

SUDBURY SELECT BOARD
TOWN MANAGER SEARCH COMMUNITY FORUM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

7:00 PM – VIRTUAL MEETING

(Meeting can be viewed at www.sudburytv.org)

Present: Chair Charles Russo, Select Board Member Daniel Carty, Select Board Member Lisa Kouchakdjian, Select Board Member Jennifer Roberts, Vice-Chair Janie Dretler (arrived at 7:15 PM), Interim Town Manager Maryanne Bilodeau

Also Present: Bernard Lynch, Community Paradigm Associates, LLC

The statutory requirements as to notice having been compiled with, the meeting was convened at 7:03 PM via Zoom.

Chair Russo announced the recording of the meeting and other procedural aspects included in the meeting.

Call to Order/Roll Call

Select Board Roll Call: Carty-present, Roberts-present, Kouchakdjian-present, Russo-present, Dretler-present

Bernard Lynch of Community Paradigm Associates to provide brief opening remarks

Mr. Lynch noted the Town Manager Search Community Forum was being conducted to elicit community participation with the Town Manager search process. He mentioned the ongoing Town Manager Survey, which would be available until the end of the week.

Community Comments

Resident and Commission on Disability member Kay Bell, 438 Lancaster Road, mentioned she was interested advancing the spirit of the Town, stating that the community is very involved in this selection process.

Resident Marie Royea, 42 Blacksmith Drive, said she was pleased to be able to participate in this feedback session. She asked if Mr. Lynch's firm represented the last Town Manager search. Mr. Lynch responded in the affirmative, and explained that the Town Manager hiring process had been challenging in the last several years, but is now improving and seeing more qualified candidates.

Board Member Roberts commented that the Select Board had an opportunity to share similar questions with Mr. Lynch and his team. She was interested in hearing what attributes and qualifications the community wanted to see in the next Sudbury Town Manager.

Resident Kay Bell indicated that the next Town Manager should be an open-minded, creative thinker. Ms. Bell stressed that Sudbury is an agricultural suburb, and has many forward-thinking residents.

Resident and Sustainable Sudbury member, Leslie Lowe, 167 Pratts Mill Road, expressed her interest in conservation and keeping the Town beautiful, clean, and healthy. Ms. Lowe expressed her concern about climate

change, and hoped the new Town Manager would have experience in sustainability, and successfully oversee the placement of a sustainability director for the Town.

Resident Pat Brown, 24 Whispering Pine Road, spoke of the incredible amount of time that Town Managers spend in public meetings. She also mentioned that the Town is governed by the Town Manager Act, which grants the Sudbury Town Manager a considerable amount of authority and autonomy. Ms. Brown recommended that a Town Manager candidate must carefully consider the importance of the Town Manager Act in Sudbury, and possess the ability to manage volunteers.

Resident Marie Royea commented that the Town recently acquired a considerable amount of conservation property that is not being utilized; she recommended that the new Town Manager address these properties and move things along. Ms. Royea mentioned the importance of sustainability.

Resident Pat Brown mentioned the importance of management skills, including the ability to delegate tasks to department heads, while maintaining enough control to avoid burnout.

Ms. Brown commented that tonight's forum was not well-advertised. Mr. Lynch confirmed that there were more residents participating remotely tonight when compared to a similar forum held three years ago.

Resident Kay Bell asked about a Town Manager having a global approach, and thinking outside the Town, which could benefit the Town by obtaining grant funds. Mr. Lynch stressed the importance of this mentioned skillset, adding there were a variety of methods to advance such funding.

Resident Manish Sharma, 77 Colonial Road, emphasized that the Town Manager's job is a 24/7 position, and indicated his desire for a Town Manager with financial expertise. He asked Mr. Lynch if it would be possible to hire a Town Manager who has worked globally for a top management firm. Mr. Lynch commented that most experienced property management executives do not typically seek town management positions. He stressed the Town Manager position also deals with personnel, labor relations, municipal finance, and community engagement.

Resident Kay Bell commented that the new Town Manager must consider inclusion for all those in the town, including those with disabilities.

Resident Len Simon, 40 Meadowbrook Circle, stressed that the next Sudbury Town Manager must have municipal finance experience, be knowledgeable in the essentials of municipal law, understand municipal procedures; and possess five to ten years of related experience. He mentioned the effectiveness and experience of former Sudbury Town Manager Maureen Valente. Mr. Simon stressed the importance of effective employee management. Mr. Simon stated this new town manager hire would be the fourth town manager appointment in eight years, which is problematic.

Resident Jean Nam, 81 Newbridge Road, agreed with many statements made about required Town Manager experience. Ms. Nam commented that a friend of hers informed her about this Forum. She suggested that residents be given another opportunity for feedback. Mr. Lynch stated tonight's meeting was posted a couple of weeks ago, and a related Town Manager survey has been ongoing.

Resident and Finance Committee member Eric Poch, 28 Ruddock Road, stated that municipal awareness should be a requirement for the Town Manager position. He stressed that Sudbury reflects a mix of "historic tradition and

aggressive activism.” Mr. Poch indicated that sometimes tradition gets in the way, and getting additional funding from the state would be ideal. He stressed that progress has to be well-planned.

Resident Pat Brown inquired about the profile of those who have taken the survey. Mr. Lynch responded that those submitting a survey (150+ surveyed) were Sudbury residents, and were allowed one survey submission only.

Resident Kevin Lahaise, 145 Horse Pond Road, added that the Town has struggled with taking input from residents in consideration of technical aspects. He stressed the importance of a Town Manager being able to share information with residents in order to facilitate change. Mr. Lahaise advocated for a Town Manager with a certain amount of technical expertise and the ability to understand the needs of residents. Mr. Lynch concurred that communication skills were key components for the Town Manager position; Mr. Lahaise agreed.

Mr. Lynch reminded residents to complete the Town Manager survey, and to reach out to him with any further Town Manager comments and questions.

Chair Russo read in the words of the motion. Board Member Kouchakdjian moved in the words of the Chair. Board Member Roberts seconded the motion.

It was on motion 5-0; Roberts-aye, Kouchakdjian-aye, Carty-aye, Dretler-aye, Russo-aye

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM.