

**Town of Mansfield
Board of Selectmen
Minutes of May 20, 2009**

Present: Chairman Ann Baldwin, Vice Chairman Kevin Moran, Clerk Jess Aptowitz, Selectman Sandra Levine, Selectman George Dentino, John D'Agostino, Town Manager

TM search firm interviews

Bob Slavin, Slavin Management Consultants and Tom Groux from Groux Associates are present for meeting.

Mr. Slavin has worked in municipal government and has served a variety of municipalities in over 20 states since 1988. Randi Frank is his associate in Connecticut that would be assisting search firm however she is away on vacation and unable to meet this week. Our background and experience had prepared us to understand the nature and culture of local government entities and the difference between the public accountability of our clients and organizations in the private sector.

Slavin Management Consultants are well known throughout the nation in the public sector. Our firm has performed dozens of executive search projects in addition to human resources and management analysis.

We follow a five step process as follows:

- Define job qualifications and requirements for the position - the recruitment profile.
- Identify and recruit qualified candidates.
- Evaluate prospective candidates
- Make recommendations, help in selection, employment negotiations and facilitate employment.
- Establish evaluation criteria and follow up.

Mr. Groux started firm in 1999 after retirement from municipal service. He was the town manager in Chatham before he started his consultant firm. His firm works exclusively in Massachusetts so he is well acquainted with the structure and form of MA Law in relation to municipal government.

Mr. Groux has worked with both Boards of Selectmen and search firms in recruiting and selecting town managers. As he works exclusively in MA he is familiar with most of the town managers in the state and would be able to tap into that network.

Selectman Dentino asked Mr. Slavin what the advantage was to being a national firm vs. a mass firm. He has a vast network of contacts throughout the country that he can draw on for qualified candidates. He can focus on MA candidates or go out nation wide depending on what the bos wants. Selectman Dentino stated he would like a candidate that is well versed in MA Law in addition to the town meeting process as that is unique to this part of the country.

Selectman Dentino asked Mr. Groux the same questions. He would use the internet as well but not rely on it as heavily. He would link to MMA's Beacon publication and the ICMA newsletter, and such to recruit candidates as that is where most town managers look. He also has many other connections to utilize as well. Town meeting form of government is so unique that he feels that a candidate really needs a thorough knowledge of MA law and governance. A candidate from out of state would have many challenges to overcome if they are not familiar with this.

Selectman Moran asked how they would interact with the board and the subcommittee.

Mr. Groux would like to meet with the board as a whole and individuals to see what they want. He would then meet with the search committee and dept. heads or others as the board sees fit.

Mr. Slavin stated that he likes to meet with the bos whole and separately as well. He would then compile a list of the comments and concerns of the board for discussion. He would also talk to anyone the bos wants, they set the agenda and he follows through on their wishes.

Both Mr. Slavin and Mr. Groux have warranties for their services. They follow candidate performance and assist for a period after the candidate is selected. If the chosen candidate leaves within a year Mr. Groux will do another search free of charge.

Selectman Aptowitz stated that he noticed both candidates stated they would use trade publications and the internet to recruit. He then asked what would the candidates bring to the table and do which the board cannot? What sets your firms apart?

And the second part of my questions: Do you work with headhunter firms or accept fees from candidate search firms? No, they both responded, that would be a conflict of interest. We get inquires from other search firms but we do not accept fees, our firms only work for the employer.

Mr. Groux responded first to Selectman Aptowitz earlier question. In addition to using trade publications, he uses a wide network of New England contacts. Also, he knows from experience, from being a town manager, that when you apply for a job you feel more secure sending your information into a professional search firm, as opposed to sending your resume into town hall. Once correspondence is received at town hall it is a public document as opposed to a search firm employed by the town.

A lot of candidates want their resume to remain confidential until they are a finalist and using a search firm makes the candidates more comfortable that the information will remain confidential until they are named as a finalist. Also, candidates will often contact the search firm to inquire more about the job, which they may not do if the board was handling the recruitment.

Mr. Slavin also added that as recruitment is their business they have a wider network to look for candidates from. Mr. Groux is correct that many candidates are leery of sending information directly to a Board of Selectmen or town hall personnel. Additionally, our firm does background checks on prospective candidates.

Selectman Levine asked about the success rate of the firms. Both firms stated that the majority of their placements remain with the municipality. They provide a comprehensive screening process with the candidate so everyone knows what they are getting.

Mr. Slavin stated that he had one instance where a candidate was selected by the municipality but then did not accept the job. The candidates are all pre-screened however some times the town and the candidate cannot come to an agreement and that candidate does not sign on.

Selectman Levine's second question: what additional skills other than the obvious would you like a candidate to have?

Mr. Slavin stated that is really up to the bos, and then he can assess management style, interpersonal skills, community involvement, site visits where the candidate currently works.

Mr. Groux, people skills, personal and professional integrity, a style that empowers personnel to achieve their best.

Mr. Groux is not in favor of publicly ranking the candidates due to a variety of reasons that were laid out.

Chairman Baldwin asked the candidates if they would be working by themselves or with others? Mr. Slavin has an associate in Connecticut that he works with. Mr. Groux does it all himself if the business is in MA, he has other consultants that he works with if the job is out of MA.

Chairman Baldwin asked how long the recruiting process usually takes. Mr. Slavin stated 90 days. Mr. Groux stated 90 - 120 days.

Chairman Baldwin then asked how they feel about the search committee having bos members on it?

Mr. Groux stated that it really shouldn't matter if they are on search committee and that citizen involvement is key, so he would add two more at large positions.

Mr. Slavin liked having bos members on the committee so they are involved at every stage.

Chairman Baldwin: Why should we hire your firm?

Mr. Slavin, national network and excellent associates in Connecticut that serve New England. Honesty, personal ethics, referrals from other communities.

Mr. Groux, personal service to the bos. He has been a tm in MA towns and has a vast working knowledge of MA Law in addition to town meeting/charter structure and familiarity with local laws that he can use in providing hands on experience. He also has the ability to reach out to out of state candidates. He looks forward to the possibility of working with the Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Dentino asked the candidates if he thought the current composition of the sub committee is good or would they recommend a different mix up.

Mr. Groux, as stated above, he likes having board representation on the Committee but would add 2 more at large members.

Mr. Slavin, 7 is a good number, as long as representation of each section is what the board wants. Some are larger with non voting committee members or alternates.

Selectman Dentino stated that he is an opinionated person and believes in the system of ranking candidates. Do you?

Mr. Slavin does not agree with a ranking system as it pits candidates against one another. An assessment of the candidates is done but not with a # ranking. This could also cause disagreements and frustration between the search firm and the bos or sub committee as well. # ranking tends to cause disharmony. (At least in the beginning phases of search)

Mr. Groux reiterated that thought and added that his process includes him sorting through the resumes and grouping them according to qualifications. He then forwards the "A" group to the subcommittee.

Selectman Dentino does not agree with this and feels that ranking is important. Mr. Slavin stated that all the candidates that they and the subcommittee forward will be very qualified and the ranking could bias them.

The board then thanked the candidates for coming and interviewing.

Questions and Comments

Weekly Business

- Warrant No. 47B in the amount of \$925,361.83
Motion: Approved (Moran/Aptowitz) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino abstain)
- Warrant No. 47A in the amount of \$279,818.06
Motion: Approved (Moran/Aptowitz) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino abstain)
- Minutes of bos meeting on April 8, 2009
Motion: To approve meeting minutes of April 8, 2009 (Levine/Aptowitz) 5:0 passes
- Vote to close 2nd special town meeting warrant.
Motion: To close special town meeting as listed. (Levine/Aptowitz) 5:0 passes

Motion: To go into executive session to discuss union and non union personnel negotiations. (Aptowitz) roll call all aye 5:0 passes

The rest of weekly business and town managers report put off until next week due to executive session.

Correspondence

- Invitation to Boy Scout Troop 51, eagle court of honor on June 21st at 2pm. Ryan Burke and Alan Miller are being honored.

- Invitation to a creative problem solving workshop to identify student opportunities to assist municipalities in moving toward economic and environmental sustainability on May 29th , 9am at SRPEDD in Taunton.
- Invitation to Bristol Aggie graduation on June 4th at 7pm in Dighton.

Town Managers Report

Selectmen's Old & New Business

- Old business from Selectman Levine:
- Old business from Selectman Dentino:
- Old business for Selectman Moran:
- Old business from Selectman Aptowitz:
- Old business from Chairman Baldwin:
- New business from Chairman Baldwin:
- New business from Selectman Aptowitz:
- New business from Selectman Dentino:
- New business from Selectman Moran:
- New business from Selectman Levine:

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn at 8:33 PM to executive session.

(Aptowitz) 5-0 **Passes**

Jess Aptowitz

Signature of Clerk

July 29, 2009

Date of Approval