

The Select Board met on Tuesday, November 30 2021 beginning at 7:00pm in the Finance Committee Room of Town Hall. The following members were present:

Mark Gallivan, Chair
Benjamin Barrett, Vice Chair
Glenn Maffei, Clerk
Nancy Mackenzie
James O'Neil

Also participating
James Johnson, Town Administrator
Aoife Kelly, Executive Assistant
Bernard Lynch, Community Paradigm Associates

Appointments

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gallivan called the meeting to order at 7pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jim Johnson provided a brief overview to the Board and those watching of the process to date. This process started back on May 5 when Chief Carmichael gave his notice to the Town that he was leaving Walpole for Newton. Once we received his notice the Select Board decided to conduct a thorough search process. The Board authorized the hiring of Community Paradigm Associates to oversee the advertisement and the recruitment for the position of Police Chief and assist the Town with navigating through the interview process.

In addition to hiring Bernie Lynch and his team the Board also authorized me to hire Public Safety Consultants to conduct an assessment center of the top candidates for the position. Once Bernie and his team were brought on Board he worked with the Town to develop a position statement to attract candidates to Walpole and advertised the position in a variety of locations over the summer. Bernie conducted multiple outreach sessions with current and former Town officials, Board members, and Town residents and on September 8 Bernie conducted a community forum at the Council on Aging to solicit input from Walpole residents.

In September, the Select Board authorized the makeup of a screening committee that consisted of: residents Jim Brady, Phil Macchi, Audrey Grace, Megan Rees Ahigian, Paul Millette, School Superintendent Dr. Bridget Gough, Fire Chief Tim Bailey, DPW Director Rick Mattson, Finance Director Jodi Cuneo, Board of Health Director Melissa Ranieri and myself. The screening committee initially reviewed the applications and narrowed the list down to eight individuals to invite for interviews. The screening committee probed specific areas such as management and leadership style, community relations, community policing, diversity/equity/inclusion, personnel management, financial management, and police service delivery.

Once the interviews were completed, the list was narrowed down further and multiple candidates were passed along to the assessment center. Wayne Sampson of Public Safety Consultants brought in other current Massachusetts Police Chiefs to assist him with conducting the assessment center. The assessment center lasted all day long and each candidate was ranked.

Bernie Lynch expanded on the comprehensive process involved and informed the Board that his role tonight is to facilitate the interview process. Bernie informed the Board that extensive efforts were made to attract a diverse group of candidates.

Interview Candidate Leon M. Krolikowski, Jr. for the position of Police Chief

Leon M. Krolikowski, Jr. began by introducing himself and describing the arc of his career, from the Marines to policing in New Canaan, CT. He climbed the ranks from Patrol Officer to Sergeant to Lieutenant to Captain to

Police Chief. Chair Mark Gallivan asked Mr. Krolikowski why he has decided to leave New Canaan, to which Mr. Krolikowski cited the desire for professional growth. Bernie Lynch asked the candidate to describe his leadership style, and Mr. Krolikowski stated that it was usually democratic unless the situation required him to act unilaterally. Throughout the interview, Mr. Krolikowski shared that if hired he plans to heavily involve himself in the department and community to build up familiarity, possibly institute a body camera program, only utilize discipline to correct bad behavior, be involved in negotiation agreements, promote diversity in hiring personnel, destigmatize mental health help, and allocate spending in the budget prudently. He stressed the importance of improvements in officer training, including racial bias training and preparedness for situations involving psychiatric behavioral health and substance abuse. Mr. Krolikowski also discussed his implementation of projects in New Canaan, such as a cyber-threat preparedness initiative and the adoption of a non-lethal Bola Wrap tool. He acknowledged that as a newcomer, things may be slow to start, but he intends to meet with as many people as possible and do a lot of listening to learn how to best steer the Walpole police department forward. In his final remarks, Mr. Krolikowski stated that he truly loves policing and enacting meaningful change in his community.

The Board took a quick recess at 8:25pm and reconvened the meeting at 8:30pm.

Interview Candidate Richard M. Kelleher for the position of Police Chief

Richard M. Kelleher began by introducing himself and describing the arc of his career, from Patrolman to Detective to Deputy Police Chief to Interim Police Chief. He wants to become Walpole's Police Chief because of his close ties to the community and dedication to creating improvements in the lives of his fellow community members. Mr. Kelleher stated that he approves of the direction the Police Department is currently traveling and would start by expanding on the improvements already in progress. He shared that if hired he would engage more with the community, make policies publically accessible, revitalize the feedback system, work closely with the schools and the Fire Department, clearly express all expectations and goals for personnel, only use punishment to correct wrong behavior, hire well-rounded and diverse officers, involve himself in contract negotiations, and prioritize officer wellness and safety. Mr. Kelleher stated the importance of officer training and evaluation and allocating parts of the budget wisely. He identified a trend in calls related to mental health and substance abuse, and he suggested creating more positions in the department to handle these types of situations. In the long term, Mr. Kelleher hopes to be able to adapt to changes in police reform and collaborate with other towns' police departments to implement improvements in policy. He described the various less-lethal tools officers in his departments use and acknowledged their help in reducing unnecessary casualties. In his final remarks, Mr. Kelleher stressed the importance of communication within the department and once again expressed his love for the Walpole community.

Chair Gallivan decided that a decision was not going to be made by the Board tonight but discussion and vote added to the next meeting's agenda on December 12, 2021.

Bernie Lynch stated that if any Board members have any lingering questions in the next week, they may contact him or Town Administrator James Johnson to get them answered.

On motion of Board member Mackenzie, seconded by Board member O'Neil, voted to adjourn the meeting and the meeting was adjourned accordingly at 9:30pm. Motion Passed (5-0-0).