

**Andover School Committee  
Minutes of October 20, 2020  
Virtual Meeting**

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**Present from the School Committee:** Shannon Scully, Susan McCready, Tracey Spruce, Paul Murphy, and Lauren Conoscenti.

**Others present:** Assistant Superintendents Sandra Trach & Sara Stetson, Chief Operations Officer, Stephen Nembirkow, Director of Communications Nicole Kieser, Director of Innovation Stephen Chinosi.

Teresa Penzola, Town Purchasing Agent

Jessica Porter, Human Resources Director (Incoming eff: 11/2/20)

**I. Regular Meeting**

**A. Call to Order/Moment of Silence**

Chairperson Scully called the Andover School Committee meeting of October 20, 2020 to order at 7:00 PM and opened up the Regular Meeting through a Virtual Meeting Broadcast by Andover TV on Comcast Channel 99, Verizon Channel 43 or via streamed: [www.andovertv.org](http://www.andovertv.org). **Public Participation via email: [scremote@andoverma.us](mailto:scremote@andoverma.us)**

The meeting began with a Moment of Silence.

**B. New Business**

**1. Permanent Superintendent Search**

Shannon welcomed Jessica Porter, incoming Human Resources Director and Terry Peznola, Town Purchasing Officer, and our senior administration team to help guide the discussion.

This is a position that will be hired by the Committee. The process and timing of the search for a permanent Superintendent of Schools is important, and does it makes sense for the District to engage with a search firm to help recruit and drive that process.

Terry Peznola explained the bid process which includes putting together a Request for Proposals (RFP) that allows selection of a search firm that will meet the needs of the School Committee and the Community as a whole. An RFP allows the School Committee to look at criteria, other than price for services, and to be able to hire based on qualifications and success rate rather than price alone. The firm the School Committee chooses to hire should provide them with what the process looks like according to the Committee's wants. There is time to work this process through. The request for proposal allows them under the law to examine the aspects of perspective firm and the draft contains different criteria that will drive the RFP into the hands of firms that will meet the needs that the School Committee has.

A key date calendar has been built into the RFP. Distribution of the RFP would begin on October 26<sup>th</sup> and responses are due back by November 12, 2020 with the decision of finalist chosen around the week of Thanksgiving. It will then take time to go through the process of finalizing the contract once a vendor is chosen. The minimum criteria are fairly standard for

any kind of service provider. Tracey said the structure of the document seems to have all of the components that the Committee is looking for.

The weighting of the questions located at the bottom of the RFP can be personalized to meet the needs of the Committee. The Committee discussed changes they would like to see in the percentage given to criteria/questions.

The School Committee expects that the Community will want to be involved in the search.

The members of the School Committee are comfortable with issuing an RFP for a Superintendent Search and they are comfortable with the language presented and the adjustments and language changes discussed. The School Committee is ready to move forward.

Steve Nembirkow will work with Teresa Penzola on issuing the RFP.

General public comment read by Susan McCready: From Krystal Solimine asks that they consider involvement from community members, especially community members not usually chosen or that have different views.

Tracey Spruce moved that the Andover School Committee authorize the issuance of a request for proposal under M.G.L. 30B for qualified firms or individual consultants to provide Executive Search Consultant Services for the position of Superintendent of Schools and authorize specifically the issuance of the proposal discussed with the modifications presented. Motion seconded by Susan McCready. Roll call: L. Conoscenti-Y, P. Murphy-Y, T. Spruce-Y, S. McCready-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes: 5-0.

## **2. Interim Superintendent Search**

Dr. Berman will be leaving on December 31, 2020 and therefore, the School Committee is looking for an interim Superintendent to fill the role starting January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021 or until the permanent Superintendent's contract begins.

Jessica Porter suggested having selective stakeholders from the District involved in screening of applicants for this six-month vacancy. Using a search firm may take longer. The Committee may want to consider having flexibility with the position and the hours of the position. Jessica feels confident we can accomplish this selection with the right people on the search committee. Susan McCready said the Mass Association of School Committees (MASC) maintains a list of retired School Superintendents which may be a good place to start. We need to determine how we want to advertise. Paul Murphy talked about the specifics of the qualities required for the position and using our internal assets to put together a screening committee and not contracting with a search firm to look for an interim; also, saving money for the District.

The Interim Superintendent will not be considered for the permanent superintendent position as they are two entirely different positions.

The School Committee asked for input from the those in leadership positions within the Andover Public School Systems.

Sandy Trach imagines candidates will come in with different experiences and appreciates the way the posting is worded. As a whole, the description is more than fair and a good backbone of the basic duties of the superintendency which is well beyond what is listed.

Paul Murphy asked that the leadership send the Committee what strengths others in the districts already provide that we do not need to duplicate for the intermediate position. The Committee is not looking for someone to come in and make change but rather to steer the ship and keep it steady until a permanent superintendent is in place. The Community needs someone who is able to communicate information quickly and responsibly, and someone to work collaboratively with the administrators.

Jessica said we have to keep the focus on the six-month period for an interim. It is important that the position be posted as soon as possible and that we begin interviewing the week of November 9<sup>th</sup>. Jessica also suggested to start reviewing the applications as soon as possible and interview on a rolling basis. Keep in mind that if we wait too long before the interview process begins, we could lose candidates due to the holiday season.

Susan McCready moved that the Andover School Committee approve the job description for Interim Superintendent of Schools and authorize posting of the position by the Human Resources Department. Motion seconded by Lauren Conoscenti.

Roll call: P. Murphy-Y, T. Spruce-Y, S. McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. Scully-Y.

Motion passes: 5-0

## **II. Adjournment**

At 8:08 P.M. Susan McCready moved to adjourn the meeting of Tuesday, October 20, 2020. The motion was seconded by Paul Murphy. Roll call: T. Spruce-Y, P. Murphy-Y, McCready-Y, L. Conoscenti-Y, S. Scully-Y. Motion passes: 5-0

Respectfully submitted

Dee DeLorenzo  
Recording Secretary