

**Board of Selectmen
January 28, 2019
Town Hall**

Present:

Mary Blanchard, Chairman
Priscilla Gimas, Vice-Chair
Mary Dowling, Clerk
Michael Suprenant
Chase Kaitbenski
Ted Kozak, Interim Town Administrator
Jeneé Lacy, Admin Assistant

Chairman Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

The Selectmen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

M. Blanchard read the agenda.

Discussion and Determination Regarding the Candidates for Town Administrator

M. Dowling thanked the TA Search Committee and Paradigm for bringing forth experienced candidates. She stated that she thinks R. San Angelo seems very committed, that K. Newman has high energy and seems to be hands on but thinks that Sturbridge may have a lot more going on than she is used to in Mendon and that a lot of things in the town may be first time situations for her. M. Dowling stated that she thinks J. Bridges Jr.'s experience is unmatched by the other candidates, but one concern she has is that he doesn't have experience in Town Meeting form of government. M. Dowling indicated that J. Bridges Jr.'s experience makes him her first choice.

M. Suprenant stated that he looked at the candidates from a qualifications standpoint using a scoring spreadsheet. He weighed their experience, how many jobs they've had in the last 15 years, their professional credentials, education qualifications and interview performance. He indicated that he thinks they all performed well but none as well as Leon did when he interviewed. K. Newman scored highest and has a Master Degree. J. Bridges Jr. also has a Master's Degree, from an online school, he scored high as well because of his 20-30 years of experience. K. Newman had 10-20 years of experience and R. San Angelo had just under 10 years of experience as a municipal manager, though he has been a State Representative in CT. M Suprenant discussed that K. Newman was 1 point ahead of J. Bridges Jr. using his scoring system.

C. Kaitbenski stated that he thought they all interviewed very well, R. San Angelo brought a lot of energy, was very personable and interviewed well. K. Newman was from a small town and wants to come to Sturbridge as a bigger challenge, but his top candidate was J. Bridges Jr. C. Kaitbenski discussed that he thinks J. Bridges Jr. will have the ability and the experience to help Sturbridge continue moving forward.

P. Gimas discussed that she weighed out only 2 candidates, K. Newman and J. Bridges Jr. She stated

that though R. San Angelo interviewed well she is concerned he is too involved with project management and not so much the day to day work of being a Town Administrator. P. Gimás stated that J. Bridges Jr. is experienced and comes from a large community but thinks it was a disadvantage that he wasn't able to interview in person. P. Gimás indicated that she personally like K. Newman as her pick, because she had control of the room when she entered her interview, she has high energy and doesn't seem like she is afraid to get her hands dirty.

M. Blanchard stated that she settled on J. Bridges Jr. and K. Newman to choose between. R. San Angelo doesn't have as much experience and has left other towns not by choice more than once. K. Newman was personable but doesn't think she has the experience for Sturbridge because Mendon is a much smaller community. M. Blanchard stated that she did not like the comment K. Newman made about the flexible hours and stated that the hours of a Town Administrator are long and not flexible. Discussed that she was impressed by J. Bridges Jr. and was pleased that he wanted to have a long term commitment in Sturbridge. M. Blanchard indicated that she believes J. Bridges Jr. has more experience and qualifications than the other two candidates so he would be her first choice.

M. Dowling stated that she still stands behind her first choice being J. Bridges Jr. but wants to comment that she doesn't have the same concerns about R. San Angelo that the others do.

The Board of Selectmen discussed R. San Angelo regarding why he has stayed in Southbridge for 4 years. M. Blanchard stated that she doesn't think R. San Angelo has the experience to work in Sturbridge.

M. Suprenant discussed that he thinks the Board is discounting that K. Newman has worked for a small community and doesn't think Mendon is that much smaller than Sturbridge. He stated that J. Bridges Jr. has never worked in a MA town or with a Town Meeting form of government. The Town Meeting form of government and managing it is much different than going to Town Council to get appropriations and J. Bridges Jr. doesn't have experience in MA, which makes a difference because it is quite different in the way it operates than in other states.

M. Blanchard stated that all the candidates are professionals and the references talked about all their adaptability skills to different states.

P. Gimás agreed with M. Suprenant stated that there were a few concerning items with J. Bridges Jr., that even though he had collective bargaining experience, three of his union negotiations went to arbitration. She stated what she liked about K. Newman is the same as M. Suprenant stated and that R. San Angelo is personable but doesn't seem like he knows how to work with his boards. P. Gimás agreed that she thinks having experience in a MA town is a plus.

Motion: To appoint Jeff Bridges Jr. to the position of Town Administrator for the Town of Sturbridge. By: M. Dowling

2nd: M. Blanchard

Discussion: P. Gimás stated that she will vote in favor of the motion so that the new TA isn't starting with a split board but would like the record to show that J. Bridges Jr. is not her first choice. She also requested that a clause be added to his contract that he has a 6 month evaluation so the Board can hear from the town employees.

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Motion: To adjourn at 7:00pm. By: P. Gimas

2nd: C. Kaitbenski

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Motion: To reopen meeting. By: M. Dowling

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Motion: To have the Chair, M. Blanchard negotiate a contract for the new Town Administrator if he accepts the position. By: M. Dowling

2nd: M. Suprenant

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

The Board discussed when J. Bridges Jr. would be able to start and discussed the Budget and when it would be completed.

M. Blanchard reminded the Board about the BOS Retreat that would be on February 2nd at 9am.

Motion: To Adjourn at 7:15pm. P. Gimas

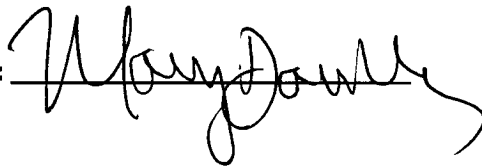
2nd: C. Kaitbenski

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Adjourned at 7:15pm.

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy

Clerk of the Board:



Date Signed:

2/25/19