

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2022**

The Glastonbury Town Council Personnel Search Committee for an Executive Level Position – Town Manager held a Special Meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 31, 2022. The meeting was held in Community Rooms A and B at the Riverfront Community Center, located at 300 Welles Street, with an option for Zoom Video Conferencing.

Sherri Tanguay, Director of Human Resources for the Town of Glastonbury, introduced Doug Thomas of Strategic Government Resources (SGR), who will assist in the recruitment for a successor Town Manager following Richard J. Johnson’s retirement. Mr. Thomas is a Florida-based Executive Vice President of SGR, but previously served as an assistant city manager in Michigan and as a city manager in Florida.

Mr. Thomas explained the background of SGR and presented a draft of their recruitment process for Glastonbury. Tonight’s meeting will gather information from the public and general town employees to mark the start of the search process. Next, the position will be marketed nationally via a brochure and through social media. After a rigorous vetting process, they will then triage the best candidates with the Town Council. Mr. Thomas reviewed a list of SGR’s past and ongoing recruitment searches in Connecticut.

The public responded with the following comments and questions:

Chip Beckett would like the next Town Manager to be both financially and operationally competent, as well as apolitical.

Susan Karp would like the next Town Manager to build relationships in the community through outreach.

Nicholas Korn asked how SGR handles the issue of a potential candidate’s political partisanship. Mr. Thomas explained that most managers are members of the ICMA, which has a code of ethics requiring members to be apolitical.

Mr. Korn then noted that development pressures are a major, ongoing issue in town, especially regarding affordable housing mandates. He also would like assurance that SGR will seek the most qualified candidates, regardless of sex, ethnicity, or other superficial attributes. Mr. Thomas stated that they have partnerships with a variety of minority and underrepresented population groups within the city management position, to help increase diversity.

Jen Jennings would like the next manager to be a resident of town. Mr. Thomas noted that while it is ideal for managers to be embedded in the community, making that a hard requirement might turn off some otherwise strong candidates from applying. Their brochure will state that residency is desired.

Another comment was made from a resident who expressed hesitancy with considering any candidates who have never served as a manager or assistant manager before. He thinks that there would be a good pool of interested candidates because Glastonbury is a desirable town. Mr. Thomas agreed that Glastonbury has a great reputation, which will make the search process easier. He elaborated on non-traditional candidates, such as those with military backgrounds, especially those who have served as base commanders, who could potentially be good matches, despite a lack of experience as a city/town manager. He noted that Town Managers are generalists, and that it is hard to find appropriate matches with non-traditional candidates.

Mr. Thomas explained that Florida and California have strict laws requiring transparency on these matters. The entire recruitment process for a manager must be open to the public. In other states, such as Connecticut, the process is virtually private until the final stages of recruitment. Ms. Jennings asked which process is better. Mr. Thomas explained that in Florida, their brochures must highlight the fact that candidates' applications may be subject to a public request. However, the downside is that candidates might be exposed too early, thereby putting them in jeopardy with their communities back home. Thus, outside of Florida, they typically encourage keeping the process confidential until recruitment is down to just four or five candidates.

One speaker via Zoom asked about the types of recruitment models that SGR has seen, and whether candidates could do a public presentation so that a wider audience could participate in the process. Mr. Thomas stated that, at a minimum, they recommend that communities enlist a search committee to vet candidates and recommend semifinalists to the pool board. At this point, the role of the Council could vary in its involvement, but candidates will typically meet with senior staff. At the end, they recommend that towns host a meet and greet for the public. Sometimes, they ask finalists to present on what they think will be the challenges and opportunities in their new communities.

Ms. Carroll read the written comments submitted:

Anne Bowman would like the new Town Manager to actively engage with residents, not just Town staff. She suggested hosting a monthly town meeting at the library. The new manager should also be proactive on the environmental crisis and hire more staff to assist town leadership.

Bruce Bowman is very concerned about climate change. He asked what level of concern applicants have for the environment and how that would shape their climate policy. He is also

concerned about adequate staffing in town departments, especially the library. He would like to know what the individual's thoughts are regarding open space and its utilization in town.

Mr. Thomas summarized all the desired candidate attributes he has heard from Town Staff and the Town Council, many of which align with the comments expressed tonight. If there are any further questions, he asked that people reach out to him via email.

The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta
Chairman