

IN BOARD OF SUDBURY SELECTMEN  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2015

Present: Chairman Charles C. Woodard, Selectman Susan N. Iuliano, Selectman Robert C. Haarde, Selectman Leonard A. Simon, Vice-Chairman Patricia A. Brown and Acting Interim Town Manager Police Chief Scott Nix

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, the meeting was convened at 7:31 p.m. in the Lower Town Hall, 322 Concord Road.

**Opening Remarks**

At 7:31 p.m., Chairman Woodard opened the meeting. He announced the Board will interview executive search firms which responded to the Town's Request for Proposal (RFP) for services to help find a New Town Manager. The four firms to be interviewed are: Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, University of Massachusetts; GOV HR USA; Municipal Resources, Inc.; and MMA Consulting Group, Inc. He stated each firm would be interviewed separately for approximately 30 minutes. Chairman Woodard reminded residents of the Special Town Election on May 19, 2015 to vote on three capital exclusion articles passed at Town Meeting.

Selectman Iuliano distributed copies to the Board of a handout she prepared to assist with the evaluation and ranking of the proposals received and a draft outline for questions to be asked of search firm references by the Board. In addition, Selectman Simon distributed copies of a list of questions to ask the search firms which he had prepared.

**Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, University of Massachusetts**

Present: Senior Associate Richard Kobayashi

At 7:35 p.m., Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, University of Massachusetts, Senior Associate Richard Kobayashi stated the Center was created in 2008 by the State Legislature, and it has completed over 200 consulting projects. Mr. Kobayashi further stated much of their work has been recruitment projects. He emphasized the consulting work is not done by students and/or professors, even though the company is associated with the University. He referenced Page 9 of the Center's proposal, which lists several recruitments done for Town Managers and Town Administrators. Mr. Kobayashi stated the Center works only in Massachusetts, and it is proud of its track record.

Mr. Kobayashi stated all recruitment firms essentially do the same work. However, he noted the difference between firms is where they place their emphasis for the professional work. He stated the Center places its emphasis on the early stages of the process. Mr. Kobayashi stated it will be important to establish what the Town's challenges will be in the next three to seven years, and what type of person will be best suited to face them. The Center would help develop the position profile for Sudbury, share it with the Board, and once voted by the Board, it would be used as a marketing tool. Mr. Kobayashi circulated a sample profile to the Board for review.

Selectman Simon asked how the talent pool currently looks and how many towns are competing for the same talent. At any given time, Mr. Kobayashi estimated there are approximately four to six active recruitments for managers in the State in locations which have similar demographics to Sudbury. He stated that, nationally, the talent pool is generally thin. He estimated a good town would likely have three or four solid finalists from which to choose.

Selectman Simon asked what the advantages and disadvantages are for a Sudbury Town Manager applicant. He also asked what the typical composition is for a Screening Committee. Mr. Kobayashi stated that former Town Manager Maureen Valente's long tenure of 15 years is a strong selling point. Based on his

experience, he believes five-to seven members works well on a Screening Committee. Mr. Kobayashi stated the Board will need to decide if it wants a member on it. Members should be knowledgeable about the Town's organization, noting the Committee could include the Town Moderator, a member of the Finance Committee, a land-use regulation specialist, a Department Head, a School superintendent or School Committee member or possibly a well-regarded member of the community.

Selectman Iuliano asked for clarification regarding how the Screening Committee is handled regarding compliance with Open Meeting Laws, which Mr. Kobayashi briefly addressed. Mr. Kobayashi also explained a book of resumes of recommended applicants would be confidentially presented to the Board for review, and all resumes received would also be available upon request.

Selectman Iuliano asked what the best methods are for involving the public in the process. Mr. Kobayashi stated the appetite for public forums varies from town to town. Based on his experience, members of the public want to communicate with their elected officials and not consultants. He further stated the Center would help the Town coordinate whatever it wants, but he noted most towns do not pursue public forums.

Selectman Haarde asked how many candidates are usually presented for consideration and where the Center last conducted Town Manager searches. Mr. Kobayashi stated his firm is doing a search for Walpole and it is completing one in Mashpee. He stated he would hope to have about 25-30 applicants for Sudbury's position and to recommend about five solid candidates to be honed to three finalists.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked how long a tenure applicants seek. She also asked how much the firm helps the Town to define itself for the community profile. Mr. Kobayashi stated the tenure desired depends on where the applicant is in their career. He cautioned the Board about making judgements about applicants based on age and/or where they are in their career. He also emphasized the best predictor of one's commitment is their past job history. Mr. Kobayashi further noted the Town will need to determine how long and what kind of a commitment it can make to an applicant. He stated the Center's job is to be sure Sudbury has exemplary choices from which to make a selection.

Mr. Kobayashi stated he would speak to each Board member individually which will help him assess whether everyone has the same perception of, and vision for, Sudbury. If this is not the case, material differences will need to come to the surface early in the process, because the differences will not disappear on their own.

Chairman Woodard asked what Sudbury's challenges would be for applicants and how the firm finds the best candidates for the job. Mr. Kobayashi stated there was not a particular negative he could think of because the Town has a reputation for a high-service level. However, he did note applicants from other parts of the country could find the New England housing cost differential problematic. Mr. Kobayashi stated the Center has a network of candidates it communicates with year-round, and it reaches out to applicants which it believes would be a good fit.

Selectman Simon asked if Mr. Kobayashi had heard of the Sudbury Listening Project, and he stated he had from articles in the *Boston Globe*.

### **GOV HR USA**

Present: CEO and Co-Owner Joellen Earl

At 8:05 p.m., GOV HR USA Co-Owner and CEO Joellen Earl was welcomed to the Meeting.

Ms. Earl stated she heads a female-owned company, which focuses on providing services to local governments. She worked for over 24 years as a local government manager in Massachusetts, North Carolina and Illinois, and she has extensive experience in Human Resources. Ms. Earl stated her firm has conducted many national searches, has extensive contacts in MA and 16 other states, and it is currently doing searches for Williamstown and Provincetown. She stated she is familiar with Sudbury and the Town Meeting form of government, and she knew former Town Manager Valente.

Selectman Iuliano referenced the firm's proposal regarding the hiring interview process and that a Screening Committee was not recommended. Ms. Earl stated the firm has worked with both Screening Committees and Search Committees, and it will help coordinate whichever process the Town wants. She emphasized the company spends significant time vetting applicants, checking references, and working to develop the position profile. Ms. Earl stated resumes of recommended candidates and a matrix reflecting all resumes received would be presented for review. In other towns, preliminary interviews are held in Executive Session.

Selectman Haarde asked how many applicants are typically received. Ms. Earl stated there were 52 applicants from seven states for the Provincetown position, of which 13% were female, and there were 13 applicants for Williamstown. She further stated she would estimate Sudbury could get at least 50 applicants, based on its location and solid bond rating.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked about follow-up with prior placements and how the community profile is developed. Ms. Earl stated 50% of the firm's business is repeat business. She stated the company will speak to whomever the Board thinks would be helpful in developing the profile. Ms. Earl noted it is also important for the applicant to know what type of situation they are heading into so that the eventual choice will be a good match.

Selectman Simon asked if Ms. Earl had heard of the Sudbury Listening Project. He also asked if people from other parts of the country could quickly acclimate themselves to the Town Meeting form of government. Ms. Earl stated she was aware the group had been established in response to dynamics in the Town and in an effort to bring the community together. She further stated that, if an applicant asked what was happening in Sudbury, she would want to speak to them frankly in order to assess how they would handle the situation. Ms. Earl also stated she believes someone from out of State could be successful in a Town Meeting form of government if they have come from an environment which had an engaged citizenry and they enjoy working with the public.

Chairman Woodard asked how the firm finds well-qualified candidates. Ms. Earl described how the firm would advertise and directly email and reach out to its network and others.

Chairman Woodard asked what Ms. Earl would consider as negatives for Sudbury position. Ms. Earl stated housing costs could be a hindrance, but it is a positive that the Town does not have a residency requirement. She stated she would need to know the full compensation package to better answer this question. Ms. Earl stated the Town has a great location, an engaged citizenry and a well-educated population which are drawing points. She distributed copies of slides from a PowerPoint presentation she had originally planned for tonight. Ms. Earl highlighted her company offers a two-year guarantee on placements and will do another search, if needed, at no charge.

**Municipal Resources, Inc.**

Present: Vice President Alan S. Gould

At 8:32 p.m., Municipal Resources, Inc. Vice President Alan S. Gould stated his firm services all of New England, but most of its recruitment projects are in Massachusetts. He referred the Board to references provided in the proposal. Mr. Gould emphasized he is from Massachusetts, and he is very familiar with Sudbury and its demographics, noting he completed recent searches for Wayland and Concord. He also noted many of the firm's clients are repeat customers.

Selectman Haarde asked how many applications the Town could expect to receive. He also asked how often out of State candidates are recommended as finalists. Mr. Gould stated Sudbury is a good destination position, and thus, he would expect about 60 applicants to be whittled down to five or six final candidates. He also stated New England is unique, with its Town Meeting form of government. Based on his experience, the chance for a successful transition is better for those familiar with New England local government.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked how the firm defines success and whether there is follow-up with placements. Mr. Gould stated he defines success by the feedback he receives regarding how pleased towns are with the placements, how well the final choice adapts to the position and how long they stay in the position. He also stated the firm continually maintains its relationship with clients.

Selectman Simon asked what Mr. Gould has heard about Sudbury. Mr. Gould stated he knows the Town is affluent, has high expectations for customer service, is financially stable, and is similar to Wayland in many ways.

Selectman Iuliano asked how the community profile is developed and how the public is involved in the process. Mr. Gould stated he would meet with each Board member and anyone else recommended he should contact. He suggested the Board could allow five minutes at a few of its meetings to gather public input, and/or develop a survey, set up a designated email address for feedback and solicit input from senior citizens.

Selectman Iuliano asked for advice regarding Screening Committees and their composition. Mr. Gould stated he recommends Board members are not on Screening Committees. He suggested others could be designated to represent the Board or conduct an open call for membership. Mr. Gould suggested a Screening Committee is best with seven to nine members, noting the Board should decide which groups should be represented on the committee.

Chairman Woodard asked about the firm's retention rate and how it finds the best candidates. Mr. Gould stated he can recall only three placement turnovers. He stated the firm has a strong network and a good outreach program to know who might be interested.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked about confidentiality. Mr. Gould stated input gathered is shared anonymously and that confidentiality is crucial for a successful process.

Selectman Simon asked if something negative were uncovered about an applicant would the information be shared with the Board. Mr. Gould stated it is important to not embarrass clients, and no one with any "baggage" would be presented for consideration. In closing, he thanked the Board for its time, and Mr. Gould circulated copies to the Board of a handout entitled, "Why Choose MRI for Your Executive Recruitment?"

### **MMA Consulting Group**

Present: Don Morse

At 8:58 p.m., MMA Consulting Group representative Don Morse was welcomed to the Meeting.

Mr. Morse stated the approach of consultants is important. He noted the applicant pool has changed compared to what it was like years ago. Mr. Morse believes it is important for the process to determine what it is looking for, to find candidates, to prescreen applicants and to present the finalists for feedback. He reminded the Board that, at some point in the process, the candidates are also interviewing the Town. He also stated the best candidates have options, and it is important to verify as much information as possible.

Mr. Morse stated he has been doing this kind of work since the 1970s, and his firm paces itself so it does approximately five or six Town Manager searches a year. He is working on a search for Andover and he completed one recently for Swansea. He encouraged the Board to determine its parameters regarding the amount for, and length of, contracts to be offered to better define the applicant pool.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked how long people usually stay in these types of positions and how the company judges its success. Mr. Morse stated they track their placements and typically placements stay in a position for seven to nine years. He noted the company offers a guarantee to recruit again for only the cost of expenses, if the person hired leaves within one year.

Selectman Simon asked if there are any negatives for the Sudbury position. Mr. Morse stated he would count on the Board to inform him of any issues. He further stated that, if an applicant asks about what really is going on in Sudbury, chances are that, in this day and age, they have already researched the Town. Thus, he believes it is best to be truthful, while putting the best possible spin on the truth.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Morse stated there is nothing wrong with a candidate making a career change, as long as one does so responsibly by fulfilling one's commitments.

Selectman Iuliano asked what the importance is of a well-run citizen input forum. She also asked for advice regarding composition of a Screening Committee. Mr. Morse cautioned the Board to be sure the opportunities for community input have a real purpose before deciding to conduct a public forum. He also stated he would want to meet with each Board member individually and with Department Heads. Mr. Morse stated a Screening Committee would be most effective with five to seven members, who are knowledgeable about local government.

Selectman Haarde asked if Mr. Morse thought Sudbury to be a good destination position and about how many applicants the Town could expect. Mr. Morse stated the location is historic and good, the Town's finances are good, the Town has a good reputation and it pays well. He stated he would rank it within the top 25% in the State. Mr. Morse estimated the Town could get 50-60 applicants, but he is more concerned about the quality of applicants. He would hope to have 10-12 high-quality candidates.

Chairman Woodard asked what the challenges for the Town would be. To be candid, Mr. Morse stated he reads the local papers, and it appears there is some controversy in Town. Applicants may be aware of some of this. However, primarily he has found applicants focus most on location and compensation.

At 9:28 p.m., the Board thanked Mr. Morse for his time, and the interviews were concluded

Chairman Woodard stated the Board was not voting on anything tonight, but it should discuss the next steps in the process. He stated Selectman Iuliano prepared some materials to assist the Board with its review of the search firms at its May 26, 2015 Meeting.

Selectman Iuliano referenced the material she provided to assist with the evaluation and ranking of the proposals received. She summarized the Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued, and now the Board will need to set a rating schedule to rank the responses received. She emphasized the firms will need to be ranked

on specific criteria and then an average of the rankings should be determined, followed by a review of the cost proposals. Selectman Iuliano noted the Town does not have to necessarily accept the lowest cost bid.

Chairman Woodard suggested the Board members should submit their rating sheets to Patty Golden by next Wednesday and he will collect the information and try to synthesize the results to be included in the Board's May 26, 2015 Meeting packets.

Selectman Iuliano noted the Board also has to complete five reference checks on each search firm interviewed to be reviewed at the May 26, 2015 Meeting. A brief discussion ensued regarding how the reference checks would be conducted consistently by different people. The Board concluded that each member would contact two references for each of the four firms. Chairman Woodard asked Vice-Chairman Brown to coordinate the assignments for the calling list and email it to Board members tomorrow. He also asked Board members to bring the findings of their reference checks to the May 26, 2015 Board Meeting.

Selectman Iuliano stated the RFP also noted the Board was to review the marketing materials for the firms. Chairman Woodard stated Leila Frank will email PDF's of this information to the Board as soon as possible.

Vice-Chairman Brown noted that, due to the Memorial Day Holiday, the May 26, 2015 agenda will need to be posted on Thursday, May 21, 2015.

Selectman Haarde questioned if the Board's Chairman should be the person to compile the rating information sheets. Other Board members stated Chairman Woodard would merely be compiling the information everyone would be receiving in their packets, in order to expedite the May 26, 2015 discussion. Selectman Haarde stated this was acceptable to him as long as everyone got to see all the same information.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked if the Board is going to dig deeper regarding references by contacting names not provided. The consensus was that, if other contacts could be obtained, additional input could be solicited.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9: 51 p.m.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Sudbury Police Chief Scott Nix  
Acting Interim Town Manager-Clerk