

Fire Chief Study Committee
Minutes 2/2/22
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Meeting began at 10:10 AM

Present: April Stein, Elaine Puleo, Jim Walton, Kristin Burgess, Walter Tibbets

Also present: Rachel Schwab, Mark Foster

- No changes to the agenda
- Public Comment: none
- Minutes from 1/26/22 10 AM meeting accepted unanimously
- Minutes 1/26/22 6 PM Public Forum. accept unanimously with changes
- Take away from Public Forum
 - A lot of passion from the public
 - Comments relating to Fire Chief hiring committee and desire for input from Fire Fighters
 - Respect that they want involvement in the process
 - Transparency has been a part of the committee's process
 - Kristin and Jim are reaching out to the 1 or 2 Fire Fighters who were not interviewed yet; preferably will be able to speak with them in person
- Recommendations for what the town should do moving forward
 - Selectboard will advertise for the job and then a search committee will do the initial interviews in private with interviews with finalists being public
 - This committee will not be involved in the interviewing or hiring process
 - Rachel noted that she supports having hiring interviews in person and supports Fire Fighters involvement
 - Jim-supports follow up interviews in person with limit of number of people in the room. Looking for a model where we would hire a new Full Time Fire Chief with time to overlap with our current Chief. Supports a Full Time Chief and strengthening the Deputy Chief position
 - Kristin-move forward looking for a Full Time Chief and what it will look like. Discussing w/Chief applicant what options they might want, as the process unfolds. Would be great to have more volunteers.
 - Walter-Noted that we have Job descriptions for Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, Captain. Who would have the other positions would be decision of the Chief. Support Fire Chief continue as a full time position. If we have no applicants the we need to look at other possibilities. If Chief does not live in town, then hire 19 or 20 hour Deputy Chief.
 - April-supports hiring Full Time Chief. Pointed out how idiosyncratic the Fire Chief's role in a small town often is depending on where the Chief lives; does the Chief have another job
 - Elaine-Full Time Chief. Job description/contract not to require residency in town but within a TBD distance from town
 - If we don't get qualified applicants then look at PT Chief w/Deputy, etc. A hired FT Chief can create a Deputy or Assistant Chief
- What is Qualified when looking for a Fire Chief?
 - Job description accurately reflects the town's needs and what the qualifications are
 - Recommended supports for the Fire Chief
 - Being active in Franklin County Fire Chief Assoc-this provides supports/ideas for Chiefs in other towns
 - Fire Chief Association of Massachusetts offers mentoring program for Fire Chief. This gives the Chief access to Chiefs all around the States
 - Networking with other Chiefs is recommended

Adjourned 11 AM

Next Meeting: 2/9/22 @ 7 PM

