

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN & SEWER COMMISSIONERS'

## MEETING MINUTES

Francis Faulkner Meeting Room

Town Hall

December 12, 2007

7:00 PM

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TOWN CLERK  
ACTON

Present: Chairman Hunter, Selectmen Magee, Knibbe, Berry and Rosenzweig

### CITIZENS' CONCERNS

### PUBLIC HEARINGS AND APPOINTMENTS

#### 7:00 DELIBERATIONS ABOUT CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION OF TOWN MANAGER

The Chairman opened the meeting with an update on the background checks by Mr. Huggard. He has completed checks, except the Cory Check on John Murray, Andy Maylor, and Steve Ledoux. There are no problems; a lot of progress was gained by having this task accomplished. Tonight's minimum objective is to get down to two choices and hopefully we get to a decision.

Selectman Berry – Several emails supporting candidates, many for John Murray have come in to me and a letter from Andy Maylor responding to a request about why he wants to be the Town Manager. My concern on John Murray is that the selection committee did not recommend him as the number one candidate. In talking to an ex Town Manager that worked on NESWC with John he was very complimentary of the work John did.

Selectwoman Knibbe - Spoke with references both on and off the official list for all candidates. She remains certain that Mr. Ledoux is the best candidate for the job. All of the candidates can do the job, but it comes down to who is the best fit. Mr. Ledoux is a very confident professional, his experience and the range of towns he has worked in is exceptional. His personality would be a good fit for Acton. Mr. Maylor is very impressive, but watching the meetings Mr. Ledoux interacts with his Board just as we do with our Board. Mr. Maylor's style is different; he is very out spoken and leads his Board more than seems necessary. She knows what he thinks, but not what the Board thinks after watching a meeting. In Acton we are not used to that role; The Town Manager is a Chief Operating Officer not Chief Executive Officer. John Murray would do very well, but the best long-term interest of the Town is to look at someone with broader contacts experiences. Mr. Ledoux is a strong first choice for me.

Selectwoman Rosenzweig – I am a "show me" kind of person. I went to Swampscott and followed Mr. Maylor around and met with his staff. Then I went to Westford and toured the town with Mr. Ledoux and saw his staff. I also took the time to interview Mr. Murray and got a much better picture of his work for the Town. I checked all his references and I got very interesting feed back; the staff was very convincing that he acted as a teammate with Don Johnson. He had a big role in working with Town Manager in preparing for Town Meeting and had a strategic role in planning what the attorney's would need what would presenters need to know. He is very knowledgeable in labor negotiations and creative thinker in many of the zoning and NESWC decisions. I talked to a lot of committees and boards and John collaborated with many towns to come to consensus going against the mainstream in instances and it turns out saved Acton a ton of money. Mr. Ledoux is

good at hiring and had a good staff. John is able to get us to come to consensus with the wealth of information he offers; he helps us with out leading. He shows a great deal of creativity in Environmental issues; with NARA he sold the gravel out of the pond and used that money for the land for Camp Acton. With Morrison farm he negotiated that the owner can stay in their home and still we can use the land. Nancy Tavernier feels he has done a wonderful job with affordable housing and has very much helped with his caution, saving the Town a lot of money. Contracts have been made for land gaining us conservation restrictions - the contracts have been thought through. Negotiations with public safety and safety services are not easy, but John worked step by step and stayed calm. He is very loyal to the town. We are looking for someone to manage not some personality. I have known him to work with him and he has helped every step of the way. The staff is smiling; he is doing a good job. This is why I feel John is the right choice.

Selectman Andy Magee – He spent the week with tapes, reading minutes, and calling references. His order did not change. I still feel Steve Ledoux is the best fit. The concern is selecting a candidate to go forward. John can do it and can make change and has his own style. But, there is a group that will make it difficult for him to move forward. He unfortunately has a head wind. From heart and the work environment the two candidates are equal. Steve Ledoux might have a better opportunity to succeed. I agree with Paulina, it is a matter of style; Andy Maylor is not a style we are used to here. Steve Ledoux is much more our style. I would like to see a bit more of Mr. Ledoux than other than the meetings I watched.

Chairman Hunter - The two people I wanted from last week are not the people I want this week. Input from people lined up evenly. I took all the input and evaluated it. The problem is, it is fairly even on all sides; there is a good balance of candidates we have been given. Frankly, the log jam broke when Selectwomen Knibbe suggested we see a meeting. Mr. Maylor lectured them the whole evening and he repeated his lecture. He is no longer my choice. He was worried about the travel time for him. He is in agreement that Mr. Ledoux would be his choice as a better fit with the town.

Selectwoman Rosenzweig – Promised that she would comment for Mr. Maylor that he is not just a fix it guy; he feels managing Town government is always new and exciting. She is convinced that Mr. Murray should get the job. The Board needed more process; the Chair did not have a good handle on the issues. The staff carries out the manager's direction for the Board, the manager needs to manage both ways. John is a strong in-depth manager. Mr. Murray is dealing with a lot and came up to speed immediately. He rearranged his office, got into the job, without the Town missing a beat. I am very impressed with what he has done. John was not my original choice, but now I am very impressed with how strong he has become as a manager.

Chairman Hunter absolutely agrees with Lauren. He should be recognized as doing a wonderful job since Don retired and we owe him a debt. John really got the organization at NESWC to function. It was really bad and John took the organization and took an aggressive stance and got everyone to follow.

Selectwoman Knibbe – I am in a unique position as I did not work with Don. I have many positive things to say about John. I really like John but these other managers appear to have more experience. It is not unusual that people move on, but it is not right for us to take that into account what John might do. I hope he stays.

Selectman Berry – I was not able to review the meetings. Mr. Ledoux would be a good choice as he has worked in a similar community and not in an urban setting.

Selectwoman Knibbe moves that we select Mr. Ledoux as the next town Manager for Acton. Peter Berry seconds the motion. The Chairman stated under the condition he passes the final background check and accepts the contract. Four voted in favor Selectwoman Rosenzweig was opposed.

Mr. Hunter will make the announcement tonight and will make him an offer. He did send the Selectmen a sample contract out to all for comment.

Charlie Kadlec spoke. He has reviewed from the beginning and he wants to compliment the board and thank them for the great job.

Meeting ended at 7:45

**SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS**

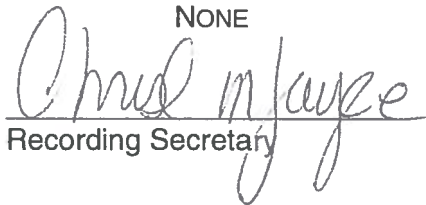
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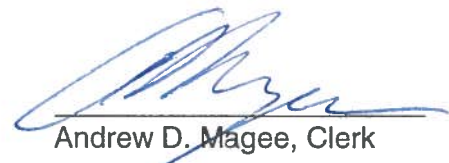
**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

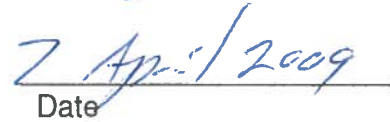
None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

NONE

  
Recording Secretary

  
Andrew D. Magee, Clerk

  
Date