

Board of Selectmen's Open Session Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2019 @ 6:30 PM Meeting

Present: Jeff Palumbo, Jim Lehan, Kevin Kalkut and Susan Jacobson, Executive Assistant.

In the audience Chief Bushnell, Chief Stone, Scott Bragdon, Nancy Langlois, Andrew Peterson of the Sun Chronicle and Susan Kelly, Chair of the T.A. Search Committee.

The meeting was held in Room 124, Town Hall. Jim Lehan opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. Jim announced that the meeting was audio and video taped. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jim said they are in the middle of reviewing departmental budgets. The BOS will need to assist on the budgets and he would like to suggest that half of the Department Heads come in before the board one evening and the other Department Heads at an additional meeting. Jim would like to see the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Bob McGhee DPW/Director. The following meeting will have Matt Haffner Facilities/Director Todd Lindmark/Finance Director and Bob Bullock/Building Commissioner will attend. Susan will schedule the times with the individuals.

Jim discussed how the Town Administrator selection process would proceed. Jim reviewed the process on how we got to this point. Jim said they did not want a long vacancy especially with our Town Meeting in May. The Board worked with Jack and they were able to get this moving quickly.

Jim thanked all of the Search Committee Members and the Chair, Susan Kelly. They reviewed somewhere between 35-40 Resumes. Candidates were selected for interviews and three finalists were selected. The resumes are confidential and not available to the Board only the screening committee has seen the full number of candidates available.

If there is a majority vote they will notify the candidate and negotiate a contract and then the contract will be brought before the Select Board for a vote. If there is no agreement reached they can return to the screening committee and request additional candidates. If no selection is made at that point they would go back to the consultant but based on a conversation Jim had with the Consultant he does not believe that the pool would be as large.

Jim said that there are a couple of ways to move forward; they can discuss each candidate's pros and cons or they can take all three candidates and discuss them. Kevin said he would prefer to discuss each individual candidate.

Candidate 1

Jamie Errickson

Jeff said he would begin with Jamie Errickson. Jeff said he felt that Jamie had tremendous knowledge in economic development and was very approachable. Jim said he was quite impressed and he believes he can do a good job.

Kevin said he has a diverse background with economic development, 40B projects and budget and forecasting.

Jim said he tries to look at these in three layers. Does the candidate have the basic skill sets, anyone can put together a great resume. The next tier is life experience how have you used those skills and demonstrated those skills in a community. Jim did not feel that Jamie has been exposed to many of the situations a Town Administrator deals with. The Norfolk Town Administrator job is a hands on job. You have to be down in the trenches and he does not believe Jamie has that experience to date. He does not know if he can do that but he did not see it in his resume and he did not hear it in his presentation. This is a job where you have to jump in the DPW truck and in storm and you have to meet with the unhappy citizens and deal with difficult situations. Jim feels that this is a question mark for him. Kevin said he feels Jamie has great knowledge-they are theoretical skills and maybe there is an opportunity that he would fly and flourish but Kevin does not feel that is a risk we can take at this time.

He said this is a stepping stone for him and we would be going into this position knowing that it would not be his last stop.

Jim said he would not begrudge him that but it is good to know that.

Jim said that Mr. Hathaway established a culture on how to act within the community and you do not want to put someone in there that does not have a similar culture. You can't have someone that won't talk to the public or employees. Whoever is selected for this position must be comfortable in that culture. They will also need to provide direction and support the employees when they need it.

Jeff said Jack was able to bring humor to the office and tried to make light of things that could be serious but always tried to keep the stress level down. Jack had a particularly good way of doing that.

Kevin said he does not want to put too much of a similar style onto the candidates and that he does not want to put too much weight on those types of things. Jim said he agreed with Kevin.

Candidate 2

Ron San Angelo

Kevin said he has diverse experience and his leadership roles far exceeded expectations; he is personable and very approachable. He had a range of high level skill in many areas and he was pretty comfortable about talking about each one. Jeff said he agrees with Kevin; major experience, Town Administrator, Project management, however in a fiscally challenged community. Jeff felt he was willing to take on projects that require fixing things. It could be a strength or weakness. Jim said that he agrees with both Jeff and Kevin. Jim said that all of the positions he has held were positions that he needed to fix things. We can always improve but we do not need to be fixed. That was one of the opportunities. Jim is concerned that his background is primarily going to towns and fixing difficult situations. He does not believe he is the right fit for where we are.

Kevin said shifting into concerns he presented at a high level but as they pressed for more specific details. He was not able to provide much because you have to get in on the ground level and execute. It does not mean he cannot do that but he did not indicate that.

Jeff felt that could be a potential problem. Jim said that it is a fix it vs. manage and improve it type of process. Jim said that all three candidates have all said what a strong financial town Norfolk is. Jim said that our department heads are strong in their positions. We have a very strong Finance Department. Todd has done a great job but each and every department head is strong. Can they be better or improve; certainly, but we do not need the Town Administrator to have his hand in each and every piece of the pie.

Candidate 3

Robert Cantoreggi (Brutus)

Jim said that Brutus was very professional, approachable, practical and articulate. Jeff said his examples were from a practical sense of style and he had a sense of humor. He felt he had situational leadership skills and could accomplish things. He can adjust his leadership style and he can read people well. He managed a project based budget of \$17,000,000, a \$5,000,000 capital budget and 6 department heads.

Jim said he was different than the other two candidates. Jim said that DPW is a tough job. You are managing a very diverse group of people. Jim stated that he has a surprising amount of finance and budget experience. He manages more than the Town Administrator in Norfolk does.

Jim said that he has spoken before Congress and he is the Chair of the Planning Board of Millis. Jim said that his resume show tremendous depth. DPW is all about project management. He has the financial skill set. Jim said knowing what it is like to manage employees, he blended a nice element of humor along with a firmness that can redirect the employees when needed but

also stand up for them when they are being attacked. He felt the public would be shocked if they knew the content of emails that are received by town employees. Jim said they have to deal with that but he feels that the Town Administrator needs to support the employees.

Kevin said he was engaging had great interpersonal skills but some of that could be the benefit of going last. Clear DPW experience and water experience. He an expansive based of knowledge about our community. Kevin felt that relatability he knows the community and he knows the surrounding communities and that is beneficial.

Jim said he made it very clear that he lives in Millis and he is looking for this to be his last stop. Jeff said he has the MMA local government side and the Suffolk Certificate. Housing Development is an opportunity for him but he does sit on the planning board in Millis and has for the last 15 years.

Kevin said he is all around the 40B projects and information but does not have direct experience.

Jim said that he is someone Bob McGhee could ride with and being engaged with the events that go on within the community and he would not be disruptive to the things that work. Jim feels like he would fit well culturally and his humor is healthy. He can diffuse situations and Jim thinks he is tough and he does not believe he would be easily coerced or intimidated.

Kevin cited that toughness with concern. There is a certain level to address concerns that we saw come out in the interview. Kevin believes there is a possibility of concern on how would it impact him. Not as strong in economic development. He could touch on the level of 40B projects but not like the other two. Jeff said it's a good point and we go through this process.

Jim said he saw him in a different way he does not interpret his toughness he used his examples he pointed out that we serve all points of that. Jim believes he has the hands on experience he views that as him being both tough but also compassionate. Jim saw that strength of his. Franklin is a community of 30,000. Jim said he sought references for each one of the things he heard about Robert that his firsthand experience with dealing with the public with uncomfortable situations and he handles it very well.

Norfolk is a small town and we are amicable and fair and most of the people understand we are here to do the best we can.

Jim spoke about not losing the small town feeling and he felt Jack emulated that perfectly. We all have our weakness and strengths and he does not believe anyone would argue that Jack did not care about this community.

Jim said there is no perfect candidate but whomever they each believe is the person for the job.

Jeff asked if there was a candidate they would be comfortable awarding the position to and he said he does believe there is a person within this pool.

Kevin said potentially.

Jim believes there is potentially a Town Administrator in the group.

Jim suggested they move forward with discussion on who they may want to move forward with.

Jim asked if there was one of the candidates that they felt was not a good fit for the community. Which candidates are viable? Kevin would propose that 1 and 2 are not good fits for the job.

Jim said that he agrees that 3 is the better candidate. Jeff felt that 1 and 3 were viable candidates. They all agreed to eliminate candidate number two.

Kevin feels like he is a fantastic but he feels there is a better fit out there. Jim agrees with them.

Jeff said three is his top candidate. Kevin said with that being said he would like to request two more candidates for one final review. He feels that there is a gap between the candidate and he would like to compare and contrast. Jim is not sure what we would gain and it would cause more confusion.

Jeff said that we really would like someone to come aboard that has been there and done that. Jeff said if they all agreed and it rose to that level of importance. Jeff said he agrees with Jim and the committee has identified the best candidates and it was a significant number of people involved. He is willing to accept those three candidates. We did not say that we had to have Town Administrator experience. Jim asked Kevin to help him understand what he is saying and how do we benefit from doing that if we make the assumption that they have brought forward three viable candidates. They could have brought four they could have brought five because we are asking the same group to go back and review the same resumes and he does not think there would be a change.

Kevin said he is not criticizing the group and perhaps that it could be someone with a different background. He would like to ensure they are being thorough.

Kevin discussed how he empathized with being on a Committee but if after seeing the public interviews the Committee might have another idea of an additional viable candidate. Jim said if they did not have a candidate that they were all comfortable with then he may be more agreeable to ask them to go back under those circumstances. He feels that candidate 3 can do the job and he would be very comfortable with him in that job. He has been battle tested and there is a lot more depth to this gentleman than came out in this interview. He has served as Chair of the Planning Board in not always the friendliest environment. Jim feels that he is a good fit with his personality.

Jeff said Kevin's point is valid and that the toughness has been used appropriately. If Jim was uncertain then he agrees, let's take a deeper look although he does not feel that way, and that is why he is struggling to bring people that the Committee did not feel met that the criteria.

He does not know what they gain. Kevin said over the last 1 ½ hours they aligned with individual skills. Perhaps having seen this line of discussion and questioning there may be something that has been identified that wasn't present during the initial stages of this process. There now may be an opportunity to reduce some those gaps.

Jim feels that nothing has changed since he shared what he would prioritize for a Town Administrator and that those qualities have not changed. He believes they are all consistent. Other than to say we want more people.

A request to the Committee members at this point is that number three is a viable option to be our Town Administrator based on what has occurred this evening or would there be another person that you would have brought forward. Susan Kelly said to do it as soon as possible.

Susan Kelly, Chief Stone and Chief Bushnell also spoke against sending this back to the Committee and felt that they put forth the top three candidates. They felt it would be detrimental to the Committee and the candidate and the time being spent trying could be a potential loss of a good candidate.

Jim said he understood on the request he is falling back and he sees no benefit and he sees a downside to doing this. Jim said he appreciated them all expressing their views. Jim said we are sending the wrong message. Jim said if Kevin thinks he is not the right candidate than that is a different scenario. Jim believes they have a candidate they are comfortable voting on.

Kevin was upset and feels that the conversation was turned around and his intent was not to infer that the Committee did not do what they wanted.

There are pro and cons with Kevin's request. Jim is struggling with why we have to go back and revisit a process that has already taken place.

Kevin continued to try and bring his request to send this back to the Committee for affirmation and he has said the same thing over the course of the meeting. Jim sees no potential in sending it back to the Committee and believes it could be more of a risk and he struggles with it.

Kevin said he feels that both Jim and Jeff are ready to go forward with this candidate and both answered yes.

At this point he feels that he has expressed his concerns.

Jeff asked if Kevin was comfortable with a unanimous vote.

Kevin believes they can take a unanimous vote. Jeff said that Kevin's opinion is respected. Jim does not want him to agree just to agree. He does not want to force a vote he wants Kevin to be comfortable with this vote.

Kevin said he is prepared to move forward with this candidate. Jim thanked Kevin and said it is important to him that no member feels that they are coerced into a vote. It is morally and ethically wrong.

A motion was made by Jeff Palumbo to move forward with negotiations for the Town Administrator for the hiring of candidate 3 Robert Brutus Cantoreggi to be the next Town Administrator. It was seconded, by Kevin Kalkut and so voted. All were in favor. Jim asked if the Board was comfortable with Jim beginning the initial contract. Kevin requested input.

A motion was made by Jeff Palumbo to allow the Chair to enter into negotiations for the hiring of Robert Cantoreggi subject to the full approval of the Board. It was seconded, by Kevin Kalkut and so voted. All were in favor.

Scott Bragdon mentioned that during the contract review process there were some gaps in our existing contracts and that Jim and Kevin documented the gaps. The language is different from one contract to the other. There were contracts that had language that we did not have. The HR Director will compile a list of TA contracts and share them with the Board.

Jim did not allow a text that the audience received (Chief Bushnell) from Mike Kuleza to be considered. Jim said that you cannot text or call into a meeting and offer any input on any subject matter.

A meeting will be posted for February 15th at either 9 a.m. or 10 a.m.

At 9:55 p.m., being no further business, Jeff Palumbo moved to adjourn the meeting. Kevin Kalkut seconded, and it was so voted. All were in favor.

This is a true and accurate report of the Selectmen's Meeting of January 8, 2019.



Kevin Kalkut