

**TOWN OF GIBRALTAR
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021
GIBRALTAR TOWN CENTER
4097 HIGHWAY 42, FISH CREEK WI 54212
6:00 PM**

Approved: 2/3/2021

Call to order: Steve Sohns, chairman called the special town board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll call/quorum:

Present: Steve Sohns, Bill Johnson, Tim Luetzgen, Brian Merkel and Jayson Merkel

Absent: None

Agenda/proper notice/adopt agenda: *Motion: (Johnson, Luetzgen) to approve the agenda as posted. Carried*

Review and accept Harding Group LLC - Organizational Effectiveness Assessment:

Steve Sohns stated in May 2020 Brian Merkel asked that the board look into an administrator position in our township. It was put on our agenda in June 2020 where a good discussion was held, but not well attended. In July, The Harding Group was retained to do an Organizational Effectiveness Assessment, how we might improve and look at the role of a town administrator and the key roles that individual may have. This assessment is what the board is considering this evening and where it wishes to go from here. A packet has been prepared for distribution this evening and will be available online.

Marc Harding stated that a multi-step process involved interviews with all the regular non-seasonal employees, the board, chairs of all the committees and commissions. A written online survey was used with the same group but expanded to include committee and commission members. Quantitative analysis used a 1-5 scale ranking various processes that go into running the day-to-day operations of the government; 1 low, 5 high. Major themes and issues were another component of the survey. The Executive Summary evaluated the operations of the Town to determine if it couldn't be run more effectively and efficiently with a township administrator or manager. Concerns identified are: Planning, Organization, People, and System/Processes.

The role of a Town Administrator: Key responsibilities for a public administration role are planning, organizing, workforce management, controlling, coaching/directing. The town administrator would not only be forward looking but also deal with the day-to-day issues. Benefits an administrator would bring include comprehensive budget & expense management, short and long-term plans, team leader to the staff, ongoing support for your board/committees/commissions, project planning and execution, communications focal point, a resource for all taxpayers, representative for the township, facilitator. Estimated costs: base pay \$70-90,000, benefit costs \$25,000, Office equipment \$4,000, Moving costs \$5,000, recruiting costs to be determined.

Johnson stated previously cost savings could have been realized if there had been an administrator. We do not need a staffing change at the present.

- Angela Sherman asked for 2 tangible examples of what an administrator would do. Johnson stated that the main thing would be coordinating daily projects, no longer tasking individuals with things that are not their expertise. For example: the clerk managing the maintenance department. Brian Merkel directed Angela to the packet that pointed out examples. Sohns responded that he spent a minimum of a quarter of his summer downtown working through projects.
- Angela asked if there will be job description changes and the current employee roles, if and when would it take effect. Johnson addressing the question stated that is part of the whole package of what the administrator is there to do. We have an excellent staff; we need them to accomplish this going forward and there is more than enough to do. Angela expressed her concern that the town

board make it a priority, prior to hiring someone, to go through all job descriptions and set board set clear job descriptions for the staff (primarily addressing office staff) as well as the administrator so the employees know what their job is. Instead of having the incoming administrator changing up descriptions and duties right away. Also concerned whether there is enough work to sustain 4 full-time positions. Johnson assured Angela that she was being heard and that her concerns would be addressed.

- Don Freix commented that what the town is doing is wonderful but asked that the board not go past item 5. Freix stated he felt the meeting title did not meet the type of meeting being held. Sohns stated it did per legal counsel.
- Carole Vande Walle said that nothing in Harding's presentation included electors opinions.
- Don Vande Walle asked about monies set aside for an administrator. Brian Merkel stated about 2/3rds of a year in wage and benefits have been built into the 2021 budget.
- Paul Woerfel added one of the benefits of an administrator is gains of potential grant proceeds.

Motion: (Johnson, B. Merkel) to accept the assessment from The Harding Group. Carried

Harding Group LLC – Options to consider for Town Administrator based on Assessment:

The Harding Group submitted a letter to the board on 11/12/2020 that gave options to consider based on preliminary findings and the result of the benchmarking survey. The letter outlined assumptions that were the base for the options and their estimated costs in filling the position of town administrator. The board chose to focus on option #3.

Option #3) Hire a Town administrator who has a zoning, public works and civil project management background that could not only perform the administrator's role but could also act as a project manager on your upcoming civil projects and act as your Zoning Administrator. Estimated costs are \$85K in salary plus \$25 in benefits costs and another \$10-15K in one-time costs.

Engagement of The Harding Group to provide a turnkey search for a Town Administrator:

Motion: (Johnson, J. Merkel) to engage The Harding Group to proceed with a turnkey search for a Town Administrator. Carried

The Harding Group

A. Consideration/approval of project plan (administrator, committee/commission structure):

The board reviewed the project plan. Marc stated that you can lose target candidates if the board moves to slowly. Steve Sohns replied there was better public participation with a June meet and greet. Johnson stated this is not the schedule that the board previously set. Brian Merkel agreed schedule date should be sooner than July 15th. Jayson Merkel agreed with Johnson on sticking with the original date. Paul Woerfel stated the focus should be on best person, start earlier, the meet and greet is important but secondary especially with COVID. Luetggen said there may be a number of people wanting to come up here. *Motion: (Johnson, B. Merkel) to change the target start date to June 1st. Carried with Sohns opposed.*

B. Consideration of administrator draft ad, ad placement list, costs associated with the list of ads:

Sohns stated project management is desirable. Johnson stated to focus on what the TA will learn and expectations. Ron Merkel added that grant writing is desirable. Lynn Mercurio asked what level of experience was being sought; Marc responded the ad indicates 5-7 years. Ads will be placed: ICMA, Wisconsin Municipal League, Universities that have a Public Administration degree, Wisconsin Towns Association, Linked In, Indeed, DCEDC, Harding Group networking. *Motion: (B. Merkel, Johnson) to proceed with changes under ad text. Carried*

C. Consideration of administrator draft job description: The job description was reviewed; grant writing should be added. *Motion: (B. Merkel, Johnson) to add grant writing to administrator draft job description. Approved. Carried*

D. Presentation of organizational ordinance draft including roles of town board, town chairman, appointed officials and town administrator: Why an ordinance? Marc responded that by putting in an ordinance you lower the risk of having someone coming in and throwing a wrench into the

operations. An ordinance brings definition and clarity. Is this the direction you want to head? This ordinance will be drawn in coordination with the town attorney. *Motion: (B. Merkel, Johnson) to have The Harding Group go ahead to complete the draft ordinance by the proposed date. Carried*

- E. **Set date for meeting with committee/commission chairs:** *Motion: (Johnson, B. Merkel) to have Marc meet individually with committee and commission chairs. Carried*

Adjourn: *Motion: (B. Merkel, Johnson) adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Carried*

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hagen
Clerk