

TOWN OF MILLVILLE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 19, 2016 – 5:45 P.M.

Board Members Present: Chairman Joseph Rapoza; Vice Chairman Jennifer Dean Wing and Selectman Roland Barrett

Board Members Absent: Secretary John Laura

Others Present: Executive Secretary Helen Coffin

Chairman Rapoza calls the special meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. at the Millville Senior Center.

Chairman Rapoza explains that the purpose of the meeting is to interview the final three candidates for the Town Administrator position. He explains the timeline of the interviews, each will be about 45 minutes, and the process in which the Board will ask the questions. The Board will probably not deliberate tonight but rather will post a meeting for next week to make a final decision.

5:55 p.m. Michael Szlosek

Rapoza indicates that the Division of Local Services recently performed a management audit and the Town signed a Community Compact Agreement with the state. Additionally, the Board decided to change the form of government in February with the Town Meeting approving same on May 9th. The Town Administrator will be charged with codifying the Financial Policies and Procedures and implementing a Capital Plan. With that being said, Rapoza asks Mr. Szlosek what he learned about Millville prior to this evening, and what he believes are the Town's assets. Szlosek replies that he has looked through the Zoning Bylaws and has ideas that he could discuss with the Board if given the opportunity. He feels that as a mill town, some things need to be revised in the Bylaws and some space reassessed. He feels the people are the Town's greatest asset.

Rapoza asks what quality or qualification he feels is the most important in a Town Administrator. Szlosek replies that vision, technical skills, a broad breadth and depth of knowledge, a jack of all trades, someone with a strong background in finance, labor, law, and broadly educated. He feels it is difficult to pinpoint one area due to the many problems that arise over a very broad spectrum, especially in a small town.

Rapoza asks why he moved from practicing law to managing municipal government, and why he moved on from each position after a short time. Szlosek replies that he was always involved in town government on some level and decided to try a Town Administrator position, his first being 2 years in Ludlow, followed by Uxbridge and Athol. Uxbridge did not renew his contract because he was perceived as an opponent of the new high school, and Athol had a residential requirement.

Rapoza asks for Szlosek's long-term goals and objectives. He replies that he would like to find a place to finish his career and then, along with his wife, move to a warmer climate.

Wing asks that Szlosek describe a difficult situation he experienced in his professional career and how he handled it. Szlosek feels that most difficult situations tend to be personnel related. He just addressed a difficult personnel situation last week where his Board wanted to discipline and/or terminate an employee. He spoke to both parties and was able to settle on a separation agreement with severance pay so the employee could leave with dignity, and the town was protected at the same time. He feels the best way to address a bad situation is to find a resolution that both parties can live with. He also addressed a personnel issue with an Uxbridge police officer, which was resolved with retirement, and again the Town was protected.

Rapoza indicates that the Town Administrator will be working with the Finance Committee on a strategic plan. Can he share a plan he participated in developing, including how he contributed to it and the outcome. Szlosek indicates he would work with the Finance and Capital Planning Committees on changing the Warrant process, and convincing Town Meeting to vote for the proposed articles. He did this in another town and all the items were passed while keeping the tax rate down.

Rapoza asks what he feels would be the priorities of the DLS Report, and how he would address and prioritize them? Szlosek indicates that he would codify the budget process – this would be easy and is something he has worked on in the past. This is important for bonding purposes and he would suggest that the Town adopt a policy already created by another Town. A capital plan requires funding and he would work on dedicating any new revenues to capital; for example, 4-6% of total revenue should be set aside for capital. He does not agree with funding capital purchases with Free Cash since it can change from year to year and cannot be forecast. He feels that as much as possible should be placed into Stabilization and then funds spent from there. He doesn't believe in letting Stabilization go down unless there is a good reason, such as an emergency.

Barrett advises that the DLS Report refers to the Town's Master Plan; the Planning Board has a draft Master Plan but it still needs a few more items in order to be finalized. How could he speed up the process, help the Planning Board, and/or provide direction to the Town Planner? Szlosek replies that a Master Plan is only good if the Town uses it. He mentions that many towns have a Master Plan but it sits on the shelf - he isn't in favor of a Master Plan unless the Planning Board wants it. He notes that Millville has a lot of items that require a Special Permit and he would urge the Town to look at the Zoning Bylaws. Most industry will look to establish themselves in places where there is a workforce and infrastructure (water/sewer) with expedited regulatory permitting. Brief discussion follows regarding economic development and the possibility of bringing town water in from Uxbridge. He speaks briefly about creative financing and provides an example of a commercial plaza which he helped bring into a town with district improvement financing. He was able to bring water into the town based on tax revenues - the Town won't see revenues for about 10 years but it worked well.

Wing asks what his experiences are with partnerships such as regional school districts and other community groups, and what type of administrative assistance would he need as a Town Administrator. Szlosek replies that he has worked with two regional school systems in the past. He prides himself on being tight with a dollar although this is not always appreciated. He would be fine with one administrative assistant although he's had up to 3 in the past. He has found that efforts to combine departments are not appreciated; he places trust in his department heads as he is not a micro manager but serves as a resource.

Barrett indicates that the Town has tentatively received an \$800,000 state grant for the refurbishment of the Town Hall. How can he help by working with the state legislators to make sure Millville receives this funding? Szlosek indicates that Representative Kevin Kuros is a good friend of his and he would call him – he is not shy about making phone calls. He adds that the situation with the Town

Hall is an embarrassing and disconcerting situation to be in but it is not unique to Millville. He would move the process along so the Town doesn't find itself in a ridiculous circumstance.

Rapoza asks what initial support he would need if he is the successful candidate, and what the organizational chart would look like. Szlosek replies he would meet with the department heads. He isn't sure how much support he would need as he would need to carve out the position. Because the position is new, it needs to be defined but he would look forward to doing so, although it is not easy to do. He indicates the department heads are used to having part-time bosses so he would want to be sure the position has value and is used as a resource. The organizational chart would have the Board of Selection on top, then Town Administrator, and then all other departments, boards, committees, with the elected ones to the side as they will always have their independence.

Wing questions if he has any questions for the Board. He replies that the Search Committee answered all of his questions.

Mr. Szlosek leaves at 6:40 p.m.

Barrett feels Mr. Szlosek would enjoy the challenge and he likes the fact that he's also an attorney – this could be a big savings for the Town. He is not concerned about his travel time to Millville.

Wing feels he understands the workings of a small town having gone through similar situations. She does not feel his commute is an issue if he's the right fit for the position. She feels he has creative financing down.

Rapoza has concerns about the way he has moved on from past positions and not staying full term. He notes he would have a 60-mile commute each way if he gets the job.

6:50 p.m. Jennifer Callahan

Rapoza indicates that the Town received recommendations from the state in the DLS Report in January and the Board has been moving along with the important recommendations made in the Report. Changing the form of Town government was one of them along with getting our act together with respect to financial procedures and capital planning. Looking forward the Town needs to focus on economic development. With that being said, Rapoza asks what attracted Mrs. Callahan to the job. Callahan replies that she believes Millville is the heart of the Commonwealth. She was also born and raised in a mill village. She has worked with the community members and has embraced the people of Millville which she believes to be important regardless of the position held. After dealing with personal family illnesses, she just recently revamped what she wants to do with her life and she feels she has a lot to offer with her experience.

She feels the Town took some bold steps but that change was inevitable. She feels the bar has been set high but she is known for "firsts" – she provides examples of many projects she has started, and indicates that she would like to bring Millville to the next stage.

Rapoza indicates that the Division of Local Services recently performed a management audit and the Town signed a Community Compact Agreement with the state. The Town Administrator will be charged with codifying the Financial Policies and Procedures and implementing a Capital Plan. With that being said, Rapoza asks Mrs. Callahan how she would get this accomplished and what her timeline would be. Callahan feels there needs to be emphasis on certain items. She would look at what needs to be done as a community, look at other areas work on the technology side, and make sure she is following the recommendations in the Report. In her previous jobs she has moved projects along by working with financial analysts and technical assistants. She worked with the department heads on follow-through to be sure they are on target to fulfill the recommendations.

Barrett indicates that the Town Hall is falling apart and Senator Fattman has made this a priority item with the Governor. How could she help us in pursuing funding to make sure this happens? Callahan replies that she has worked on both the state and municipal side and is familiar with creative funding. She is familiar with renovations and historical buildings and is able to articulate the merits of funding such projects. She would work collaboratively by contacting the Senator and pushing for what is needed. It is not a small amount but she has the connections and would like up the documentation to ensure the Town's match money is there, as necessary. She can work effectively for the Town.

Wing asks that Callahan talk about some difficult situations she experienced in her professional career. Callahan believes in ceasing the moment. She was a legislator during three indicted speakers and two recessions. She weighed the merits of votes and did not personalize them – whatever would benefit the people. She has experienced ethical issues and did not take them personally, remaining cognizant that people sometimes transgress. She believes in showing transparency and ceased any opportunity to meet with the House Ways and Means Committee. She is responsible for the 2010 Budget Transparency Act. She believes in budget sharing and real time figures. She agrees with the DLS Report with respect to the guidelines to follow in that respect and she has some great ideas that wouldn't be cost prohibitive – she would progress in that area.

Rapoza asks what her goals/objectives and thoughts/views are with respect to Personnel Management. Callahan replies that this is no different in the private sector – people need accountability and quality is important. She has a lot of experience in government labor relations and management. She has served on many committees including on the state level. She was a school board official and spearheaded interest-based bargaining which was a very amicable experience. She believes there will be times in Millville that will lend opportunity for using those skills.

Wing asks what her point of view is with respect to working with partnerships such as regional school districts and other community groups. Callahan replies that she has worked with five communities and all their residents and all school systems. She was always able to work cooperatively and feels that it comes natural to her working with people. She has had strong relationships with school superintendents. While working at UMass she worked on a project to bring quality change to large organizations wanting to improve and achieve better and/or higher levels of service. She would be sure each responsible employee or committee is heard. Having a Town Administrator is a great way to open up communication and dialogue. She would ask the departments what we can do together. She would like to free up the Town's reserves. With respect to the schools, she would pay attention to state grants that could benefit the school; she would look to do things creatively. She feels that most successful towns have joint meetings with their school departments beginning in the summer – she would set a precedent and make it a goal to be sure all services are funded.

Wing asks what Callahan would need in the sense of other administrative support. Callahan replies that institutional knowledge is very important. She is used to having few or limited resources and she would be proud and happy to take steps to define the role of Town Administrator. She feels an overlap

should occur as it is important to tap into the resources that currently exist. She would have to see how it goes – some people will say there is a problem with the funding, hours and timing with the budget so she would work on that aspect. Other things may free up funding – she will creatively look at the budget efficiencies. She would offer ideas as to what makes the most sense not to disrupt government services. She understands it will be a balancing act.

Rapoza asks what her Day 1 would look like, and what she would do in order to become oriented. Callahan replies that it depends on the administration and leadership. She is a trained facilitator and she would move people forward towards a strategic plan. She would tap into the resources of those who have served the community. She would introduce herself in her new and different role and set the stage for what the Board of Selectmen impress as being important. She would listen to the Board and look at where she can find substantial gains and resources. She would set priorities and make sure the DLS Report is followed through.

Barrett mentions that Callahan's application/resume weren't received under after the deadline and asks how she would deal with deadlines, especially with respect to grant applications. Callahan replies that she was out of state and her mail was postmarked before the deadline. She does not see that meeting deadlines will be an issue. She would work very hard to maintain schedules and pursue grant opportunities. She would stay attuned to when the Town needs to follow through on items. She reminds all that she worked to obtain the grants for the Town's bridges. She understands the sensitivity of timing and has written many grants.

Barrett advises that the Town has a draft Master Plan but the final version was held up due to rezoning which was done recently to make the Town a little more interesting for businesses. How important is a Master Plan? Callahan replies that the Town Administrator is a link to the Planning Board and although she isn't a business owner, she was on the Board at the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce and understands the importance of moving these types of projects forward. She would be sure everyone was on the same page and make the technical report a reality. She would be certain the Planning Board has the resources needed and put them in the queue for when monies are available. She could also work with CMRPC which is the authority on planning grants.

Wing questions if she has any questions for the Board. Callahan replies that she feels the Search Committee did an exemplary job. She emphasizes her dedication to the townspeople of Millville and that nobody will work harder and care more about the community. There are many things she would like to see for Millville in the long term and she would like to continue working in a meaningful way with the Board of Selectmen.

Mrs. Callahan leaves at 7:35 p.m.

Wing feels she was positive and knows the budget, resources, and people. She understands local government and knows the manner of how to use funding. She was aware of the Assessors Report and is familiar with the lack of jobs in municipal government but still feels she can complete the work.

Rapoza feels she would be a plus to have with her knowledge and connections.

7:50 p.m. David Demanche

Rapoza acknowledges that Mr. Demanche has done his homework and has reviewed materials requested from the Town Hall. He further notes that Demanche's resume is impressive and asks what attracted him to Millville. Demanche replies that he understands the opportunities and challenges the Board is facing. He has 17+ years in Town government although most recently works for a private organization. His motivation stems from his work with the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce where he realized helping with economic development and serving on the Economic Development Task Force was fulfilling and where his interests are. He is a people person and enjoys government – it is who is he and what he is about. He only lives 5 minutes away and is familiar with the Town. He would like to see an increase in tax revenue and economic development while preserving the historical and cultural charm and quality of life in the Town.

Rapoza indicates that the Division of Local Services recently performed a management audit and one of the priorities was to bring in a Town Administrator to assist with developing Financial Policies. How could he make this more viable going forward? Demanche replies that the financial objectives are clearly outlined in the Report and he would put together a financial team to be sure everyone was on the same page, to avoid potential conflict, and to develop financial and capital plans. Finance is one of his strengths.

Rapoza asks how he feels about economic development. Demanche indicates that he has done some research and notes the possibility of parcels on Central Street, Lincoln Street and Route 122; however, there are some limitations due to the proximity of the river and railroad. He feels the Town also has some limitations due to the infrastructure (lack of town water and sewer). He questions the possibility of partnering with another town for shared resources as this has been a big push with the Mass Modernization Movement on the state level. The downtown bike path is a positive and will bring lots of traffic on the trail, and would be a great opportunity for small businesses such as a bike shop or ice cream shop. He feels the Town needs to develop a village concept and he has worked with CMRPC in the past on signage and promoting businesses – the goal is to bring people off the trail. He speaks briefly about solar farms and grant opportunities, the creation of jobs and removal of blight areas. He feels that in the absence of commercial economic development, the Town could consider a 55+ living community – with the beauty being there aren't children in the schools. These units can generate revenue of up to \$4,000 per unit.

Rapoza indicates that the Town recently received funding from the Community Compact Agreement to establish financial policies – how would he address these needs? Demanche replies that he would put together a financial team and meet regularly to discuss revenue projections and a revenue plan, projecting out costs. Some of the items that need to be addressed are how to pay for the Municipal Center and how to keep the senior programs active using potential grant resources. He would need to determine how to structure debt by not making a burden to the taxpayers through an override. The Town does not have a bond rating and this would need to be the first thing to work on so the Town has favorable ratings on projects.

Barrett advises that the DLS Report refers to the Town's Master Plan; the Planning Board has a draft Master Plan but it still needs a few more items in order to be finalized. How could he assist the Planning Board to speed up the process and assist the Planning Board to implement and complete it? Demanche replies that he has an open door policy and looks at the taxpayers as customers. He believes you can learn more by listening rather than talking. He believes a Master Plan involves a vision process including open space, residential growth, industry and other opportunities. The Town will need to look at rezoning, infrastructure and how to maintain the mill village feel. He feels the

Town needs to designate an area for economic development and look into TIF agreements to get business here.

Rapoza asks for Demanche's long-term vision and his view on strategic plans. He replies that he would develop 43D expedited permitting so developers come in while maintaining a quality of life and not destroying the synergy. He would develop a plan that meets the objectives of the community. He speaks briefly about streetscapes and the positive effects of the bike path.

Wing asks how Demanche dealt with a difficult situation he experienced in his professional career and how he addressed it, or in hindsight, how would he change it. Demanche explains a situation he encountered in Uxbridge with the proposed installation of a power plant. He met with the company without the Board's permission and in hindsight, he would never have met with them. He learned not to make assumptions on things he doesn't know about.

Wing asks what his experiences are with partnerships such as regional school districts and other community groups, and if he can work collaboratively with them. Demanche responds that he has worked in two communities with regional school districts and he has worked with superintendents and had good working relationships with them all.

Rapoza asks what he feels would be the priorities of the DLS Report, and how he would address and prioritize them? Demanche indicates that he feels the \$578K in uncollected tax title should be addressed. He would determine if any of the properties are developable, affordable and create a process to fix the issue. He would work with the Town of Uxbridge to develop town water and sewer.

Wing asks for his thoughts on funding a budget with Free Cash. He replies that this is a systemic problem and he is very conservative.

Rapoza asks how his Day 1 would look, and how he expects to become oriented? Demanche replies that he would meet with the department heads and building managers and familiarize himself with the issues. He would ask for feedback and assign 6-month or 1-year goals. He would continually communicate with the department heads asking how he can serve them. He feels an All-Board Meeting should take place every 6 months so the Board can find out what's going on in the community. He has an open door policy.

Rapoza asks what his philosophy is on performance evaluations. Demanche replies that he would establish parameters and set objectives. He would keep the Board informed and understands that it would be his job to make sure things get done and carry out the policies of the Board.

Mr. Demanche leaves at 8:37 p.m.

Rapoza asks the Board members that with the information heard tonight, is the Board ready to select one candidate next week to pursue negotiations with?

Wing feels that all of the candidates have the skillset and she doesn't feel the Board needs to repost the position.

On a motion by Barrett and second by Wing, the Board votes unanimously to post a meeting for next week to deliberate and vote to pursue one of the candidates.

At 8:38 p.m. on a motion by Barrett and second by Wing, the Board votes by Roll Call to enter Executive Session under MGL c.30A section 21, paragraph 2 to discuss strategy in connection with negotiations with non-union personnel, and upon exiting Executive Session the Board will only return to regular session to adjourn the meeting. Rapoza, aye; Wing, aye; Barrett, aye

On a motion by Wing and second by Barrett, the Board votes unanimously to adjourn the regular meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen M. Coffin

Joseph Rapoza, Chairman

Jennifer Dean Wing, Vice Chairman

Roland P. Barrett, Selectman