

MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Special School Committee Meeting

Virtual

Monday, December 20, 2021

Committee Present:

Sean Nicholson, Erick Brown, Phil DeZutter, Kerry Laurence, Vikki Ludwigson

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 p.m. by Kerry Laurence.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the Agenda

MOTION: On a motion of Kerry Laurence, seconded by Vikki Ludwigson, to approve the agenda without the approval of minutes item.

VOTED:

Sean Nicholson, yes

Erick Martin, yes

Vikki Ludwigson, yes

Kerry Laurence, yes

Phil DeZutter, yes

II. WORKSHOP WITH SEARCH CONSULTANT TO DESIGN NEXT STEPS IN SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROCESS

The School Committee discussed with Carolyn Burke & Michael Palandino from NESDEC (Superintendent Search Consultant) the timeline:

- Position has been advertised,
- Job description
- Successful candidate profile approved by School Committee
- Screening committee used the approved profile to screen applications

Carolyn Burke noted approved profile included 3 areas of real expertise and real experience – organized and strategic leader, whole student focus; collaborative and exclusive leader. Carolyn noted to determine if candidate have these abilities, the School Committee will need to decide how to make those determinations such as be site visits, questions and/or references calls.

Carolyn noted applications are confidential and will become part of the HR file. She asked who will be the liaison/spokesperson with the press. It was determined Kerry Laurence as the Chair will be the spokesperson.

School Committee will need in house staff to assist with some coordination.

Next steps options include but not limited:

- Interview then invite day in district
- Day in district, interview that night
- Day in district, interview later
- Visit candidate's district
- Interviews in person or remotely
- Day in district will be walking around or meet/greet with staff and parents

It was asked since one of candidates is an internal candidate, is there a difference? Carolyn recommended to treat as the same way as the external candidate. This gives each candidates the same opportunities.

Kerry Laurence stated candidates day in the district to get questions from stakeholders for them to answer and then interview later in the day. Carolyn stated response sheets (paper or online) are available for stakeholders to give opinions.

Phil DeZutter likes the one-day option so everyone can see both candidates. Carolyn discussed day in district is where the candidates are greeted by a member of the School Committee and escorts them to the schools. Samples of the day in the district will be provided. This day provide interactions with students/staff and others with the candidate. It was agreed one day was a good option.

Vikki Ludwigson will get the information and work with staff to determine and schedule the day in the district. These days should be posted so any School Committee members can participate. No deliberations are allowed but questions can be asked.

Carolyn discussed interviews questions and it was best to plan 90-minute interviews Themes of interview questions/guidance discussed:

- Kerry Laurence is interested in knowledge in Special Education
- Sean Nicholson is interested in getting students back to pre-pandemic levels and what methods are available
- Vikki Ludwigson is interested in the SEL of the pandemic and budget question;
- Erik Brown wants to ask about experience with regional school district, strategic initiatives involvement with school system, what are the 4/5 key responsibilities of superintendent and what is your strength and weakness
- Phil DeZutter recommended developing a google document so committee members can add questions/interest and review after the holidays. It was noted questions from the screening committee will be provided.

Kerry Laurence will set up google document and will add the information discussed. It was recommended to look at the profile to ensure the questions are evenly distributed among priorities.

Kerry Laurence will welcome candidates and ask the icebreaker question. Clarified 90 minutes interviews will take place in the evening of the day in the district for each candidate

Carolyn stated reference grids will be distributed so School Committee members can review and determine who calls who. Sample reference questions will be provided as well. Discussion of the how to ask the reference questions. Carolyn noted one of the candidates is a finalist in Hingham.

School Committee will plan another planning session in the first week of January. The plan is to have the day in the district on January 10 or 11. Further discussion on making the reference calls before interview so information is available when deliberating. School Committee members can also plan to visit/virtual meetings with their references. It was determined not to do this and accomplish through reference calls.

Carolyn noted the vote is to enter negotiations with a candidate and not to offer the position, thus School Committee needs to understand a competitive salary range is higher than MURSD current range.

Next meetings and tasks were discussed

Carolyn discussed how School Committee members should discuss feedback of each candidate in open session. Then a School Committee member should make a motion to show unanimous support for 'incoming superintendent'.

Kerry Laurence and Vikki Ludwigson will work with building principals on which day is best for day (10th or 11th) in district. The interview date will be determined.

III. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: MOTION: On motion of Vikki Ludwigson, seconded by Phil DeZutter to adjourn

VOTED:

Sean Nicholson, yes

Erick Martin, yes

Vikki Ludwigson, yes

Kerry Laurence, yes

Phil DeZutter, yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Minutes by Kelly McElreath