

Holbrook Board of Selectmen

Minutes of the Regular Session of

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

Present: Timothy J. Gordon, Chairman  
Matthew V. Moore, Vice-Chairman  
Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk  
Richard B. McGaughey, Associate  
Kevin J. Sheehan, Associate

In attendance: Marjorie E. Godfrey, Selectmen's Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Gordon, in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 50 North Franklin Street, Holbrook, MA 02343, and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Selectman Fuller, the Chairman of the Town Administrator Search Advisory Committee, explained the process of screening 37 applicants for the position, and narrowing the applicants down to three finalists who will be interviewed tonight by the Board of Selectmen.

The candidates were interviewed individually, with the same questions being asked of each candidate by Mr. Fuller, and follow-up questions by any/all members of the Board. Topics discussed included why they chose Holbrook, what financial competencies they have, how they develop a budget and work with the Finance Committee, their experience with the Mass. School Building Authority or school construction projects, their experience with negotiating collective bargaining agreements and employment law, their managerial leadership style and goals for Holbrook, their time commitment to the town, and their experience with a Town Government Study Committee or changing a form of government.

David J. Marciello, Esq.

Mr. Marciello explained that the demographics of Holbrook are similar to the experience he has gained over the last ten years. He discussed his accomplishments as town administrator in the Town of Rehoboth. He believes in developing a budget from zero dollars and working with department heads to build the budget with lists of needs and wants, so that departments get what they need and some of what they want. Mr. Marciello said he has a lot of experience with regionalization, but has not been involved with a school building committee. He has experience in negotiating collective bargaining agreements, and experience in labor law both as an attorney and as a town administrator. As a town administrator, if he has a legal opinion different from town counsel, he will advise the Selectmen, but recognizes that he gets his direction from the Board. In Rehoboth, he reduced the legal bills by doing some of the legal research himself and then reviewing it with town counsel. He has handled human resource management, including employee training and prosecuting and defending discrimination at the Mass. Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) and in superior court. His managerial leadership style is to give employees an understanding of the job to be done and the tools to do the job, and let them do it, with follow-up to check on the work. He explained that he would expect to develop a plan for Holbrook within 60 to 90 days of hire. He would plan to work late many evenings, especially during budget time. Full time work is not an issue. Mr. Marciello is open to new and different forms of government, and has helped model charters.

William J. Phelan

Mr. Phelan explained that he loves municipal government and the impact it can have on people's lives. He has enjoyed his six months as the Interim Town Administrator, and feels that the residents should be proud of their community. He sees an opportunity here to make a difference through the upcoming trash transfer station, water treatment facility, and school projects. He discussed his experience as the mayor of Quincy in turning negative fund balances into a \$17 million surplus, overhauling the budgeting process, improving the schools, and running an efficient government with increased services. In developing budgets, Mr. Phelan said that it is important to look at how the money is spent. He noted that the town's engineering bills and Joint Water bills seem high, and the school funding has increased 35% since 2005. He has a lot of experience with the MSBA, and built a green high school in Quincy, which was a long complex project that came in on budget. He believes that education is one of the most important roles of government and a plan has to be put in place and debated. The MSBA and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) have instructed Holbrook to do a list of certain things, so a regionalization planning committee will need to be formed to develop a plan that town meeting can support. He said as the town administrator, his responsibility would be to carry out the direction he gets from the Board. Mr. Phelan said he has experience with negotiating collective bargaining agreements and cited his experiences in Quincy relative to healthcare benefits. Although he does not consider himself to be a human resource expert, he gained experience with hiring, firing and disciplining employees in Quincy. Although he has not seen any issues with human resource management in Holbrook, he noted that the department heads could be more transparent about the work accomplished in their departments by sharing the information with the public. He described his management style as hands on as he has to be and as hands off as he has to be. He feels that the next three years and how the various upcoming projects interact are important to the well being of the town. Some goals for Holbrook include getting the roadways paved or improved, and developing a plan for the schools and how to educate the children of Holbrook through a study. He believes the commercial tax rate needs to be looked at and there needs to be commercial and industrial growth. Mr. Phelan discussed the use of the retained earnings in the water and sewer enterprise funds and looking at the town's future debt obligations and anticipating borrowing for a school project. He said that in order to get the job done, he would work as hard as he has to, but he will be continuing his law practice. He is at the town hall every day, but not necessarily during normal work hours. He is asking for flexibility in that regard. Mr. Phelan has not worked on changing the structure of a government, and would recommend getting experts to guide the town through the process.

Francis A. Hegarty

Mr. Hegarty said he is right for the Town Administrator's position in Holbrook because with his experience, he understands what a Board of Selectmen expects from a Town Administrator, and there are many opportunities for him to grow in Holbrook. He believes that in this period of challenges, towns have to be creative and innovative. He explained that during his time on the Board of Selectmen in Avon, a balanced budget has been developed which is not dependent on Free Cash. The debt situation has been addressed, and money has been put in stabilization. Mr. Hegarty discussed the development of the annual budget by the Board of Selectmen, which is then submitted to the Finance Committee, and presented by the Selectmen Chairman at town meeting. He believes in starting with a zero based budget every year and building the budget up. He has experience with the MSBA through a project to add modular classrooms to an elementary school and a boiler project. Mr. Hegarty has had experience in negotiating collective bargaining agreements with the Avon Selectmen and while serving on the School Committee.

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Mr. Hegarty believes in a team approach to management. The department heads should come together with a common goal as a unified group and look at the big picture. When asked about his time commitment to the Town of Holbrook, he said he would do whatever is required, whether it be late night, early morning or on weekends. His term expires in Avon in the spring, and although not committing to anything at this time, he could consider whether to run again if offered this position. He said that government is changing and towns have to be open to change, including examining the structure of municipal government. He recommended that Holbrook look at economic target zones, zoning, and zoning and development with a transit component to attract businesses to town. He said the area along the Holbrook/Avon line could be considered, and because it is a Brownfield area, state and federal funding could be utilized.

The Board of Selectmen thanked the Town Administrator Search Advisory Committee for its work and for sending forward three excellent candidates for their consideration.

MOTION: At 9:15 pm, by Mr. Moore, second by Mr. Fuller, to adjourn the meeting  
VOTE: 5:0

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Brinsley A. Fuller, Clerk

Documents:

Agenda  
Report of the Town Administrator Search Committee  
Copy of the advertisement and job description  
Resumes of candidates