

Electric Light Department

Town of South Hadley

85 Main Street
South Hadley, MA 01075-2797

Telephone 413-536-1050
Fax 413-536-0741

**MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING OF
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2016 AT 5:00 P.M.
SHELD CONFERENCE ROOM, 85 MAIN STREET, SO. HADLEY, MA**

Present: Anne Awad, Chair
Vern Blodgett, Vice Chair
John Hine (arrived 5:09 p.m.)
Gregory Dubreuil, Clerk

Absent: Kurt Schenker

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 P.M. by Chair Anne Awad.

Preliminary Screening Committee

Chair Awad stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the hiring process and to establish a Preliminary Screening Committee for the Manager search. She noted that under the Open Meeting Law the full Board cannot discuss the applicants unless it is done in open session. She noted that at a prior meeting the Board approved a subcommittee of Vice Chair Blodgett and herself for the initial screening phase of the search. She feels we need to further define the job description of the Preliminary Screening Committee and establish the composition of that committee. Her thoughts as to the job description for the Committee would be to:

- Review all resumes received against the Manager's job description.
- Reduce the candidates to the top five to seven.
- Review the selections with Scott Fry.
- Conduct preliminary interviews with the top five to seven candidates.
- Select the finalists to be interviewed by the full Board in open session.

Chair Awad reiterated that we need to keep the candidates confidential until the finalists are interviewed by the full Board. She reminded the Board that Scott Fry stressed that we would have a difficult time getting good applicants if the entire process was public since most applicants are already employed and have not shared their exploration of other jobs with their employer.

Chair Awad referenced the Open Meeting Law Guide and read reason #8 under The Ten Purposes for Executive Session from the guide which reads as follows:

“8. To consider or interview applicants for employment or appointment by a preliminary screening committee if the chair declares that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants; provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening;

This Purpose permits a hiring subcommittee of a public body or a preliminary screening committee to conduct the initial screening process in executive session. This Purpose does not apply to any stage in the hiring process after the screening committee or subcommittee votes to recommend candidates to its parent body, however it may include multiple rounds of interviews by the screening committee aimed at narrowing the group of applicants down to finalists. At the time that the executive session is proposed and voted on, the chair must state on the record that having the discussion in an open session will be detrimental to the public body’s ability to attract qualified applicants for the position. If the public body opts to convene a preliminary screening committee, the committee must contain fewer than a quorum of the members of the parent public body. The committee may also contain members who are not members of the parent public body. Note that a public body is not required to create a preliminary screening committee to consider or interview applicants. However, if the body chooses to conduct the review of applicants itself, it may not do so in executive session.”

Relative to the composition of the Screening Committee, Chair Awad said it could be just two Board members, it could also include SHELD staff, and it could include members of the community or someone who has expertise in the field. The staff members could be Paul Byrne, Ed Morrin, and/or the new engineer Mark Gilmore. She said that Mr. Morrin feels that Mark Gilmore would be the best to join Mr. Byrne as the second staff member of the Committee. She said that Ron DeCurzio from MMWEC would also be happy to be part of the process however his preference would be to participate in the final round of interviews with the full Board. She said that Mr. DeCurzio did work with Scott Fry on the initial evaluation of applicants and ranking them into groups. Mr. Hine said it would be good if we could have a fifth member of the group with industry expertise and also so we have an odd number in the event of a tie vote. Mr. Dubreuil said he recalls Mr. Lavelle from HG&E offered his assistance through the process however Chair Awad noted that may be awkward given we have an applicant from HG&E, even though Mr. Lavelle is aware the individual applied for the position. Chair Awad said that Jeff Cady, Manager from CHELD may be willing to participate in the process. Given the significant time requirements for the process it is not certain but she said she could check with him. Mr. Dubreuil noted that even if we end up with only four members of the committee we would likely be able to reach a consensus on the finalists.

There was discussion related to which two members of the Board would be part of the Preliminary Screening Committee. Mr. Hine reiterated the time required and said he would be happy to be part of the Committee but with other commitments was concerned he may slow the process down. Mr. Dubreuil echoed Mr. Hines comments in that he also works full time and would enjoy participating in the process but also feared he may slow the process down. Mr. Schenker was unable to attend this meeting but indicated he would consider the role and let the Board know prior to the meeting if he could take it on. Mr. Dubreuil said that Chair Awad and Vice Chair Blodgett had done an excellent job thus far and suggested that they carry the process through to determine the finalists for the full Board.

On a motion by John Hine and seconded by Gregory Dubreuil, it was unanimously

VOTED: To establish a Preliminary Screening Committee consisting of Chair Awad, Vice Chair Blodgett, Paul Byrne, Mark Gilmore and, if he is available and willing, Jeff Cady from Chicopee Light Department to conduct preliminary screening interviews to come up with finalists for the full Board to interview.

Chair Awad also noted that Scott Fry suggested that the preliminary screening interviews be conducted in a small meeting room at a hotel in Chicopee close to the Mass Pike for ease of access and to avoid any awkwardness that may arise from trying to conduct the interviews at Town Hall or SHELD, and to preserve confidentiality through the initial interview phase. Mr. Hine suggested that perhaps we could inquire about using a room at Willits Hollowell at Mt. Holyoke College, a meeting room at the Village Commons, or a room at the Library. Chair Awad took those suggestions under advisement.

Other Business


Mr. Blodgett noted that our October meeting is the same night as the Know Your Town Forum for referendum questions which is at 7:00 P.M. at Town Hall. Chair Awad said that perhaps we could meet at 6:00 P.M. rather than 6:30 P.M. and with a short agenda and efficient meeting we could end by approximately 7:00 P.M. so that anyone wishing to attend both meetings could. All agreed and Chair Awad will advise prior to preparing the agenda.

Adjournment

On a motion made by John Hine and seconded by Vice Chair Vern Blodgett it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 5:35 P.M.

Respectfully,



Gregory R. Dubreuil, Clerk
Municipal Light Board

Approved : October 27, 2016