

Meeting Minutes - Hartford Town Manager Selection Committee

Location: ZOOM Meeting Room #834 6761 9362

Date: July 31, 2020

Time: 6:00 pm

TOWN OF HARTFORD TOWN MANAGER SELECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Friday, July 31, 2020, 6:00pm

Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, VT 05001

This meeting will be conducted in compliance with Vermont Open Meeting Law with electronic participation.

Present on Site: none

Present on-line: Jo Alexander; Erik Krauss; Sandy Mariotti, chair; Brett Mayfield; Steven Pomije, secretary; Allene Swienckowski; Don Jutton, MRI Consultant. John Clerkin, vice chair, absent.

I. Call to Order:

Committee Chair Sandy Mariotti called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

II. Public Comments:

No public comments.

Committee member Erik Krauss expressed his concern regarding discussing interview tools and

questions in an Executive Session, per 1 V.S.A. § 312(a) of the Vermont Open Meeting Law, due

to a perceived gray area noted through his contact with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT). He proposed discussing the interview questions in public and the evaluation matrix in

Executive Session. Committee Member Allene Swienckowski commented that specific questions tied to interviewing candidates are a personnel discussion and do not usually happen in Open Meetings, and there was general consent that discussing specific interview questions in public could create unfairness among the candidates. Secretary Steven Pomije referenced 1 V.S.A. § 312(a) of the Open Meeting Law which does generally apply to the “appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.” Overall, the committee felt within bounds to continue the Executive Session for Personnel Discussion as planned, with the committee discussing specific interviewing questions and tools in Executive Session, while sharing the type, category and nature of the interview questions during the public sessions.

A proposal was made by Committee Member Erik Krauss to amend our future agendas by adding the Open Meeting Law citation, 1 V.S.A. § 312(a), at the bottom of each agenda, and the Secretary responded that this could easily be done moving forward.

III. Executive Session* - Personnel Discussion:

A motion was made by Committee Member Jo Alexander to enter Executive Session. Committee Member Allene Swienckowski seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Committee Member Erik Krauss to exit the Executive Session. Committee Member Allene Swienckowski seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Committee Member Allene Swienckowski to approve and adopt the candidate assessment and evaluation document provided by MRI for use by the committee during all second interviews. Committee Member Brett Mayfield seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Committee Member Erik Krauss to adopt the list of interview questions as they stand to be used by the committee during all second interviews, pertaining to the following topics:

- Management & Leadership
- Town Operations
- Social Justice, Equity and Inclusion
- Economic Development
- Community Development & Social Capital
- General

Committee secretary Steven Pomije seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

*Closed session

New Business:

Committee Member Erik Krauss proposed polling community businesses, organizations and residents to gauge interest in arranging a public forum where the committee would field questions or concerns regarding hiring a next Town Manager. A subcommittee including Committee members Jo Alexander and Erik Krauss will move this project forward.

Action Items:

- Committee secretary to include the following line in all future agendas:
*This will be a closed session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) of the Vermont Open Meeting Laws.
- Committee Member Erik Krauss to combine committee and MRI interview questions into

one document for use during all second interviews, and distribute to committee by August 3.

- Secretary to work with MRI to arrange the committee's regular meeting on August 10 be facilitated by MRI due to conflict at Hartford Town Hall.
- Committee members Erik Krauss and Jo Alexander to subcommittee a project entailing polling local businesses, organizations, and residents to gauge interest in having a public forum where the committee would field questions from the public.
- In lieu of an additional meeting, Committee members will send their individual commentary or questions regarding the resource document shared by Town Hall heads of departments to the Chair by August 7.

IV. Adjournment:

Committee Member Allene Swienckowski made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Committee Member Erik Krauss seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:25pm.

All Meetings of the Hartford Town Manager Selection Committee are open to the public. Citizens wishing to address the committee should do so during the 'Public Comments period.' *An Executive Session is a closed session per 1 V.S.A. § 312(a) of the Vermont Open Meeting Law.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Pomije, Secretary
