



Temporary Subcommittee to Review Applicants for the Strategic Initiatives and Financial Oversight Committee (SIFOC)

Conference Room 2, City Hall

Thursday, February 21, 2019

4:30pm

Open Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

- 1.1. Subcommittee members present - Geoffrey Epstein, Richard Finlay, Tiffanie Maskell, Noval Alexander.
- 1.2. Staff present - City CFO, Mary Ellen Kelley, Superintendent Robert Tremblay
- 1.3. Public present - Beverly Hugo
- 1.4. Called to order at 4:44pm
- 1.5. The meeting was recorded

2. Review Subcommittee Scope

This seemed obvious and was not discussed.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Process, Questions to be Asked and Scheduling

The issue of candidates reading written statements during the interview was raised. The issue of the 3 categories of appointment: Finance, Business, At Large was also raised. The approach the Council used was reviewed, including the questions that were asked. It was also noted that

the Council had already identified its set of 3 candidates, which would impact the School Committee selection process.

The issue of questions to be asked was addresses and the notion that if the questions were agreed on in this meeting, the candidates might have access to them through the minutes, so the notion was raised to develop a draft list of questions before the next meeting and finalize them at the start of that meeting. There was agreement that each candidate should be asked the same questions.

It was regarded as important to have each candidate show that they were able to write coherently, as that was regarded as an important skill for the SIFOC to operate well. Following this line of attack, it was agreed that each candidate would be asked to submit a written statement of up to two pages prior to the interview day, so the subcommittee members could assess that.

Each person present was then asked to give their idea of what questions should be asked.

One concern was to establish if each candidate has the time to serve properly.

Another was to be sure that if they were already serving on another city body, they understood that they would have to resign from that to serve on the SIFOC. It was noted that this was covered in the application process.

It seemed pretty important to asked them why they want to serve, given the time commitment and the lack of compensation.

The issue of the scope of SIFOC was raised and the fact that the charter intention seemed to be that it was not comprehensive, intense strategic planning, but higher level, possibly focusing on a small set of big issues. This was clearly an issue which the SIFOC would have to address as part of its initial deliberations. Some suggestions were put forward by the city CFO on topics the SIFOC might address, including what to do with city buildings, how to organize the administration, development e.g. Nobscot, ...

Another relevant question raised was what experience do they have with long term planning.

Also, what is their take on the role of local government? What is their take on investing in community assets?

Further, the issue of ensuring that the chosen candidate have a schools perspective, so they would help address issues like the school buildings management, funding the school system, impacts of residential development.

What is important strategically?

It was pointed out that there is some collateral that the SIFOC can use, such as the master plans for infrastructure: roadways, water & sewer, .. and the long range financial forecast etc.

The further issue of coordinating building projects on the city and schools side was raised, especially from a funding point of view.

The importance of getting some new thinking going in the major areas of capital infrastructure and finance was raised.

Even the frequency of the SIFOC meetings is undefined, so the question of their scope and practical ability to have an impact was raised. The fact that they are planned to have a \$200,000 budget allocation in FY20 was noted.

The question was raised as to how can the city and school administrations support the SIFOC in its efforts. The idea that a city webpage for the SIFCO might be created to help support the effort.

One further question suggested to ask candidates was what do they expect to be the outcome of their efforts? What would they have contributed?

Mike Rossi entered the meeting to request Geoffrey Epstein briefly attend the Marijuana Task Force meeting to approve minutes. That occurred and then Geoffrey Epstein rejoined the temporarily halted meeting.

Another question was how does the candidate work in a committee setting, resolving differences, building consensus etc.? What are their interpersonal skills like?

A request was made that in order to get a draft list of questions, that folks present email Geoffrey three questions they might like asked. Then a draft of the questions would be put in the shared drive for people to read but not edit, to be prepared for the next meeting.

It was decided that all candidates would be interviewed individually from a common set of 5 questions, with 15 minutes allocated to each. In addition to the candidate statements, it was decided to have the candidates note which of the 3 positions: finance, business community, at large they were aiming to fill, or if they thought they may be suited for more than one.

5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Richard Finlay

Second: Tiffanie Maskell

Motion carried: 4-0-0; Richard Finlay, Geoffrey Epstein, Tiffanie Maskell, Noval Alexander

Meeting adjourned at 5:14pm

These minutes were approved by the Framingham School Committee in Open Session on December 18, 2019.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on December 20, 2019.