



Town of Bridgewater

Town Council

November 18, 2024

7:00 PM

Town Manager Preliminary Screening Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Academy Building

66 Central Square

Council Chambers/2nd Floor

and

Virtually via Zoom.

MEETING MINUTES

A Quorum of the Town Council may be in attendance

A. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum of the Town Council being duly present, Town Council President Perry called the meeting to order at 7:00pm on Monday, November 18, 2024.

A quorum of the Town Manager Preliminary Screening Ad Hoc Committee being duly present, Chair Paul Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:00pm on Monday. The meeting took place in Council Chambers and via Zoom.

PRESENT

Fred Chase, Dr. Kevin Perry, Paul Murphy and Timothy Fitzgibbons.

Also present were Councilors Mark Linde, Mary McGrath and Adelene Ellenberg.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a) October 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Councilor Chase made a motion to approve the minutes from October 28, 2024. This was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:

Fitzgibbons – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea;.

Motion Passed 4-0.

C. CITIZEN OPEN FORUM - None

D. ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED

a) Introduction Meeting with Community Paradigm to Discuss Process

The councilors and Mr. Fitzgibbons introduced themselves.

Bernie Lynch introduced himself and Sharon Flaherty and discussed the documents that he sent. Mr. Lynch noted that they are in the stage of pulling together all the information. Geared towards engaging the stakeholders and understanding what Bridgewater needs in hiring a new Town Manager. Not the same town when Mike Dutton was hired or when this form of government was adopted.

Mr. Lynch noted that Ms. Flaherty has been pulling together documents from the website which will be included in the position statement. Have asked for additional information from the Town Manager's office. Department Head questionnaire will be sent out in the next few weeks. Will be talking to all of the council members on a Zoom call via 1:1. Will be scheduled around Councilor schedules. Will also do a community survey to engage the community.

Mr. Lynch noted that after pulling the information together a draft position statement will be presented to the Ad Hoc Committee in mid-December. Would like to hit the market right before Christmas, give a span of 4 to 5 weeks to go out and find candidates. Have already spoken to about half a dozen candidates that should take a look at Bridgewater.

Bring all resumes received to Ad Hoc committee in early February and select between 6 to 8 for interviews. Will work with Ad Hoc Committee on the interview process. Will then bring finalists in front of the full council.

Mr. Fitzgibbons noted that he would prefer interviews be done in person. Mr. Lynch noted that they are use to doing full day interviews.

Councilor Perry asked if there are other ways of engaging the community, wants there to be plenty of community involvement. Mr. Lynch noted that they have done in-person forums with mixed success. Level of participation has not always been the greatest. More inflammatory than productive. Many communities have done virtual forums. One challenge that local governments face is it's tough to get people all together, technology has allowed for some of that. Most successful has been the Community Survey. Also have had Community Forums mid-way through the process. Meet and greets have been successful also. Bring each candidate in before the community and have community ask questions.

Councilor Chase noted that amendable to the use of email for community outreach, dedicated email address. Mr. Lynch noted that we have utilized something like that. Put an email address out there and ask people to give us feedback.

Councilor Murphy noted that it is important to all of us that the community be engaged in the process. Position Statement is hard to pick up for the average person, how do we sell to the community of what we are looking for, a simpler document. Mr. Lynch noted that the audience for the Position Statement is the candidate, designed to help them understand.

Ms. Flaherty noted that they could simply pull out some information and make a one pager.

Councilor Dr. Perry noted that he liked the sample Position Statement, more for the candidates

and asked about the timeline. Mr. Lynch noted that they would like it put together right around Christmas. Position Statement is posted to our website, people check daily to see what jobs are out there. Make the statement available to the Town to put on their website. More than happy to help condense into shorter, easier to read document. What the screening committee is looking for. The survey can be out in the new few days and can send on to the Town and have that posted on the website. It can close prior to the Position Statement being completed or early January. Then consolidate the data received and present to the Ad Hoc committee. The survey is an on-line document.

Mr. Lynch also noted that he will start scheduling 1:1s with the councilors, the position statement will be out on the street by December 23rd, reach out about 400 people in our database. Resumes back by the week of 1/13 and push back to talk with people at the MMA Conference. Maybe the 27th of January. Does that work?

Mr. Fitzgibbons asked if that would push out the 3/3/25 deadline to 3/17/25 and Mr. Lynch noted yes but it would be good to talk with people at the MMA Conference.

b) Next Steps

Councilor Murphy noted that he would confirm with Mr. Lynch on what is happening with the process and that he was in favor of doing a community event early in the process, would like people to let us know what they want in a Town Manager. Noting that it needs to be engaging. Similar to what was done with Vision to Reality.

Councilor Perry noted maybe a joint effort with Mr. Rulli, around 12/10.

E. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Donna Jewell: very difficult to hear the Town Councilors comments via Zoom. Dr. Perry noted that there was some technical issues.

F. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Chase made a motion to adjourn. This was duly seconded by Councilor Perry.

A roll-call vote was taken with the results recorded as follows:
Fitzgibbons – Yea; Chase – Yea; Perry – Yea; Murphy – Yea;.
Motion Passed 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

In accordance with the applicable provisions of the Town of Bridgewater Home Rule Charter and Town Council Rules and Procedures, the Town Manager Preliminary Screening Ad Hoc Committee assembled voted, at their meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2024, to approve the aforementioned minutes, as submitted.