hartford Staff
   a. Communication flow through TM office
   b. Committee Liaison
   c. Access to collect feedback:
      Meetings
      Survey: Update CM

4. Members report on Community Listen Session feedback
   a. Gratitude and acknowledgements
   b. Virtual Session
   b. In-person Sessions

5. Town Manager Search Process updates, D. Cloud

6. Announcements

7. Round table individual Committee member closing comment

8. Adjourn
Hartford Town Manager Search Committee
Community Listening Sessions Priorities and Feedback
April 24-26, 2023

4/24 Bugbee Center Session Priorities (Brown/Campbell/Lucke)

- Listening and following up is key.
- Transparency to the residents Integrity Good listener Person who can pull people together.
- A collaborator who works on solution with Community and Selectboard.
- Experienced at putting a budget together.
- Put the residents and the needs and issues of the town first.
- Conflict Resolutions skills are a must.
- Able to bring groups to consensus.
- People person who knows how to outreach and be present in the community.
- Leadership experience in municipal government
- Noting a villages issue is an issue impacting our town, be all in in solving and addressing village issues.

4/25 Virtual Session Priorities (Lucke)

- Collaborative Skills with all Stakeholder: Town, Schools< Local and State Government
- Local Business Leaders see NH as a potential Partner.
- Know and use preferred channel of communication.
- Be media Savvy.
- Highly developed listener Skilled in solving complexed problems.
- Skills to deal with Selectboard disparities to harmonize them into a working body.
- Hire good people and let them do their job.
- Be out and about at some level daily “Inspector General” Don’t micromanage but be aware.
- Support the team AND hold them and yourself accountable.
- Be uplifting and draw people in to participate be visible and build our community, culture and mood Have good energy.
- Be strategic with all our community assets and businesses __> Arts and Food
- Energy, vitality be our cheerleader Do the operations work and make it a priority.
- Taking leadership to bring people together.
- Focus on the processes and progress.
- Take the lead on resolving conflict Know how to work with both the press and the State politics.
4/25 Wilder Club and Library Session (Melocik/Major)

MAIN THING
- Can the selectboard say we heard it loud and clear, and we will act like adults and be like who we want to have as a town manager.
- Maybe wait until political situation calms down; don't think we should be recruiting a town manager until the selectboard “gets its s**t together.”
- Need to set a high standard.
- If we go recruiting right now, we will get the bottom of the barrel because of the selectboard.
- Need to communicate this to the selectboard.

*Random Requirement/Like/Want: That the town manager should live in town [several attendees noted this would mean a change to the charter and that Vermont statutes specify no residency requirement for town managers]*

Characteristics Wanted (number of people who marked)
- Prior experience (4)
- Comfortable in complex, ambiguous situations (3)
- Ability to execute on plans/strategy (2)
- Interest in/ability to work with neighboring governments.
- Visionary (0)
- Inspirational (0)
- Quick learner (0)

Skills Wanted (number of people who marked)
- Team building (3)
- Being able to listen to townspeople (2)
- Interpersonal skills (1)
- Understand VT governance (VLCT, statutes, etc.) (1)
- Problem-solver (0)
- Good communicator (0)
- Ability to build trust (0)

Experience Wanted (number of people who marked)
- PRIOR EXPERIENCE as town manager EVERYONE MARKED/MENTIONED
- Leadership (5)
- Familiarity with New England (roads, weather), preferably in VT or more specifically this region (1)
- Financial management (1)
• Union-negotiating (0)

Other Characteristics/Skills/Experience Noted, in no particular order.
• Someone who has been a town manager in a community of a similar population for at least 10 years.
• Seasoned
• People person
• Good at delegating to departments
• One who uses the resources of the town staff/relied on them/respects them.
• Someone who can develop staff.
• Team leader, an inspiration
• Listening skills
• Be able to listen to the townspeople.
• Working knowledge of finance (some specified more than a working knowledge is needed)
• Be able to demonstrate/prepare/understand/and communicate budgets to the selectboard AND so they will approve it.
• Open-mindedness
• Transparent
• Ability to deal well with conflict.
• Ability to say no.
• Can inform the selectboard about things outside of the scope of the budget/board, protect the selectboard from political pressure.

Miscellaneous Comments
• Don't need a visionary as town manager— that's the job of the selectboard and planning department
• Will the town want someone looking to progress with skills/experiences as part of their career or someone wanting to put a capstone on their career/looking to come back home (to family, previous life in Vermont, etc.)

4/26 West Hartford Library Session Priorities (Brown/Lucke)
• Transparent Communication
• Conflict Management Resolution and Mediation Skills
• Experienced in Municipal Leadership
• Understands Northern New England
• Emergency Management skills, experience, and knowledge
• Long term vision and planning
• Experience with budget planning, coordination, and packaging
• If they don’t know say it and do the follow through and follow up.
• Solid organizational and time management skills
• Positive and productive relationship working with police.
• Approachable
• Accessible and visible around town
• Willing to listen and not judge.
• Be a team builder.
• Grant writing experience
• Flexible and able to work on and through competing priorities.
• Consensus builder
• Collaborative with the State government
• Know the role and do the job.
• Be respectful and honest to a fault.

4/26 Quechee Library Session (Ottmann/Fariel)

**Concern – Characteristic need to avoid?**

• Why did our last one fail – lessons learned?
• Finding a good fit
• Interesting comment regarding hiring of a women – given the last failure – confidence (gender bias)
• Broad Management Experience (specifically municipal)
• Ability to mesh the 5 villages – Unify the community(town) at-large.
• Collaborative style
• Knowledge of budgets and finance
• Ability to communicate the budget to the public.
• Open/Honest communication – respect and trust
• Accessible – no barriers or gatekeeper to limit reachability.
• Delegation important
• Relationship with Department Heads
• Transparency
• Get things done while still genuine listening.
• Mature and seasoned can manage/handle the day-to-day stress.
• Set priorities with the selectboard – Limited capacity and resources so need to choose and deliver.

Broader discussion regarding the Selectboard/Town Manager dynamic and room for improvement

Noted concern of several seasoned Department heads close to retirement - institutional loss?
Town Manager – Actions to succeed.

- Be visible.
- Manage a variety of people.
- Repeat of clarification of capacity and priority year to year
- Not just say no to request but have an explanation.
- Create a supportive environment not a ‘blame’ game culture.
- Discussion of Community-Selectboard-Town Manager model for optimal functionality
- Open door to public – possible Coffee with scenario like Joe does at UVAC.
- Immersion and involvement in the community – integration and learn to know Hartford (i.e., Bugbee visits)
- Understand the local culture.
- Ability to plan longer term and follow the vision – formulate and agree upon
- Infrastructure – specific example of a plan that goes out 5-10 years and it is adhered to.
- Understand the community at large and the needs throughout.
- Suggestion to look at towns where the town manager IS working and establish a work environment like it to achieve longevity and better operations.
- Migrate the climate of the Upper Valley and the current divisive/political climate.
- Opportunities for Tr-town collaboration?
- Hartford has changed and has new management demands to work thru = poverty, addiction, etc.
- The idea of a town wide bring people together event – picnic.

Experience required.

- Project management skills
- Knowledge of local government
- Education level necessary – BA, MBA, specific MPA certification?
- Concern as to where this person will live – affordability and options not in-town requirement.