

TOWN OF TRURO
SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JULY 22, 2020 at 11:30AM
Remote Meeting Via GoToMeeting

Members Present: Chair-Robert Weinstein, Vice Chair-Kristen Reed, Clerk-Susan Areson, Member-Janet Worthington, Member-Stephanie Rein

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Town Manager-Rae Ann Palmer, Assistant Town Manager-Kelly Clark, Bernard Lynch, Paul Wisotzky, Jim Summers

Chair Weinstein called the meeting to order at 11:30 am, announced the meeting would be virtual, and provided the toll-free number and access code.

In addition to introducing the Board members, he introduced Bernie Lynch, the consultant for the Town Manager search process, and Paul Wisotzky, the Chair of the Town Manager Search Committee.

There is one item on the agenda, which is the discussion of Town Manager Finalists.

Public Comment-None

Chair Weinstein thanked Mr. Lynch for shepherding them through the process, and the members of the Town Manager Screening Committee.

One of the finalists dropped out due to health issues, so there are three strong candidates.

Mr. Lynch stated that the Town Manager Screening Committee did an outstanding job, and thanked Mr. Wisotzky for his leadership. He stated that they ended up with forty-five resumes, plus ten which were carried over from the first go-around. The Town Manager Committee asked good questions, had some great discussions, and arrived at the three finalists that they now have.

Mr. Wisotzky wished to thank the Town Manager Search Committee; Dan Schreiner, Kristen Roberts, Jim Summers, Chief of Police-Jamie Calise, Robert Weinstein, and Janet Worthington. He also thanked Mr. Lynch, who assembled a great group of applicants, and thanked all the applicants. Mr. Wisotzky moved forward by explaining how they arrived at the finalists:

- All resumes and cover letters were reviewed by Committee members before the first meeting.
- At the first meeting, they decided who they wanted to move forward as semi-finalists. During the approximately two-hour long meeting, they narrowed the number down to seven.
- The next two meetings were devoted to interviewing each of the seven applicants. An hour was devoted to each person. The Committee had ten questions. Questions revolved around:
 - Leadership and Management
 - Covid-19
 - Finance
 - Housing
 - The Environment and Natural Resources
 - Tourism and Economic Development
 - Citizen Relations and Transparency
 - Relationships with the Select Board
 - One question pertained to the applicant's own self-awareness
- Applicants were given ten or fifteen minutes at the end of the interview to ask questions.

Mr. Wisotzky then introduced the candidates. He stated the Board would get their resumes and cover letters. He presented them in alphabetical order with no priority and gave a brief description of their backgrounds.

Chair Weinstein thanked Mr. Wisotzky for the thoroughness of his delivery. He added that people may question why two of the individuals are from as far away as Texas and Colorado and wanted to add the following information. Mr. Wood has a college aged child who is about to graduate from Emerson College. He has spent time in New England, but particularly Boston. He is familiar with Cape Cod and finds this part of the world extremely attractive. Mr. Fetherson grew up in Connecticut and summered most of his life in Eastham. Mr. O'Brien has been a part of Barnstable County for more than three decades and is very familiar with Truro.

Mr. Lynch stated that he sent Town Manager Palmer the cover letters and resumes, to be distributed to the Select Board. As part of the process, Mr. Lynch is now conducting background checks on all the candidates, which includes talking to the references. From that, the comments will be consolidated into a report which will be presented to the Board. He continued, stating that the next step would be to determine when the Select Board would like to conduct the three interviews. He also asked what other steps they feel would help in their making a decision. One of the things the Screening Committee talked about was perhaps doing something with Department Heads and trying to elicit questions from the public.

Member Worthington asked if Mr. Lynch will talk to people the candidates have worked with, or people who know the candidates in another capacity. Mr. Lynch confirmed that they would be doing that, to verify their experiences. Member Areson feels it's important to speak to people outside of the references that are provided (for example: the public, and employees not included as references).

Member Reed asked how long this part of the process usually takes, and how long during Covid-19. Mr. Lynch said that it's taking a little extra time during Covid-19, generally it's taking about seven to ten days. He indicated this would be completed by the end of next week.

Chair Weinstein stated that other than himself and Member Worthington, the other members have not had the opportunity to review the resumes and applications. He would like everyone to have the opportunity before weighing in. Chair Weinstein would like to use the remainder of the meeting to focus on Policy Memorandum #63. Because of Covid-19 there are things in the policy memorandum that are impacted. He referenced the words, "shall" and "will" and noted that it is his personal feeling that it's not safe to hold one-on-one interviews due to COVID-19.

Town Manager Palmer suggested the interviews could be held virtually. It will give the Select Board an opportunity to do a one-on-one with each candidate. She believes that was one of the most useful parts of the process because it gave her, as a candidate, the opportunity to get to know Truro and the Board, and it helped her decide (if she was offered the job) if it would be a good fit.

Member Areson agreed that they cannot ask the candidates from Texas and Colorado to come to Truro. She wondered if Mr. O'Brien would be willing to come and sit outside somewhere and meet with the Select Board individually, but she asked if other members of the Select Board felt that Mr. O'Brien would have an unfair advantage. She does feel it's important for each Board member to interview them individually as stated earlier. She would also like to discuss getting community input on questions.

Member Rein agreed that one-on-one interviews need to be done, and as much as it would be better to do that in person, she feels that conducting them virtually is necessary. She is concerned with the suggestion of having Mr. O'Brien meet face-to-face as it could potentially give an unfair advantage over the other two candidates.

Member Reed stated that while it's not the ideal way they'd like to proceed, all of steps four through seven can be done virtually. She is requesting that an hour of time be allotted for each candidate/interview. She would like a facilitator to facilitate a public process where each of the candidates could be asked questions and people could call in. She also feels having Mr. O'Brien meet

face-to-face would be unfair to the other two candidates. The group discussed how to schedule these interviews.

Chair Weinstein asked for clarification on how to square the requirements of Policy #63 with the virtual world we find ourselves in. Mr. Lynch said that the biggest issue he sees is having a candidate insisting upon showing up at a meeting that's scheduled for another applicant. He believes the Select Board will have to rely upon good faith of the candidates. Town Manager Palmer agreed, saying that the best they can do is ask the candidates not to watch the previous interviews. She also suggested that candidates could call into a Zoom meeting with Mr. Lynch while the other candidates are being interviewed. Mr. Lynch does feel all three candidates are upstanding people. He added that there are always risks that candidates could be watching the interview from somewhere else, particularly if they are held over a couple of nights. Member Worthington pointed out that these are professional people that have been vetted this far, and she feels it would be insulting to them to have to sit in a virtual meeting room and be watched.

Chair Weinstein asked if there would be a prepared list of questions which the Select Board would ask the candidates. Mr. Lynch confirmed there would be a list of questions prepared for them. Member Worthington would like to involve Mr. Wisotzky as he did a great job with questions during the initial interviews. Member Reed would like to see the questions and give comments in case they wish to change or alter them in some way. Members suggested that Town Manager Palmer and Mr. Wisotzky could work together on an initial set of questions and then the Board could weigh in and add, subtract, or edit.

Member Reed stated that the last thing they had to figure out would be how to host a community meet and greet virtually. Mr. Wisotzky agreed to help facilitate the community meet and greet. Mr. Lynch reviewed the order of events and stated that the challenge in doing the community forum is that with three candidates, you would possibly have a three-hour forum. He asked if they Board wanted to have one candidate follow another candidate, or whether they wished to have three separate one-hour forums. Member Areson thinks they should pick a time, perhaps an hour per candidate, and try to do it all on the same day for the community meet and greet. A date of August 4th was proposed by Member Reed.

Town Manager Palmer asked the Board if they would be comfortable facilitating a meeting with staff and the candidates. Chair Weinstein was amenable. Member Areson questioned whether Town Manager Palmer should be involved with the meetings with the staff and the candidates.

Mr. Wisotzky confirmed he was available on August 4th and asked if a neutral party would be better to handle the scheduling of the candidates. He also would like to get Town Manager Palmer involved in the process as she has personal insight into what it takes to do the job of Town Manager. Member Reed agreed with his comments and stated that Nicole, Liz, and Noelle were there to help with the logistics of scheduling. Member Areson is fine with Administrative staff doing the scheduling as long as options are given for times and dates. She also added that she thinks Town Manager Palmer should absolutely be involved in the process.

It was decided to hold interviews on Tuesday, August 11th at 5:00pm and a meeting to deliberate on August 12th at 8:00am. August 4th at 5:30pm was the date agreed upon for the community meet and greet. Town Manager Palmer asked Mr. Lynch to work with her and Assistant Town Manager Clark on advertising and scheduling.

Mr. Wisotzky wondered if people could submit questions in advance for the Community Forum. He could moderate and ask those questions on behalf of the community. Chair Weinstein likes the idea. Member Rein wanted to know if the Board would receive feedback from the meeting with Department Heads. Member Worthington has found it valuable to be in a room with the candidates and Department Heads to see their interaction. Town Manager Palmer reminded the Board that in the past the Department Head get together with the candidates was held in a format that does not lend itself to a

Zoom meeting or a GoToMeeting. The public health emergency has changed the way things will happen. She suggested a video conference with the candidates and staff. Assistant Town Manager Clark suggested that the meeting between Department Heads and candidates could be recorded, and then the Board could watch the recording later.

Member Reed made a motion to adjourn at 1:07pm.

Member Areson seconded.

So voted; 5-0-0, motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,



Noelle L. Scoullar



Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer

Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board

