

Planner and Conservation Agent Hiring Committee

Montague Town Hall – Annex Conference Room

1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Also Available by Zoom

Wednesday, October 5, 2022

Members in attendance: Jen Audley, Mark Fairbrother, Erin MacLean, Francia Wisniewski, Bill Ketchen, Walter Ramsey, Ron Sicard (departed at 4:45).

Absent: Suzanne LoManto.

Also Present: Steve Ellis, Town Administrator

Jen Audley called the meeting to order at 4:05. All participants were physically present.

1. Review of Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes of September 28, 2022 were approved with minor spelling corrections, 6-0.

2. Update/Review of Position Advertising

Steve Ellis and Walter Ramsey reviewed status of advertising, noting the advertisement is now live at the online and print media locations as discussed at the previous meeting. These included MassLive, Diversity.com, MassHire, MMA, Town sites, several planning specific professional organizations and listservs, and academic institutions (partially complete). MassLive also includes broadcast to LinkedIn and social media outlets. These sites are expected to cast a wide net that will engage traditional and non-traditional applicants. Francia Wisniewski has shared the opportunity through womens' professional associations with which she is familiar and Jen Audley is also working to share the opportunity through collegial networks.

3. Preliminary Screening and Interview Planning

Jen Audley noted that the committee's main task today is to work out the process for screening and interviewing candidates.

Format: How many interviews do we want to do? Depends on number and credibility of resumes. Phone interviews may be an appropriate preliminary step, perhaps done one-on-one by an authorized member of the committee.

Committee will get all credible resumes. The preliminary screening process is not very specifically defined in law, but intended to protect applicants. To some extent, the interview process will be defined by the number and quality of resumes.

Interviews: Decision made to use a meeting at the end of October to select interviewees and potentially conduct interviews on the 3rd, 7th and 8th of November.

Observations/Interview Questions: Discussion of potential interview questions began and members offered some of their thoughts. Loosely paraphrased, Ron Sicard wants to see how the person interacts. Erin MacLean: focused on vision and wants to get a grip on their ability to translate that to action. Walter Ramsey: project leadership is a focus and would like examples of past leadership, dealing with

conflict. Francia Wisniewski: give them a project or scenario and see how they develop the process and present themselves. Jen Audley: ask them to provide examples of projects they have already done. Ron Sicard: how much did they study up on Montague. 1st round- tell us what they've done already, 2nd round- we give them a project. Francia Wisniewski: what is this person looking for in their own career or outlook? Mark: Conservation Agent is a separate entity legally. Candidates, or final selection, should if necessary be given time to become familiar with the various layers of regulation associated with that position – it can be taught.

Jen Audley suggested she could synthesize the input received and work on a draft interview protocol for the next meeting.

Next meeting: October 26 @ 4:00. Screening of resumes and finalization of interview questions.

Motion to adjourn at @ 5:16 by Mark Fairbrother, second by Francia Wisniewski. Motion carries 6-0.