

FIRE CHIEF SCREENING COMMITTEE
MCAULIFFE HEARING ROOM, 17 COMMON ST, SOUTHBOROUGH
JANUARY 2, 2019, 6:30 PM

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SOUTHBOROUGH, MA

Present: Jason Malinowski, Janet Maney, Sam Stivers, Chief Paulhus and Chief Breen. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Committee was present at the Board of Selectmen meeting at the start of their meeting at 6:30 P.M. Other agenda items not pertaining to the Fire Chief Search were taken ahead of the Committee's update.

Mr. Malinowski opened with a brief update on the search process and summarized the December 11, 2018, meeting that the Committee had with the Board of Selectmen in Executive Session. He noted that the minutes for this meeting have subsequently been released and are public. The outcome of that meeting was a decision to repost the Fire Chief job to attract a wider pool of candidates.

Mr. Malinowski then made a presentation to the Board of Selectmen on the recommendations that the Committee received from MRI to increase the candidate pool with the job re-posting. Mr. Malinowski noted that all recommendations were unanimously approved by the Committee at a meeting earlier that day. In addition, he noted that the recommendations were being made with a focus on expanding the candidate pool to bring a more diverse group forward for interviews. None of the recommendations was expected to change the decisions made on candidates who have applied to date.

The recommendations that were presented were:

Recommendation 1 – Indicate in the revised advertisement and in the ideal candidate profile that the Town encourages innovative and creative external applicants. Obviously, this needs to be tactfully communicated to not create an internal concern.

Recommendation 2 – Include information relative to the construction of the new public safety complex in both the revised advertisement and in the ideal candidate profile. A link to the current status of the project should be included in the ideal candidate profile and added to the MRI website.

Recommendation 3 – Adjust the salary range and indicate in the revised advertisement that the salary is up to \$150,000 depending upon qualifications.

Recommendation 4 – Communicate that the Town is seeking stable long-term leadership.

Recommendation 5 – Clarify that residency within an approved residential radius is required within 18 months from the date of hire and increase the residential radius to 15 miles (border to border).

The Board of Selectmen offered a variety of comments and questions, primarily focused on the residential radius discussed in Recommendation 5. There was extensive dialogue back and forth on the need to balance response time for the Chief to an emergency scene with finding the best leader for the department. Mr. Malinowski encouraged those members of the Board who were struggling with the revised residential radius recommendation that they allow the Committee to advertise using the new radius to attract a wider pool and then use residency as a negotiation tool with the new Chief during

contract negotiations. The Board of Selectmen voted 5-0-0 to support all of the Committee's recommendations.

Mr. Malinowski presented a timeline for the remainder of the search:

Next Week – Job Re-posted
February 8 – Applications due
Mid to Late February – Candidate vetting and interviews
Early March – Assessment Center
Mid March – Finalists ready for Board interview

Mr. Malinowski noted that Town Meeting occurs shortly after the Finalists will be ready for Board interview and he wanted to gauge the Board's desire to interview in the days leading up to Town Meeting or immediately after. There was some discussion amongst the Board of Selectmen, but the general consensus was to bring the Finalists forward as soon as practical and they will likely interview in the days leading up to Town Meeting.

Mr. Malinowski also requested that the Board of Selectmen approve changes to the Committee's charge focused on: 1) Extending the Committee's Charge to April 15 (originally set to end on February 1), 2) Expand wording to incorporate the Committee's involvement in the Assessment Center (based on recommendations from consultant), and 3) Make the Committee responsible for submitting the Finalists to the Board of Selectmen (original charge calls for Committee to only make recommendations on who should go to an Assessment Center). The Board of Selectmen voted 5-0-0 to support these changes to the Committee's Charge.

Mr. Malinowski closed by thanking the Board for their support through the process and also noted the tremendous contributions of the residents and Chiefs on the Committee.

The Committee left the McAuliffe Hearing Room and finished the rest of the agenda on the 1st floor of the Town House.

Mrs. Maney presented some proposed revisions to the first paragraph of the Ideal Candidate Statement that was prepared by MRI and discussed at the posted meeting earlier in the day. The Committee all agreed with Mrs. Maney's edits. Mr. Stivers proposed some suggestions to the overall format, grammar, and flow of the document. The Committee also agreed with those changes. Mr. Malinowski moved that the Committee approve the Ideal Candidate Statement, as edited by Mrs. Maney and Mr. Stivers. Committee voted to approve 5-0-0. Mr. Malinowski will work with MRI to get the document released.

Mr. Stivers' proposed edits to the December 27, 2018 Open Session meeting minutes were presented. Mr. Malinowski moved that the Committee accept the December 27, 2018 Open Session meeting minutes, as edited. Committee voted to approve 5-0-0.

At 7:37 PM, Mr. Malinowski moved that the Committee adjourn. Mr. Stivers seconded. Committee voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Submitted by Jason Malinowski, Chair.

Documents Referenced

- 1) Memo from MRI dated December 29, 2019
- 2) Ideal Candidate Profile Drafted by MRI
- 3) Mark-ups of Ideal Candidate Profile from Mr. Stivers
- 4) Revised Opening Paragraph to Ideal Candidate Profile from Mrs. Maney
- 5) December 29, 2019 Open Session Draft Meeting Minutes