

Select Board Meeting
May 18, 2022

4:59 pm meeting called to order by Mike Bedini.

Select Board members present: Neil Oleson, Mike Bedini, Terry I. Green (arrived 5:02pm)

Select board members absent: None

Others present: Vicki Winchell, Ron Bosley, Al Bedini (present for portion of meeting), Angela Brothers (present for her interview portion only of meeting), Ericka Oleson (present only at end of the meeting)

Town Administrator Interview

Angela Brothers

Neil asked Angela what do you bring to the town as this is a different job than most of the stuff you've listed. The town administrator holds many hats. Angela responded she applied because she had been an assistant clerk, assistant treasurer, town assessor/lister and was very successful in these positions and has a lot of knowledge in town work and would just need to get up to date on the Massachusetts laws. She also enjoyed keeping things going and likes learning new things and thrived in a small town.

Mike asked Angela how is she with people. Angela answered she is very good with people and definitely a people person. She feels a lot of what she has done in previous jobs is what is listed for the Town Administrator position. Neil responded that is a plus.

Mike asked how Angela is at getting grants. She responded she was good at it as the lister. She was able to get grants. She is not one of those people to shy away from it and tries to apply for as much as possible. Terry followed up to this asking how much money in grants she has been able to get and did she know the names of them. Angela was unsure exactly but there was a \$500K project she discussed but not sure of the names and amounts of all.

Angela asked if the Town Administrator is in charge of grants for all departments. Mike answered some find their own but the Town Administrator writes the grants. You've written them and that is a plus. Neil added the biggest thing is dealing with the public too and upset people. Got to have the right temperament to handle it.

Mike asked Angela if she'd be looking for long term. Angela responded yes and discussed why she had left Stamford. Not sure what the salary and benefits are but this is something, atmosphere wise, that she would enjoy. She doesn't think there is much she wouldn't be able to do.

Angela asked if school is being requested or if there is a certain amount of schooling required. Neil responded most of it, if there are any meetings or classes that would aid your position, has never been a problem to do it. Mike added if there are classes you take the town would reimburse you.

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Neil listed the benefits and salary as to be determined.

Discussion held regarding the rebuilding of a town website as well by the Town Administrator. Angela did not think it would be difficult since it was already up and running but did have contacts to turn to for help as well.

Terry added the position is a lot of multitasking, figuring things out as you go. There is guidance but you would have to get in there and do what you have to do. Mike added answering calls is important as well. Terry included answer calls is key and use your resources.

Discussion held regarding various town positions and their duties.

Mike also stated it would be nice at the end of the year to make up a nice town report, reaching out to each board to get monies spent so town people know what is going on. Angela asked if the Town Administrator was in charge of keeping track of what was spent or if that was the Treasurer. Board answered the Treasurer. Terry added everyone is responsible of their budget though. Neil added the Town Administrator has always kept a running tally of balances.

Angela asked if there is a grand list of residential and nonresidential for people who come in and want property information. Neil responded no they are able to view the maps though. You're the face here and every board is pretty much part time. You can refer people to the board or look up the information while they're there. Terry added she has worked in VT and MA and the VT laws are totally different than MA laws. Ron added you would be the focal point but the key thing is communication. If someone has a question you have to communicate that to that board and update them.

Mike asked Angela how should would handle someone if they were yelling and screaming at her. Angela responded she has yet to see anyone come in raging but if they did she would give them a second, calm them down. She feels she can't forecast that but does have a good personality and would do whatever she could to be sure someone could come into the office with her quick. She proceeded with an example of a time she had a difficult issue in Stamford. She added she is able to think on her feet, react quickly.

Mike asked Angela if she had any further questions. She did not.

The board thanked Angela for coming in.

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Town Administrator Candidates Discussion

Neil stated Angela was fairly knowledgeable but not the same in MA as in VT. Matt presented himself well and wants to move back into town. Joanie is local and pretty good on a lot of things. Knows what the job would entail as it has been done by family.

Terry did a lot of homework and research on them. Top two choices were Carla and Matt. Both, Matt has the structure, the experience of grant writing and being just education wise everything is right there. And Carla with the municipality experience, the office experience. She stated if the circumstances were different and people weren't coming in blind then Joan or Jamie would be good but circumstances are they are coming in blind and we need someone that has background and they both have government background. These two would be her picks.

Ron commented his pick would be Matt. Neil agreed Matt is good. He presented himself very well the only thing he could say against him is more police and baseball experience than actual municipality. Terry added there was Dept of Veterans Affairs that is government then police. Neil stated he carried himself good, is a smart guy and had 30 years police work as a police officer is most of his work then director of athletics. Terry added grant writing. Regarding Carla, Neil's only concern is that she is on so much in Monroe. Terry responded even though she wears so many hats in Monroe it wouldn't be an issue as they're on a smaller basis. She added she has worked with her on the Water commission and has been great to work with. Terry also reached out to some of the references and spoke with John Franzoni regarding Carla. He said she's been wonderful and anything they've ever asked she's been their point person and has been on committees for them and has been great. Mike stated they need to find someone who is going to stay here for longevity too. Terry reiterated she feels Matt Reed or Carla are her choices. Based on the interviews and their experience and reaching out to John Franzoni and their references.

Mike thought Joanie and Carla as his two for the position. Carla has experience Joanie has a little experience. He thinks she would learn and do good too. No matter who comes in, is coming in blind. Thought Angela was good tonight too. Hoping all members can be on the same page with the decision.

Neil thought out of them all the most eager and eager to please and seemed like she wanted it the most was Joanie. I know whenever she's done anything she's put everything she's got into it. That is one plus there. Thought Matt did a pretty good presentation. Would like to have seen him a little bit more in administrative things. Carla is good but think she may have a lot of hats going on in Monroe and felt it was kind of hard to separate them.

Mike asked Terry what she was thinking for starting salary. Terry responded she was thinking at least \$55K to start based on everybody's experience and all her research. Neil agreed \$55k would be a good place to start. Terry suggested so as not to be locked into contracts, do a hire letter and state here is your job and renewal of hire every year after a review. This way the town is not locked into someone who is having issues and doesn't end up having to pay out contracts and this protects the town.

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Mike commented they agreed on the price, now we have to agree on the person. Mike would like to give Joan a shot at it. Terry feels we need someone who has government, municipal background. Neil did not see anyone there that really had enough there to consider municipal background. Terry responded well Carla's been doing it for a number of years, government background, even Matt – yes, it's officer and its athletics but that is structure, organization.

Neil called for an official motion.

Mike Bedini made a motion to offer the position to Joan Lewis. Neil Oleson seconded.

Mike suggested the offer to Joan and if she was not interested then Carla. Neil agreed and like the idea of hiring someone from town and it would be nice to keep the money in town. He added If we do it for a yearly thing and she does not seem to be working out at the end of the year we can move on to someone else. Terry understood the local issue and she is eager to have the position but just disagrees.

Mike commented he made his motion and if it is not accepted it is understandable. Neil responded he thinks Joan will put her heart and soul into it. She has the other experience too, she was a paralegal for a while but doesn't have government experience. She came off as the most eager to want to do it and will put as much into it as she can. Carla also came off pretty good and has experience but she has a lot of hats in Monroe.

Mike's motion was on the table. Mike Bedini and Neil Oleson in favor. Terry I. Green voted no. 2-1-0

Neil commented he would like to see it unanimous but two does carry the vote. He stated it could be rescinded and asked for any other discussions or argument. Terry said I understand the passion and eagerness to work as the Town Administrator for Joan. I feel that this position to at least start needs someone with more of a background. Terry felt she can have heart and soul that she wants to be an amazing chef in a restaurant but just because she has the passion it does not mean she would do the job. She feels Matt or Carla. She also stated she scrutinized all the applicants. She understands someone who is local. Based on knowledge and experience through the years those are her top choices.

Mike agreed he didn't want it to be 2 to 1. He understood Terry's point.

Board discussed the details of hiring Joan and agreed to offer \$55, 000 year starting salary and a 90-day review to be included in her letter of hire. Benefits are to be similar to the road crew.

Board instructed Vicki to type a Letter of Hire letter to Joan and to send rejection letters to the other candidates. They also asked Vicki to have Joan come in for the next meeting on May 25, 2022 at 5:30 pm. Terry unable to be at meeting until 6pm.

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Selectmen:

Neil discussed Annual Town Meeting Warrant changes that were needed.

Mike discussed talking with assessor, Krista Bishop, about the issues they were having with Patriot. The town had switched to Patriot and there were a lot of issues. The Assessors would like to go back to Mayflower. Terry responded they had already voted to go back to Mayflower. Mike thought Krista must not have known this and he will let her know.

Ericka asked if there had been any Treasurer/Collector applications. Neil responded no. Ericka suggested to relist the position and informed the board her bond runs out on June 1st so she should not be accessing the banks accounts then. She has the bank coming on June 1st to take their names off the accounts. Ericka will transfer enough money to cover the town for four or five warrants. The board responded they did have one person who expressed an interest in it when she was here for Town Administrator interview. The board will bring her in and see if she is interested. Mike asked if Dave could do anything in that position. Terry responded technically he could be a signer because he is her backup signer for her as the Treasurer/Collector of Rowe. Ericka agreed to help someone train. Terry agreed to call Jamie in to meet with the board.

Terry I. Green made a motion to adjourn at 6:35 pm. Mike Bedini seconded. Unanimous.

Neil Oleson, Chair

Michael Bedini

Terry I. Green

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