



Board of Selectmen

Date of Meeting: Friday, April 27, 2018
Location: Town Hall, 221 Main Street
Time: 2:00 PM – 2:47 PM
Members Present: Chairman James Wood; James Underwood; Mike May; Stephen Madaus, Town Counsel

The meeting commenced at 2:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Discussion on Town Administrator Candidates:

Jim Woods started off the discussion stating they have had three days to review the information to replace Town Administrator Martin McNamara.

While waiting for Town Counsel to arrive, Jamie suggested they talk about if they would want to open the search committee again and Mike May said he went through the candidates and feels as though the candidates that were presented to them should be discussed first. Town Counsel arrived and discussion regarding the candidates started.

Mike May stated that out of the candidates that were presented to the Board and the 4 candidates that were received that he feels as though April Steward was the dominant choice. He received some concerns from residents and appreciated their feedback and letters written; however, people from the outside do not have the same perspective that the board of selectman and others that work in the Town Hall have. Mike May said that after looking through April's background as a candidate he couldn't help but be impressed; listing some of her accomplishments and trainings that she has been through. He said that she was presented by the search committee and instead of opening the search committee up again he supports the position of April Steward; she is a good candidate, not a great candidate but we did not receive a great candidate for this position from the search committee. Instead of going through the whole process again, Mike May finished by saying that he recommends and fully supports April Steward as the next Town Administrator.

Jamie Underwood stated that he feels as though April Steward does a great job, but he might see the Town Administrator's role differently; going out making deals, get the town grant money, write grants, deal with large corporations and help Boylston move forward. He feels as though we would be settling and putting the town a step back; she does not have budgeting or grant writing experience. He stated that she should be the point person for the board instead of them being the point person for her; she doesn't have the expertise.

Jim Woods mentioned the transition with April would be the best transition for the town. Jamie disagreed.

Resident Chris Katz asked the question that if they were to hire April as the new Town Administrator and bring Marty McNamara to help her how much would they be paying Marty for this role? Jamie responded saying there are a lot of people who have the same questions that Chris has and believes this is a flawed system. Jim Woods stated that the system is not flawed. Jamie Underwood stated that if the two other board members feel as though they would like April as the candidate then he will have to respond no since he feels as though that is what the town would want. Mike May responded saying that regarding the C- comment, this town was not able to attract an A candidate; reflecting on the skills that we have been presented he would much rather have the board work with the Town Administrator where they groomed their own person. Mike May stated that he would rather groom her to get to an A rather than have someone come in. Mike May believes that the handicap of the Town of Boylston is the charter and the structure that various boards work under; we are not able to put unified standards and policies in place. He does not believe we are a town going backwards. Jamie stated that he does not feel this is a good decision.

Town Counsel stated that this is not about an appointment this is about selecting a finalist or deciding that you are not happy with the finalists given and will go through the process again.

Resident Gerry Quam asked how much Martin McNamara was paid. The Board responded \$105,000. Gerry then asked that if you budgeted for \$120,000 why did you post the job for \$95K-\$98K? Mike May said they did not want to go to that level and had some push back from FinComm and the BOS. Gerry stated that he doesn't understand that how you budget for \$120K and then you're not willing to spend it. Mike May stated that he is willing to help her out in any way he can. She has been taking classes and grooming herself for this role since she has been here. Gerry asked if it was well known that April Steward was being groomed for this role when she started? Jim Woods responded saying that it's a possibility.

Jamie stated that we gave the search board two specific requirements; 5 years managerial experience and a bachelors. He stated that she has zero managerial experience and Mike May disagreed.

Resident Chris Katz asked if from a legal standpoint if the other candidates hit all the legal requirements and we decided to go with someone who doesn't have all the requirements, would that open the Town for any legal concerns. Town Counsel stated that the job description said "and or" which allows the option for managerial experience and or a degree.

Jamie suggested that he believes they should open the process again and offer up a higher range to see what talent they can attract. Jim Woods stated he doesn't want to slap them in the face.

Gerry Quam asked if April had not been working here and was an Administrative Assistant in another office, would she have passed the search committee? Jim Woods said he doesn't know. Mike May said that when you have an internal candidate and you groom someone, you move them along in the process. Mike May stated that the board is working towards professionalizing this organization.

Jamie Underwood made a motion to go out for another search with a higher search criterion and a higher salary range. Mike May gave a courtesy 2nd. Voted All in Favor, Jamie; Yes, Mike May; No, Jim Woods; No.

Jamie stated that he believes the town should be going in the direction with someone who is already established and not have to train someone to get to the level that we need them to be at; while stating that even though the board may disagree they are having a professional conversation regarding the situation. Mike May stated that he respects Jamie's position and his passion, but he does not agree.

Mike May made a motion to accept the candidacy of April Steward for the Town Administrator position subject to the background investigation, pre-employment screening, and contractual negotiations. Jim Woods, seconded. Voted All in Favor; Mike May; Yes, Jim Woods, Yes, Jamie Underwood; No.

Mike May motioned to commence the chairman to enter into contract negotiations with April Steward for the Town Administrator position. Voted All In Favor.

Discussion regarding the FedEx building started. Mike May suggested that we end this meeting at this time given this meeting was scheduled for the discussion of the Town Administrators role.

At 2:47 PM Jamie Underwood motioned to adjourn; Mike May seconded; voted all in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Mack, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectman