

Approved by
the Select Board on:

11/29/2021

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: December 6, 2021
TIME: 2:58 PM

Select Board Joint with School Committee

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

8:00 AM

CALL TO ORDER

A joint meeting of the Select Board was called to order by Chair Adam Dash. Vice Chair Roy Epstein and Select Board member Mark Paolillo were present, along with Town Administrator Patrice Garvin.

Chair Amy Checkoway called the School Committee to order with a quorum (Amy Checkoway, Meg, Moriarty, Mike Crowley). Catherine Bowen and Jamal Saeh joined later.

ACTION BY CONSENT

Initial review of School Committee applicants

Dash recounted that the current opening on the School Committee was precipitated by the resignation of Andrea Prestwich. The position will only be for five months until the Town election in April 2022. The process for choosing new members and the candidate interviews must be discussed in open session. Dash said we will not be voting on applicants today. The applicant interviews will take place on November 10th at 8 pm.

Chair Checkoway said that the School Committee has received 12 applications for the open position. All members of the Select Board and School Committee should have received the applicant materials.

Four of those applicants did not submit the required documents yet. Dash said they can reach out to the candidates to provide them at this time. Mike Crowley thinks it is not worth the time to reach out those people with incomplete applications. But Dash said there is the possibility it could be a technical error. Epstein said we need to be sure that there was not a clerical error. Dash asked Patrice to make sure that all documents were received.

Applicants: Diana Cepeda, Aisha Foxx Telfort, Philip Fremont-Smith, Ralph Jones, Marko Labudovic, Frances Leighton, Jeffrey Liberty, Alessandro Miglio, Glenn Robertelli, Jerome West, Jung Yueh and Amy Zuccarello.

Amy Checkoway reviewed what has happened since their last meeting:

- Information about applications were shared with the community
- The School Committee and Select Board members developed five questions for the candidates.
- Applicants were sent e-mails about the two meetings. They are not required to attend today's meeting, but they are required to attend the meeting tomorrow on November 10th at 8 pm.
- Each candidate's application materials have been shared with Select Board and School Committee members.

Discussion and vote on the process to be used for filling the School Committee vacancy

Amy Checkoway reviewed the interview and voting process that was agreed upon by the Board and Committee:

- School Committee and Select Board members will review the application materials submitted (resume and statement of interest)
- There will be a meeting held by the School Committee and Select Board on November 10th to interview candidates and vote.
 - Opening statement from each applicant that includes brief introduction and why they applied for this role (up to three minutes each)
 - School Committee and Select Board vote on their top five candidates. In case of tie for fifth slot, a tiebreaker will be held.
 - Ask the five finalists the interview questions limiting each reply to two minutes.
 - Deliberation and potential vote on filling vacancy. If no candidate receives the majority of five votes, conduct additional rounds of voting (dropping person with the least number of votes in each round) until someone receives five votes. In case of tie between two candidates, then ask for final closing statement and vote until majority attained.

Amy Checkoway said that Meg Moriarty has agreed to receive the e-mail votes. Meg will tally the votes and inform the group of the outcome.

COMMENTS and AMENDMENTS to the proposed interview process:

Epstein, Crowley and Mark Paolillo were supportive of the interview process as outlined.

Meg Moriarty asked for clarification on the re-voting process. She wanted to know whether the re-vote would include debate or discussion about the reasons for choosing a particular candidate. Meg thinks we need to be clear that we are taking those re-votes with or without discussion.

Catherine Bowen asked if we could develop an additional question that could be asked of the candidate if the vote is close. Amy said if a majority vote cannot be reached, then we should not ask additional questions unless there is a tie at the end. But she said it may be good to develop an extra question for that situation.

Epstein suggested using a rank choice voting scheme to reduce the potential number of rounds of voting.

[Amy put the interview framework back on the screen for further discussion.]

The group raised the issue about discussion between voting sessions.

Paolillo said he believes we should say why we chose someone. Continuing to vote will not produce a finalist without discussion. Paolillo thinks the residents of the community are entitled to hear why we chose a person.

Mike Crowley agrees the public needs to hear what we are thinking.

Members of both committees agreed that deliberation is acceptable before the final vote.

Garvin said that Matt Haskell from her office, could tally the votes during the voting sessions in order to ensure fairness.

Motion was made to disallow discussion between voting rounds (A&B in the review protocol), but deliberation will be allowed before the final voting process. Motion was approved unanimously by members of the Select Board and School Committee.

Motion was made to allow a one-minute closing statement before the vote on the five finalists. Motion was approved unanimously by members of the Select Board and School Committee.

Motion was made to adopt the proposal process as amended. Motion was approved unanimously by members of the Select Board and School Committee.

Amy Checkoway said she would amend the process as discussed and send out to the candidates and members of both committees before the interview sessions tomorrow night.

Discussion and vote on the interview questions to be asked in filling the School Committee vacancy

Amy Checkoway presented the questions that were developed:

- 1) Explain the unique skills that you will bring to the School Committee?
- 2) Share your perspective on the top three priorities facing the School Committee over the next five months?
- 3) How would you handle the balance between collaboration with management to achieve the best outcomes?
- 4) What would your approach be for getting up to speed and working as part of a group?
- 5) How would you fit this demanding role into your other commitments? And do you envision yourself continuing on the School Committee past April 2022?

COMMENTS on interview questions:

Mike Crowley asked if we could include a question about financial experience? Amy Checkoway feels this will come out in the resume and application statement of interest.

All members at the meeting agreed that the questions are acceptable. Epstein suggested sending the questions to the applicants who did not attend this meeting

Motion was made to accept the five proposed interview questions. Motion was approved unanimously by members of the Select Board and School Committee.

Incomplete Applications

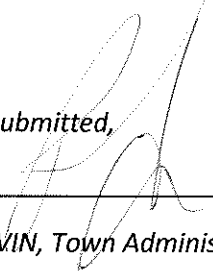
The issue about the incomplete applications was raised again. Garvin reported that a confirmation reply was not provided after uploading. Catherine Bowen said we should follow up with the candidates and give them the opportunity to produce any missing documents.

Epstein commented that we should not create an exception for one person. If we allow missing documents to be added, then we need to change the deadline until close of business today for application materials to be submitted. Patrice Garvin asked if the deadline could be 4 pm today so that Matt Haskell can be here to receive the documents.

Motion was made to extend the deadline for incomplete applications until 4 pm today, November 9, 2021. Motion was approved unanimously by members of Select Board and School Committee.

Motion was made to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was approved unanimously by Select Board and School Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,



PATRICE GARVIN, Town Administrator