

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting Called By:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	August 23, 2010 at 18:00
Transcribed By:	Kathy Tobine	Place:	Tilton School, new Academic Building, School Street, 2 nd Floor, Room 213, Tilton

Commissioner Gallant called the meeting to order at 5:36 PM.

Present: Commissioners Paul Auger, Pat Clark and Tom Gallant; Barry Cox and Scott Weden from the Local Government Center and Administrative Assistant Kathy Tobine.

Commissioner Gallant stated the purpose of the meeting is to discuss LGC Recruitment Services. The objective is to go over the recruitment process LGC goes through.

Barry Cox spoke generally about the process. The proposal they submitted laid out the process.

- They help draft the classified ad. A lot of the advertising is free. The typical cost is in the newspaper ads.
- Everything they do in the recruitment service is covered with the exception of the cost of advertising.
- Advertising costs would be invoiced for at the end of the recruitment. They recommend the NH Sunday News, The Union Leader. That and the free websites. They would be contacting fire chiefs through the Chiefs Association. Word of mouth is often most effective.
- LGC receives the resumes. They respond to the resume. After the closing date they screen the resumes and make recommendations to the Commissioners for oral boards. The oral board is the most unique process for them because it involves fire chiefs from other similar communities.

Scott Weden stated they will profile the job description to be sure they advertise for what the District wants. The position is rather unique in that it does not have a deputy chief that supports the fire chief.

Once the cover letters and resumes come in, based on the classified that has been posted, Scott Weden, Butch Burbank, Ron O'Keefe, Barry Cox and two chiefs from the Chiefs Association will review the resumes. They have an in-depth process of reviewing the resumes to be sure that they are picking the candidates to interview based on the classified and the knowledge, skill and ability that candidates have and are bringing to that position.

Commissioner Clark asked if they have a matrix that's based on the profile they developed from the job description. Scott replied they have a matrix that they use for scoring that covers personality traits. There are 10 different personality points that they are going to judge and score those candidates on.

They pick the ones they are going to interview. The Commissioners look at the resumes to see if there is anyone they would like included that LGC did not include that the Commissioners have an interest in.

LGC then interviews those candidates from a professional standpoint including the Fire Chiefs Association, himself, Ron, Butch and Barry. They have a list of set questions they have

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developed to ask that they will run by the Commissioners to be sure they are appropriate for the position. The Commissioners may add questions. They may say they don't want that question asked.

The candidates then go through the professional oral board. They are scored. At the end of the day, the scores are averaged amongst the interviewers. Based on that, they will bring either the top three or four candidates to the Commissioners for a final interview. Based on that they will give the Commissioners some guidance on creating a conditional offer of employment based on successful background information. This includes which would include financial credit, criminal background check, motor vehicle report, psychological exam and a polygraph test. This is all included in the price quoted. Their goal is to make sure they find us the most qualified candidate we are looking for.

Barry Cox stated they require the final candidate to go through the process. Commissioner Clark asked if they have had instances where they haven't done it and it has not been good. Scott Weden replied they have done it in the past and it has stopped a candidate from moving forward in the process. It really is the standard of the industry today to put the candidates through this process.

Commissioner Gallant feels the Commissioners, the Deputy Chief, and the Captains should be included in the process. Scott Weden replied that Belmont did not include that in the process. Gilford did include that in their process for the Deputy Chief. The candidates had to interview in front of a Captain, three Lieutenants and two firefighters. The candidates did two interviews in one day; one with the staff, then they moved on to the Commissioners. Each group scored individually. Initially the oral board interviewed five for the position and they moved three on.

Commissioner Clark asked about other fees that might not be covered in the \$3,500. Barry Cox replied other fees would only occur if you bring someone in from out-of-state for the weekend.

Scott Weden asked if they have internal staff who might want to apply for position if they are to be automatically interviewed or do they have to go through process. The Commissioners decided they need to go through the process.

Commissioner Auger asked how long the process will take. Scott Weden replied Gilford took just over six weeks from the time the ad was placed in paper.

Commissioner Gallant asked if they decided to go with LGC tonight how long would the average time be. Barry Cox replied six to eight weeks depending on the variables. They will schedule the oral board ahead of time. Scott Weden stated that if the ad is placed by September 5th it would remain open until the 17th. They would receive resumes until the 21st. They would be reviewed on the 22nd. The first round of interviews would take place on the week of 27th. They would bring the top three to the Commissioners. The next round of interviews could take place as soon as the end of the first week of October. They could make conditional offer of employment the second week of October. Testing would take place after the conditional offer was accepted. You are looking at three months before the new person starts.

Commissioner Clark asked what happened if they came up empty handed or people they are not satisfied with. If they decide to go internally would they have to go through process? Scott

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Weden stated if they don't like anybody they will re-advertise. They have been successful in every recruitment they have handled.

Commissioner Clark stated there has been a lot of turmoil in the last two or three years. Everything is on an even keel right now. Should that be factored in as a negative? Will that affect the talent we are looking for? Scott Weden said no, he doesn't think so. Everybody wants to come to the Lakes Region.

Barry stated there are candidates that have kept up with the news.

Commissioner Gallant stated they should give the new fire chief is bulletproof vest. The point Commissioner Clark is trying to make is there is a lot of politics between the two towns. What came up last year will come up again. All the noise you heard last year came from a small select group. The Chief is still going to be the main politician.

Scott Weden the other piece he wants to see when the candidates come in for their interview is that they have done their homework on Tilton-Northfield and the Fire District. He wants to know they have been here and have a sincere interest in being here. He was Fire Chief in the Town of Ashland. Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid is very well respected. The uniqueness of Tilton-Northfield makes it a very unique position.

Scott Weden stated that before the professional board is administered they will sit with the board and go through the briefing based on what he hears tonight, the job description, the classified was. They have those discussions so people are looking for those things that will fit here. It is a key component of that. The educational piece, the levels of certifications are all great but it has to be the right personality that comes in that fits with you and the community. This Chief has a little bit more to do than the Chief in Belmont because there is not a Deputy that supports him. Commissioner Clark stated they do have a Call Deputy, Mike Robinson. He's very active.

Commissioner Gallant stated that Mike Robinson is the acting chief and Brad is the acting deputy.

Barry Cox stated another thing for the second interview is they ask the candidate to reply to questions in writing.

Commissioner Gallant stated we are a real busy department. Far busier than many departments with a full time Deputy and full time Chief. One of the uniqueness that they have is that they are District. There is a layer between the Selectmen and the Chief. He is not going to work for the Selectmen he is going to work for the Commissioners. They have to answer to their partners as necessary. That is one of the unique things they are going to have to understand. The layers of government are a little more complex here.

Scott Weden asked their thoughts of where they would start the position pay wise. Commissioner Gallant replied it depends on the person's ability and experience. Given that, the range should start around \$65,000 and go to somewhere around \$70,000. Commissioner Clark replied they should shoot for a range in the middle with maybe a probationary period to get him up a little more after he's been here a while. Scott Weden recommends they start advertising at \$61,000 to \$67,000. This will leave them room for negotiating. He feels they will get five really qualified people to apply for this position.

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Commissioners Gallant and Auger want to add a residency requirement to the job description. They would like them to move within the confines of the District within the first year. Commissioner Auger asked about the surrounding area, ie. Franklin or Sanbornton. Scott Weden is a huge fan of somebody living within the community. Commissioner Clark feels it could be taken as political if they buy a home in Tilton or Northfield. They must live within "x" number of miles or minutes of the Center Street Station. Scott Weden stated he understands. If the Chief doesn't live within the community they serve they miss out on a lot of events. Commissioner Gallant feels 12 to 18 months to have them move to the area would be reasonable. He feels Sanbornton would work as well.

Barry Cox stated they should state the residency requirement in the ad. Commissioner Auger asked if a lot of Chiefs or Deputies must live in the area. Scott Weden and Barry Cox both replied they do.

Commissioner Auger feels \$61,000 is low on the pay. The Chief should live in the community whether it is Sanbornton, Tilton or Northfield. Residency should be within 12 to 18 months.

Commissioner Clark asked if there was any type of situation where a pay increase would hinge upon moving into community. Barry Cox and Scott Weden have not seen that.

Barry Cox if there were any special expectations. Are there any ongoing projects to be mentioned in ad? Commissioner Clark said we are working on a Wage & Benefit package and Goals & Objectives.

Barry Cox asked the size of the work force and the operating budget. Commissioner Gallant replied 13 full time, 28 call. The budget is \$1.5 million. That is the operating budget. We also have an Apparatus & Equipment Special Fund. Discussion ensued about the ambulance billing.

Scott Weden asked if the Chief is the one that applies for grants. Commissioner Gallant stated that experience with grants is helpful.

Commissioner Gallant asked if enough questions had been asked to take a vote.

Commissioner Clark made a motion to move forward and sign a contract for professional recruitment with LGC. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Clark asked if any clauses on the contract have been changed? Barry Cox said no. Scott Weden said everything in the contract has been discussed tonight.

All three commissioners were in favor of signing the contract tonight.

Scott Weden will have a discussion with Alisa Clary. They will draft the ad for the Commissioners to look at. She will email it to Kathy. If they have questions or comments, they want to hear them.

Commissioner Gallant said they will target having September 1st as the date to advertise. Advertising was discussed.

The oral board was discussed.

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Scott Weden asked if they thought Brad would apply for the position. Commissioner Gallant said no, he doesn't believe Brad will apply.

Barry Cox stated that in all their discussions everything remains very confidential.

Commissioner Gallant will release a statement to the press.

Adjournment

Commissioner Clark made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Vote was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Tobine
Administrative Assistant

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: September 7, 2010 at 17:30. Meeting to be held at Tilton School, new Academic Building, School Street, 2nd Floor, Room 213, Tilton.