

MINUTES

Cumberland Town Council Special Meeting

Town Council Chambers

MONDAY, July 29, 2013

6:00 p.m. Call to Order

Present: Councilors Stiles, Turner, Copp, Storey-King, Gruber, Edes and Bingham

I. RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., §405(6)(E) re: consultation with Town Attorney.

Motion by Councilor Bingham, seconded by Councilor Gruber, to recess to Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., §405(6)(E) re: consultation with Town Attorney.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

TIME: 6:01 p.m.

II. 7:00 P.M. RECONVENE TO M.S.A.D. 51 SCHOOL BOARD INTERVIEWS

The 5 candidates were William Dunnett, Tim Ferris, Brad Hilton, John Simpson and Pete Wilson. Chairman Stiles welcomed the candidates and covered the interview ground rules with them:

Under state statute and the town charter, the Town Council has the duty to appoint an interim school board director to fill a vacancy in a seat representing the Town of Cumberland. There are currently two vacancies for seats representing the Town of Cumberland on the M.S.A.D. 51 School Board. The appointees to these seats will serve until June 30, 2014.

The Town Council is committed to selecting the best candidates for these very important appointments. As part of that selection process, the Council is conducting this public panel interview this evening. The public will be allowed to observe but will not be given the opportunity to participate in tonight's interview.

The interview will be conducted as follows:

- 1) Each candidate will be given a 2 minute time limit to provide an opening statement.*
- 2) Each candidate will be asked a series of questions selected by the Town Council.*
- 3) Each question will be asked in a random order from left to right until all candidates have answered the question.*
- 4) There will be a 3 minute time limit to answer each question.*
- 5) Each candidate will be given a 2 minute time limit to provide a closing statement.*
- 6) At the conclusion of the interviews, the Town Council will recess to Executive Session.*
- 7) At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Town Council will reconvene in a televised public meeting to vote on a decision related to this process.*

Thank you once again for your attendance this evening. We appreciate the interest of these five dedicated residents who have agreed to participate in this unique public process.

Chairman Stiles introduced Councilor Storey-King, who moderated the interviews.

Councilor Storey-King thanked the candidates on behalf of the Town Council and the residents of Cumberland. She explained that each candidate would be asked to give a 2 minute introductory statement, followed by 5 random questions that were compiled from questions submitted by the Council and residents. The candidates will then be given the opportunity for a 2 minute closing remark. Councilor Storey-King said that the Council requests that the candidate's answers be specific yet respectful. We are not looking for responses that question anyone's integrity or attack any individual's character. It is the sincerest interest of the Council to move forward the full functionality of the school board on behalf of all citizens.

Councilor Storey-King asked the following 5 questions to each candidate:

- 1) Please describe your understanding of and thoughts about the role of a school board member.**
- 2) One of the primary concerns of the Town Council is that our school board representatives take their fiduciary responsibilities seriously. Additionally, there has been a lot of discussion about how budgeting decisions have detracted from the policy-making functions of the school board.*
What assurances can you give us that you will serve as a trustee to the entire community of Cumberland in your role as a school board member? And what protocols might you suggest to make policy-making more efficient and transparent?
- 3) Please give one specific challenge that you believe MSAD 51 currently faces and one specific achievement that you believe the district should celebrate.*
What skills and desires will you bring to the school board that address the challenge and further the achievement you just identified?
- 4) As highlighted in the recent media, we are a state of changing demographics and declining school enrollment. With the goal of maintaining the level of education without increasing the school budget...*
How will you show that you are mindful that most residents in Cumberland no longer have children in school while assuring that our schools remain attractive to potential new residents?
- 5) As an entity of the state, MSAD 51 functions and is governed independently from all other Town of Cumberland operations. Therefore, the Cumberland Town Council and administration have very limited authority with respect to the operations of MSAD 51. However, many residents are not aware of the separation of power between the Town and the school district and, while many residents are familiar with their Councilors, they are hesitant to communicate with their school board representative.*
What efforts will you make to be more directly engaged with the residents that you represent so that their participation in MSAD 51 governance is encouraged and respected?

Councilor Storey-King thanked the candidates and explained that the Council will recess to Executive Session to discuss the appointments.

III. RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., § 405 (6)(A)(1) re: discussion or consideration of appointments.

Motion by Councilor Gruber, seconded by Councilor Copp, to recess to Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., § 405 (6)(A)(1) re: discussion or consideration of appointments.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

TIME: 8:43 p.m.

Reconvene to regular session at 9:25 p.m.

IV. 13 – 123 To consider and act on the appointment of two RSU 51 School Board members.

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Turner, to appoint Pete Wilson to the RSU 51 School Board of Directors.

VOTE: 6-1 (Bingham opposed) MOTION PASSES

Councilor Storey-King said that the Council was very pleased with all the applicants and thanked them for their time this evening. It's nice to see interest and enthusiasm in the community.

Motion by Councilor Gruber, seconded by Councilor Storey-King, to appoint John Simpson to the RSU 51 School Board of Directors.

VOTE: 5-2 (Bingham and Edes opposed) MOTION PASSES

Councilor Copp thanked all the applicants. He felt that it was a very fair process. He thanked Councilor Storey-King for the outstanding job that she did as moderator.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilor Bingham, seconded by Councilor Gruber, to adjourn.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

TIME: 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brenda Moore
Council Secretary