

**SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES – July 6, 2023**

7:00 p.m. - Selectmen's Meeting Room, 63 Main Street, Northborough, MA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mitch Cohen, Chair
Kristen Wixted, Vice Chair
Laura Ziton, Clerk
Julianne Hirsh
Lisa Maselli

OTHERS: Robert Mercier – Municipal Resources, Inc.
Buzz Stapczynski – Municipal Resources, Inc.

EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

ROBERT REED

Chair Cohen noted that per the Town Charter, an interim Town Administrator can be appointed for a three month period with the option to extend the appointment for another three months, if necessary. Since Mr. Reed's first three months will end on July 10th, he recommended that the Board renew his appointment for another three months.

SB Member Wixted moved the Board vote to authorize the current Interim Town Administrator's appointment for a second three month period, as specified in Article IV, section 4-1, of the Town Charter; SB Member Hirsh seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS

Overview of Town Administrator Recruitment Process and Timeline

Mr. Mercier of Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) summarized the Town Administrator recruitment and selection process which can be found in the July 6th meeting packet [HERE](#). The meeting packet also includes a memo from the Town Administrator Screening Committee recommending the three final candidates that will be interviewed this evening.

Town Administrator Interviews

The July 6th meeting packet that includes the candidate's resumes can be found [HERE](#)

The YouTube recording of the July 6th interviews can be found [HERE](#)

In answer to questions by members of the Board, each candidate shared their thoughts and experiences with the following:

- Traffic safety issues as a result of large distribution warehouses near residential neighborhoods
- Most notable accomplishments
- Communication, programs and services provided during the pandemic
- Use and experience with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds
- Balancing high density housing versus the needs of the community
- Economic development
- Master Plan implementation
- Thoughts and response to the climate of book banning in public libraries
- Biggest challenges facing the Town of Northborough

- Interaction and communication strategies with the Select Board, Boards and Committees, Town staff, local businesses and residents
- Strategies to help offset the tax burden to residents
- Technological advances in local government

Courtney Friedland

Ms. Friedland provided a brief review of her background and fourteen years of experience as Assistant Town Administrator, including personnel management and supervision, budget and finance, grant writing, procurement, human resources, insurance and risk management, public policy, capital planning and labor negotiations.

In summary, Ms. Friedland has been the Assistant Town Administrator for the Town of Webster since 2010. She has been instrumental in the preparation of the annual operating and capital budgets. She has strong organizational skills and exercises general supervision over department heads. She oversees all aspects of human resources management and labor relations. She is skilled in open communication with Town departments, boards and committees, State representatives and residents. She feels that transparency in local government is extremely important. As a resident of Auburn, she is in close proximity to Northborough and would be easily available and present in the community.

David Genereux

Mr. Genereux provided a brief review of his background and experience in the public sector, including senior level administrative management, municipal finance, project management, procurement, risk management, capital planning, policy development, facilities and operations, research, presentations, collective bargaining, dispute resolution, recruitment and organizational structure.

In summary, Mr. Genereux has served as the Town Administrator for the Town of Leicester since 2017. Prior to that in the Town of Uxbridge, he was the Finance Director for eight years and the Town Manager for three years. He is proficient in human resource management and is a skilled communicator with the media, municipal boards, the public and State officials. He has good professional judgement and is sensitive to the importance of consensus building and teamwork. He has formulated and assembled the annual municipal budget, town meeting warrant and capital plan. He also created and maintained a balanced budget revenue sharing procedure that keeps municipal and school department budget increases at the same annual percentage. He has worked through numerous legal and collective bargaining issues that were in existence at the time he was hired.

Mr. Genereux disclosed that while he was the Uxbridge Town Manager, the then Town Accountant was charged with embezzlement. It was a regrettable situation in that it happened while he was Town Manager and was responsible for the oversight of the Finance Department.

David Williams

Mr. Williams provided a brief review of his background and experience in municipal government, which includes personnel leadership, financial operations and capital planning, grant writing, human resources, procurement, community preservation and land use, media relations and strategic planning.

In summary and until recently, Mr. Williams served as the Town Administrator for the Town of Sherborn for nine years and prior to that served as Assistant Town Manager in Framingham. As Town Manager, he also served as Human Resources Director, Chief Procurement Officer, Technology Manager and Buildings/Facilities Director. He acted as supervisor for emergency services, public safety, communications, public works, environmental issues and strategic planning. He developed the operating and capital budgets and presented projects for consideration at Town Meeting. He facilitated a large housing development and led a multi-faceted affordable housing project. He also revised personnel policies and created a new position rating and classification and compensation system.

DELIBERATION AND VOTE TO APPOINT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

In addition to the Select Board's discussion, Mr. Stapczynski and Mr. Mercier offered their thoughts on each of the candidates interviewed this evening.

Board members shared their thoughts on each of the candidates.

Courtney Friedland

- Would bring a fresh perspective and progressive ideas
- Confident and speaks well
- Innovator
- Sensitivity to joining the organization and working with staff
- Logical career move from Assistant Town Administrator and seems ready for the next step
- Good communication skills that would be beneficial in engaging the public
- Good ideas to engage residents in attendance at Town Meeting
- Experience in working with State representatives to obtain funding opportunities and a strong advocate for Chapter 90 funding
- Effective tracking tools relating to Master Plan implementation
- Good experience with climate sustainability
- Has had the benefit of working with and learning from good quality Town Managers over the years
- Openness and involvement with staff and the public
- Seems like the right fit for Northborough

David Genereux

- Has a real interest in development and good experience with the Complete Streets program
- Understands the importance of checks and balances
- Open and transparent with the challenges he has faced in the past and how that has impacted him going forward.
- Good at communication and transparency with the public
- Experienced with building projects, but didn't seem enthusiastic about downtown revitalization
- Good working knowledge and financially focused
- Concern with the challenges and aftermath of the actions involving the Uxbridge Town Accountant
- Concern with his lack of enthusiasm to protect the environment in regard to a land soil operation

David Williams

- It would be a logical career move for him
- Experience with preserving historic buildings
- Good communication and outreach skills
- Good with sensitivity training and working with staff
- Good experience in preparing for potential cyber attacks
- Not overly pleased with some of the answers he gave to certain questions
- Did not seem to have the energy to be creative and innovative
- Concern with his ability to direct and inspire staff
- Lack of enthusiasm in regard to economic development
- May not be the best fit for Northborough

There was no further discussion.

SB Member Wixted moved the Board vote to authorize Municipal Resources, Inc. to make a conditional offer of employment to Courtney Friedland for the position of Northborough Town Administrator. This offer is conditioned upon the satisfactory background review/investigation conducted by Municipal Resources, Inc., physical exam, if required, and the successful negotiation of the terms of appointment by the Select Board; SB Member Maselli seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

SB Member Hirsh moved the Board vote to adjourn; SB Member Wixted seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. July 6, 2023 Meeting Agenda
2. Information packet – Summary of Town Administrator Recruitment Process
3. Information packet – Courtney Friedman
4. Information packet – David Genereux
5. Information packet – David Williams