

**Town of Belmont  
Fire Chief Screening Committee  
Thursday, October 29, 2020  
Remote Meeting  
7:00PM**

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: February 24, 2021  
TIME: 2:02 PM

**Call to Order**

A meeting of the Fire Chief Screening Committee was called to order at 7:04PM on Thursday, October 29, 2020 by Committee Chair Dan Halston. Committee Members Patrice Garvin, Ralph Jones, Kathy Keohane, Chao Lai, John Sullivan, and Stacey Zawel were present.

Also present: Brian Duggan MRI Consultant, Shawna Healey Assistant HR Director, Bob Loomer MRI Consultant, Jessica Porter Human Resources Director and members of the public.

**Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Healey reviewed a few edits submitted by Ms. Keohane. Mr. Halston moved to approve the minutes for the meeting held on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 as amended. Seconded by Ms. Keohane. Vote 7-0-0.

**Liaison**

Jessica Porter introduced Shawna Healey as the Liaison for the Fire Chief Screening Committee as Jessica Porter's last day with the Town is October 30, 2020.

**Review of Demographics of Applicants**

Mr. Loomer provided an update on the status of applications. MRI received 21 applicants, one withdrew. Of the 20 candidates, 12 states were represented, including eight candidates from Massachusetts. Two candidates were from Rhode Island, and one each from New Hampshire, Virginia, Kentucky, Washington, New Jersey, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Arizona and Illinois. Of these candidates, 11 have Master's Degrees, one has a Doctor of Jurisprudence and Bachelor's degree, six candidates have Bachelor's degrees and two have associates degrees.

The one candidate that withdrew was because of the letter that Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts sent out to unions across the state.

Ideally MRI would have liked to have seen more applicants but the recommendation to the committee is to proceed with the high quality candidates we have. There has been a trend of fewer applicant pools due to the pandemic and the average is normally 30 candidates.

MRI reviewed and scored the resumes against the ideal candidate profile to determine a recommendation. The scores will be discussed in detail during the executive session.

Mr. Duggan informed the committee that applicants will pay for the costs to come to Massachusetts for the assessment center if living out of state. Having the candidates pay for their first visit will show they are engaged, committed and interested in working for Belmont. In some communities COVID-19 has made an impact on the process, and in person interviews had to be done via zoom due to the quarantine guidelines and the candidate's ability to travel across state line. The decision for each candidate will depend on where the state is with the pandemic at the time of the interviews. MRI prefers to do interviews in person but will go virtually if it needs to.

The committee discussed the importance of the ability to adapt to the unique form of government in Massachusetts. A candidate's ability will depend on the knowledge, skills and abilities of the individual and these things are considered throughout the process. The importance on how will this candidate fit, can they adapt to this type of environment, etc. will be crucial to determining the next Chief.

The next step of the process is for MRI to send essays out to the candidates early next week and each candidate will have ten business days to submit their responses. The executive session will confirm which candidates should receive the essay questions. At this point, it is reasonable to assume the assessment center will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December.

### **Executive Session**

Chief Sullivan moved to go into executive session per reason 8 not to return to regular session. Seconded by Mr. Jones Vote 7-0-0. Roll Call Vote: Patrice Garvin Aye, Ralph Jones Aye, Kathy Keohane Aye, Stacey Zawel Aye, Chao Lai Aye, John Sullivan Aye, and Dan Halston Aye

The public was asked to remove themselves from the public session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawna Healey  
Acting HR Director

Voted and Approved 12-3-2020