

Minutes of the Public Informational Meeting of the Town of Hampden
Administrator Search Committee
June 30, 2018

Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Town House Auditorium, 625 Main Street, Hampden.

Present: Search Committee Members – Carol Fitzgerald, Dick Patullo, Rebecca Moriarty, Don Collins, Cliff Bombard, Ellen Bump.

Absent: Board of Selectman representative, Norm Charest

In attendance were 12 members of the public.

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public of the duties of the search committee, the process to be followed, and to respond to any questions posed by the public in attendance.

Carol gave an introduction and overview of what the search committees responsibilities entail. The duties are to solicit applications for the position of Town Administrator, review applications, interview candidates, and present a minimum of 2 qualified applicants to the Board of Selectmen to make the final decision. The search committee reports directly to the BOS. The position was approved at the town meeting in May, 2018, and \$90,000 was allocated for salary.

The position of "town administrator" has been established in accordance with Massachusetts statute. All of the duties and responsibilities of the town administrator will be under the direction of the Board of Selectmen in accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 41, Section 23A, quoted in part here. "...He shall act by and for the selectmen in any matter which they may assign to him relating to the administration of the affairs of the town or of any town office or department under their supervision and control, or, with the approval of the selectmen, may perform such other duties as may be requested of him by any other town officer, board, committee or commission." Unlike a "town manager", who has far more authority by law than a "town administrator", authority of Hampden's town administrator is only in accordance with the statute, i.e. as designated by the BOS.

In addition to reviewing the needs of the town and the laws governing the creation of this position, the board of selectmen spoke with representatives of the surrounding towns who have town administrators or town managers.

The opening has been posted in the *Beacon*, a Massachusetts publication, the Massachusetts Municipal Employees Association website, Masslive.com, AIC, and will be posted at other local colleges who offer master's degrees in business or public administration. The colleges' alumni offices and career offices may attract qualified individuals. Also, members on the search committee who have access to professional lists will distribute the posting to them. A copy of the job posting was distributed to the attendees. Eva will be asked to post the job on the town's notice board.

The responsibilities of the town administrator, among other things, are to execute policies as established by the BOS, build relationships among all departments within the town, improve communication among departments, and ensure the equitable enforcement of personnel policies. The town now has 100 employees, therefore, someone who can handle all aspects of human resources is a critical.

Technology use among the department needs to be coordinated. The job is an evolving one so other responsibilities may be added, i.e. ADA coordinator and social media oversight.

There was also a discussion of the role of the town administrator in relation to the BOS administrative assistant and clerk for the BOH, who have taken on more responsibilities from the selectmen over the past few years. These added responsibilities are beyond the scope of their job descriptions and will be transferred to the town administrator, with the BOS oversight. Additionally, special attention needs to be given to the town meetings and the assimilation and distribution of information. The job descriptions of all these positions will be reviewed to insure there are no overlapping responsibilities.

Residency is not a requirement of this position. The committee decided that the search pool should be as wide as possible in order to attract the best candidates. Nor is there a requirement that the person live within a certain radius of the town. The key is that this person be generally responsive to the needs of the town, that he/she engage with the town, and that he/she recognizes the unique needs of a small town.

The town administrator, at the discretion of the BOS, may also interact with members of surrounding communities through personal and professional activities. The person should also understand that he/she is a conduit for the BOS and establish an open-door policy.

The search committee has established a timeline for completing this process, although it will change as needed. The goal is to have a final decision by the end of August, 2018, with a start date of October 1, 2018. The salary has been allocated for fiscal year 2019, which begins July 1, so will be prorated as needed.

Upon receipt of a confidential application to personnelcommittee@hampden.org, the personal information of the applicant will be redacted by Carol before review by member of search committee in order to protect the privacy of the applicant. A matrix will be used initially to evaluate candidates. Interviews will be conducted by the search committee, references and background checks will be done, with the final round being 2 candidates, at which time the BOS will participate and make the final decision. There is no deadline for filling the position. Applications will be accepted until an offer has been made and accepted.

Questions to the search committee should be directed to personnelcommittee@hampden.org. Questions posed on social media will not be answered. All meetings of the search committee are open meetings which are posted and anyone may attend until such time as interviews are conducted.

The next meeting of the search committee will be Monday, July 16, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town House auditorium at 625 Main Street.

Meeting concluded at 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by Ellen Bump
Approved on 7/16/18