

MENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MINUTES OF MEETING----- February 6, 2014

APPROVED-----March 10, 2014

Chairman Tinio, Selectmen Goddard & Reil are present at the Mendon Town Hall.
Chairman Tinio called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and led the pledge.

Chairman Tinio explained the purpose of the meeting is to interview candidates for the Town Administrator position. Mr. Gould from MRI Associates, recruiting firm, introduced Grady Miller. Mr. Miller gave an overview of his professional experience. He stated Mendon's small-town character has a high quality of life for residents. Narragansett, with whom he was previously employed as Town Manager, has a city council and not a Selectboard. Selectman Goddard asked what his first 90 days would look like. He would like to meet with each Selectman monthly and would spend time with departmental directors to understand their operations and issues to assist them. He would reach out to neighboring communities to see if there are opportunities for shared/regional services. He would reach out to Superintendent of school district. He would look to see what top issues are with the town as well as prepare for ATM. Selectman Reil asked what Mr. Miller sees as the role of Town Administrator. Mr. Miller stated it is to assist the BOS in running the day-to-day personnel and policy issues and financial issues. It is to also bring things to the board that has to go to ATM. Mr. Miller intends to move to Mendon if he gets the position. He has always lived in the town in which he works. He feels it is important to be active and give back through service organizations. He has interest in history. He left the position in Narragansett for 2.5 years due to unresolved issues. Selectman Goddard asked what he sees as the issues in Mendon. Mr. Miller sees the revenue base as challenging, growing the revenues and economic development. He is not currently employed; however, he is very active in volunteer organizations. He is familiar with regional school districts as his town was involved with one in Arizona and he had a good relationship with the administration. Selectman Reil asked what his greatest strength is and how he could bring that to Mendon. He was able to bring skills he learned in an 'apprenticeship'-like position of Assistant to the City Manager to a smaller community in which he worked. He would commit to being in Mendon five years or more. He has experience with bringing technology to add efficiencies in previous positions.

Mr. David DeManche introduced himself as an Uxbridge resident. He has 18 years of experience in Town Administrator and Town Coordinator positions. Selectman Goddard asked about his management style. Mr. DeManche said he is not a micromanager. He feels department heads are experts. He feels he is a manager and facilitator. The Board is the final decision maker. Selectman Reil asked what he thinks the role of local government. Mr. DeManche said its function is to provide services and order. Selectman Goddard asked how he would balance expenses with what each department needs. Mr. DeManche meets with department heads and has had a financial team involved in the budget process. Chairman Tinio asked what hurdles were in Carlisle which has a similar population. Uxbridge & Millbury were trying to attract economic development. Carlisle emphasized open space and maintaining a rural atmosphere.

Mendon has to determine how they develop to be creative in order to bring business in and expedite development. Chairman Tinio asked if economic development helped the community. Mr. DeManche said it worked for Millbury but wouldn't fit in Mendon. Control and planning needs to be done for something like that. He has used shared services and would work with other Town Administrators to coordinate. Selectman Goddard asked if he has had any problems getting department heads getting behind a policy. Mr. DeManche would use communication and team building and quarterly board meetings. Mr. DeManche asked the Board what his focus would be during the first few months. Selectman Tinio stated organization in Selectmen's office and getting the office running at its full level--capital purchasing, technology, identifying trouble areas that an Administrator finds. Selectman Goddard added optimizing town resources, compensation plan, job descriptions and job sharing. Mr. DeManche has extensive experience in writing and being awarded grants.

Mr. Gould introduced Kimberly Newman who gave an overview of her background. She is from New England and has worked in several town departments in Florida. She is currently a City Administrator in Kansas and has an opportunity to come back to New England. She was not welcomed as a New Englander. This was a relatively new position working with a six-member city council. Some of those individuals were related to town employees. She was able to establish boundaries and clarify roles without taking away people's authority. She spent time going to meetings and civic functions. She believes everyone's goal is to provide the best possible service for the residents. She worked to consolidate town's IT with the school's. Meetings were able to be broadcasted over the web and they had the ability to print fewer documents by having them available electronically. Residents need to see return on investment to justify the expense. Chairman Tinio asked what experience she had in Lyndon and Killingly with economic growth. Ms. Newman replied that Killingly turned a contaminated mill site into a shopping plaza. Lyndon's economic development is centered around tourism. She helped re-develop a \$3M grocery store site into an elaborate convenience store with seating. She also helped get an office building redeveloped into a doctor's office by working with local hospitals. She was involved in starting a Chamber of Commerce-like organization. She established relationships over a three-year period with local businesses that didn't previously communicate. Last fall 27 businesses sponsored a festival which she feels was a huge accomplishment. Selectman Goddard asked what would be the biggest asset that she would bring to Mendon. Ms. Newman stated she enjoys being challenged and believes her accomplishments in other towns can be carried over to Mendon. Selectman Goddard asked what she thinks the biggest challenge would be in Mendon. Ms. Newman noted that economic development is spread in different places. Planning is necessary for development to be done properly. She is interviewing with other communities but is more interested in Mendon. She is looking for a community that she cares about and can stay in.

Selectman Goddard reminded members that they owe town counsel an email regarding Pilot vs. personal taxes for the solar lease. Lawney can be available via phone for the meeting on February 11 with town counsel.

Selectmen gave their rankings of candidates. Selectman Goddard: Kim, David, Grady. Selectman Goddard said he likes Kim's energy and that David and Kim have the same experience. However, he feels Kim would be able to 'drive this'. Chairman Tinio's ranking:

David, Kim and Grady. He feels David has a good grasp of what is going on in Mendon and has experience in the area which gives him the upper hand. However, he also likes Kim's energy and her ability to get things done. Selectman Reil felt it would be good to have Kim come in with 'fresh eyes'. Selectman Goddard didn't hear from Kim the specific issues that were facing the town.

Selectman Reil made and Selectman Goddard seconded a motion to allow Alan Gould to offer Kimberly Newman an employment agreement for Town Administrator, obtain medical clearance and successful background investigation. The motion carried. Chairman Tinio did not vote.

Dick Skinner, resident, suggested that Chairman Tinio vote for Kimberly to show his support for the candidate. Chairman Tinio stated that David DeManche was his first choice and Kimberly was his second. He will give her his full support as Town Administrator.

Selectman Goddard made and Selectman Reil seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:12 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Willoughby
Administrative Assistant

Documents Discussed Located in the 'Administrative Secretary's' Office:
None