

6/4/07 - (10)

Maryjane Kenney

From: Paulina Knibbe (comcast)
Sent: Sunday, May 27, 2007 8:42 AM
To: Dore' Hunter; Board of Selectmen
Cc: Manager Department; Peter Ashton; Clerk Department
Subject: Re: Appointment of an Observation Sub-committee

It seems to me that there is no hurry to make a decision on how to handle Selectman participation in Executive Session Meetings of the Manager Search Committee. I suspect there won't need to be any until mid-August or early September when resumes start coming in. Certainly not before the next BoS meeting.

This should be placed on the agenda for the next BoS meeting.

However, since Dore' has made a suggestion, I would like to make a couple of other suggestions for consideration by the board.

It might be appropriate for no selectman to be present at any of the Executive Sessions. This allows the Committee to discuss candidates more freely and prevents any Selectman from having pre-conceived notions about candidates before the entire BoS considers them.

If it seems there is value in having Selectmen at the Executive Sessions, it seems more appropriate to alternate this representation in a 'round-robin' way among those interested than to designate specific representatives.

Paulina

At 02:36 PM 5/26/2007, you wrote:

Hi Folks,

As you are aware we have set up a Screening Committee, Chaired by Peter Ashton, to undertake some specified tasks, the most important of which will be to conduct an initial or preliminary screening of Town Manger applicants designed to produce a relatively small group of finalists that the Board of Selectmen will then interview and ultimately hire the best person as the New Town Manager. It is expected that the Screening Committee will perform much of its work in Executive Session due to anticipated applicant concern about their current employers potential reaction to the fact they were seeking employment elsewhere.

Of course, once the finalist group is selected by the Screening Committee any further interviews and hiring discussions leading to the actual appointment by the Board of Selectmen will be done in public session.

Some of the Selectmen have indicated a desire to sit in as observers during the Screening Committee process, including the Executive Sessions. Accordingly I will appoint an Observation Sub-committee of the Board of Selectmen for that purpose, but only authorize the members to act as follows:

1. No more than TWO SELECTMEN may be present in a Screening Committee Executive or Public Session. To that end I will appoint two members, and one alternate member, of the Observation

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Subcommittee, and make appropriate assignments to particular sessions so that limit is observed; and

2. Observation Sub-committee members will not, by word or deed, express any view of an applicant's qualifications, or lack thereof, to any member or members of the Screening Committee; and

3. Observation Sub-committee members will not participate in any Screening Committee elimination or rank ordering of any candidates for interview, or any other purposes, although they may observe the process and, if they desire, review the resumes submitted by any candidates who are eliminated after the fact; and

4. Observation Sub-committee members will not during the Screening Committee process publicly disclose the identity of any of the candidates; and

5. Observation Sub-committee members may, in either Executive or Public Sessions, respond appropriately to factual, logistical or procedural questions directed to them by members of the Screening Committee, or candidates, that do not involve evaluation of any candidate; and

6. Observation Sub-committee members may, during an applicant interview, but after the Screening Committee members present have asked all their questions, suggest that a question be put to a candidate by the Screening Committee Chair. However, such a question should only be intended to clarify some prior statement by the candidate, and shall not indicate any candidate preference;

7. One Observation Sub-committee member should keep notes during the observations of the Screening Committee process which can support a later critique of the process, should it be desired to later study this hiring process. This in order to pass on any lessons learned to those involved when next the community has to repeat it.

It is my intent to appoint myself and Lauren as the Observation Sub-committee Members, and Paulina as the Alternate.

Regards,
Dore' Hunter
Chairman of the Board of Selectman & VSO, Town of Acton, MA
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