

Tuesday, August 7, 2018
Town of Hartford Town Manager Search Committee
Hartford Town Hall.

Committee members present: Elizabeth Rathburn, Mike Morris, Frank Klymn, Scott Farnsworth, Gabrielle Lucke, Simon Dennis (Selectboard liaison- non-voting member) Asma Elhuni (arrived at 5:40pm), Dan Fraser
Leo Pullar- Town Manager
Don Jutton- Municipal Resources Inc.

Members of the Public: Richard Grassi

Absent; Chuck Wooster

1. Meeting called to order at 5:32pm.

2. Public Comment; None

3. Approval of Minutes from 7/30/18 meeting: one typo to correct, change "posted" to "posting". Scott moved to accept, Mike Second with all in favor. Gabe abstained since she was not at the 7/30/18 meeting.

Gabrielle Lucke introduced herself. She has served on many committees in town and PTO. She is currently a State Representative and employed by HR Dept. at Dartmouth College. She previously worked with the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity as well as the division of Student Affairs.

4. Discussion regarding supplemental information for MRI. Dan moved to table this agenda item, Gabe second, with all in favor.

5. Discussion regarding Town Manager Search Process:

* Elizabeth shared a statement in an effort to ensure that has a voice and felt they could share their opinions openly.

Don Jutton shared the following time line of events:

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY DON JUTTON, MUNICIPAL RESOURCES INC.

Now that the AD is posted, typically the next steps going forward will be:

1. Firm up schedule for on-site interviews so candidates and local participants can block dates.
2. Conduct community on-line survey (need Committee agreement ASAP) – aggressively promoted by Committee – remains open for 3 weeks – closes by 8/31

3. Jutton to conduct telephone interviews w/ Committee, Selectboard, Direct Manager Reports, Leo, Key Community Leaders – completed by August 15
4. Jutton to draft Ideal Candidate Profile & Challenge Statement for Committee review / approval - by August 21
5. Jutton & Committee conducts preliminary review of candidate pool to determine if re-advertising is warranted; by Sept 1
6. Assuming a viable pool we will be sending 5 essay questions (drafted by Jutton w/ Committee review/approval by Sept 7) to those meeting minimum qualifications - they will have 3 weeks to address and return. IF WE HAVE TO READVERTISE THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE REJIGGERED.
7. During the 3 weeks that the candidates are responding to the essay questions MRI will conduct public information checks on each of them.
8. After the essay responses have been received back and reviewed (around October 1st) MRI will conduct telephone interviews with the most promising candidates to verify their interest and availability, discuss any background issues, verify that compensation and benefits expectations are in alignment and discuss their career direction.
9. After this preliminary screening is complete Jutton will review the candidate pool with the Town Council to determine which candidates we wish to invite for on-site interviews. (week of October 8th)
10. On site interviews targeted for 10/18 & 19 or (preferably) 2 consecutive days during the week of 10/22 .

Don let the committee know that the pool to draw from was very small. The lack of interest in the workforce for the last couple of decades for these positions has resulted in more openings and fewer candidates. He recommended that in light of this that the committee no "settle" but wait for the right candidate, even if it takes longer. He mentioned that New England is a tough sell on lifestyle to some people.

Don has begun conducting 1/2-hour phone interviews with all committee members. A few members have participated, and the rest should be completed very soon.

Don reminded the committee to hold all names of applicants in confidence since most are employed and may not have informed their current town/employer.

Don asked for a few community members who should be involved in the process and it was suggested that representatives from the following agencies should be contacted:

Hartford Community Coalition member
The Haven
Dismas House
TIF member (Tax Incentive F.)

A survey will be conducted on line, open to residents and non-residents. All data is easily compiled this way.

Surveys will also be available at Bugbee Senior Center, Town Libraries and Town Hall (all of these surveys will have to have data manually compiled/entered).

Scott moved, Gabe seconded to approve the survey will all members in favor as presented.

MRI will supply the essay questions, and interview questions for candidates.

Leo shared the challenges and provided recommendations based on his experience from the last process.

- * He mentioned that the capital improvement plan needs to be codified and prioritized and funding sources need to be identified.
- * 7 of the 10 department heads are new (but experienced).
- * Budgeting is in a good place.
- * New Town Manager will have to be on top of Union/Labor relations, familiar with details/process.
- * It is difficult to find information on The Town of Hartford on line. (5 villages also cause confusion).
- * New manager should have an open-door policy and be very transparent.
- * the town has great staff to work with.

Some surprises: Social issues- homelessness, drugs, hunger and poverty in town. Non-profits are fantastic providing the safety net for many. Town/School collaboration is wonderful and benefits all.

Changes suggested:

- *The hiring process was rushed.
- *No tour of the town/villages, both would have been helpful.
- *Provide a map of town.
- *Involve town staff at some level after manager was hired.
- *Include town manager's wife/partner/significant other in the process (tours, meetings, etc)
- * Leo was impressed by citizen committees.
- * Little details are important
- * Avoid national political issues- keep things local.
- * Leo would do it again.

7. Other Business/Updates: None

8. Selection of Future Meeting Dates/Times:

We will NOT meet next week. Instead a doodle poll will be conducted to find a convenient time.

9. Gabe moved, Frank second will all in favor to Adjourn at 7:50pm

Notes respectfully submitted by:

Dan Fraser

Clerk