

Selectmen's Meeting  
Friday, January 6, 2006  
Ayer Town Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room, Main Street, Ayer, MA

7:45p.m. Open Session

The Board met with Chairman Morrison, Selectman Sullivan, Selectman Conley, Selectman Bresnahan and Selectman Maxant.

Chairman Morrison opened the discussion by announcing the Three (3) candidates being considered by the Board for the Town Administrator's position: Terri Ackerman-Andover, MA, Timothy Goddard-Littleton, MA and Shaun Suhoski-Gardner, MA. Chairman Morrison called upon the Board for opening statement re their choice of candidate and reasoning beginning to her left with Selectman Maxant.

**Selectman Maxant-** Opened his remarks by applauding the efforts of the Screening Committee for their research and recommendation of the level of candidates brought forward to the Selectmen for consideration of the Town Administrator's position. Selectman Maxant expressed his concern re creating a hole in the Town's revitalized community development efforts attributed to Mr. Suhoski and with the departure/loss of Mr. Suhoski to that effort- for this reason alone would not recommend the appointment of Mr. Suhoski for the Town Administrator's position. Selectman Maxant nominated Ann Ackerman of Andover stating again concerns re her salary being paramount acknowledging the Town's Compensation Plan and plan not within the proposed ceiling of Ms. Ackerman but stating he felt Ms. Ackerman to be the most qualified candidate. Mr. Maxant also advised the Board to his conversation with Selectman Glavey of Littleton re Mr. Goddard advising the Board to Littleton not wanting to loose Mr. Goddard but would also not hold back due to Mr. Goddard's strong background in Public administration, budgeting/financial/Contractual experience.

**Chairman Morrison -** expressed her concerns re Selectman Maxant's apprehension re Mr. Sushoski stepping up to Town Administrator's role. Chairman Morrison stating Mr. Sushoski has served well and earned opportunity to advance and for that reason should not be held back that the Town could also find another capable person to fill the Community & Economic Development Director's position. Chairman Morrison advising to Mr. Suhoski to not allowing EOCD running aground would be available to monitor. Chairman Morrison elaborating on telephone calls, emails, letters of support coming in supporting Mr. Suhoski for the position of Town Administrator and she fully supported Mr. Suhoski .

**Selectman Conley-** Selectman Conley advised the Board to her spending two hours with Mr. Suhoski last week re in-depth meeting to convince her he could manage the position of Town Administrator and loosing him from EOCD Office would not be detrimental to Town. Selectman Conley expressed her concerns with disturbing answers re lack of budgetary/financial matters and most importantly re proposed staffing changes in Town Hall. Selectman Conley reviewed criteria and answer rating established by her vs. all the candidates with the Board i.e. finance, budget, personnel, collective bargaining, inter-government skills, legal/law knowledge, and educational backgrounds. Ms. Conley stated given criteria her number one candidate would be Ms. Ackerman with eighteen (18) years of service/experience to her credit, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice Mr. Goddard and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mr. Suhoski in the same order given to the Selectmen by the Screening Committee. Selectman Conley elaborated on her own personal background checks conducted one being with a former Town Administrator Mr. James Kriedler re job search and recommendation of Mr. Suhoski. Salary major concern without input from Personnel Board.

**Selectman Sullivan-**advised to not being present at Mr. Suhoski's interview but advised to picking up Ayerpac's disk and viewing it. Selectman Sullivan spoke to Mr. Suhoski's commitment and track record for the Town of Ayer. Selectman Sullivan advised to long hours worked by Mr. Suhoski and flexibility of hours to accommodate businesses/industries. Selectman Sullivan stating Mr. Suhoski has leg up on other candidates having a working knowledge of the Town, Devens, Legal being a law school graduate, has prepared Grants funding applications, prepared budgets for his Departments to include Federal & State compliance and the

industrial development and could hit the ground running. Finance committee, who Mr. McCann contacted and spoke highly of Mr. Suhoski. Selectman Sullivan stated he too had spoken with former Town Administrator James Kriedler and came away with an entirely different prospective then Selectman Conley's. Selectman Sullivan spoke to focus on hours, time management workable and Mr. Suhoski's recommendation by the Search Committee honorable not done out of courtesy to employment with Town but because he was a strong & viable candidate bringing strong administrative qualities to the table. Selectman Sullivan strongly endorsed Shaun Suhoski for the position of Town Administrator.

**Selectmen Bresnahan**-Selectman Bresnahan took this opportunity to publicly recognize and thank the Screening Committee for their direction- outstanding job recommending three qualified candidates. Selectman Bresnahan stated he spoke with Terri Ackerman earlier in the day re salary line, asked her questions re employment and stated she was his first choice for the position of Town Administrator. Selectman Bresnahan stated Ms. Ackerman left her last employment at \$95K but when asked stated she would consider \$80K. Selectman Bresnahan realized that this salary objective was unrealistic given the Compensation Plan approved by the Town. Selectman Bresnahan stated he also supported Mr. Suhoski but had concerns re time management, hours of work. Selectman Bresnahan urging strong contract language be incorporated into a contract if Mr. Suhoski accepts position.

The Board reviewed the Personal Board's impact re Salary constraints, Rule of Necessity being invoked due to lack of quorum re ruling re compensation. The Board reviewed among themselves if they wanted to offer top salary, probation period, position title Executive Secretary vs. Town Administrator.

Chairman Morrison called for a motion to appoint Shaun Suhoski to the position of Town Administrator. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board appoint Shaun Suhoski to the position of Town Administrator at the salary of \$68,089.68, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Maxant for discussion requesting the Board approach the Personnel Board re change in Grade & Step.

The Board moved to offer Shaun Suhoski the position of Executive Secretary a/k/a Town Administrator at the salary of \$68,089.68 subject to contractual negotiation contingent upon probationary period, specific time management and required hours worked, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Maxant VOTE: Selectman Sullivan aye, Selectman Bresnahan aye, Chairman Morrison aye, Selectman Conley no, Selectman Maxant no 3-2 Motion carries. The Board voted to meet in Executive Session on 1-11-06 at 6:30p.m. to discuss/develop Mr. Suhoski's contract. 8:05p.m. The Board took a five minute recess.

8:10p.m. the Board met with Chief Rizzo re-Sick Leave Bank-Judith Hadley Dispatcher. See letter from Atty David Jenkins dated 1-5-05 submitted to the Board from Chief Richard Rizzo.

Chief Rizzo updated the Board to Ms Hadley being hospitalized 11-29-05 with serious illness requiring her to be out 30 days or more and stating that she has run out of sick time, vacation, personal days effective 12-21-05. Chief Rizzo advised the Board that the Ayer Police Department employees have all expressed desire to donate sick days to help Ms. Hadley out this being all three unions. (Patrolmen, Sergeants and Telecommunicators) Selectman Conley moved the Board vote to support this Sick Leave Bank with the following amendments.

1. Strike out the words " in any particular fiscal year and place this Fiscal Year-expires 6-30-06"
2. Number of days change from 20 days to 100 days.
3. Change Mr. to Ms.
4. Authorize the Chairman's signature on Agreement
5. Change Union signatories to that of Union Presidents not representatives
6. Policy to be submitted to Town Treasurer for validation within five (5) days of contract approval.

The Board requested this information be submitted back to Atty. Jenkins for changes and resubmitted back to the Board for final approval and endorsement.

8:30p.m. Selectman Sullivan moved the Board adjourn the meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Maxant, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.