



TOWN OF  
**CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
15 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01011

Administrator Interviews

August 18, 2022.

Attending:

Selectboard members John Baldasaro, Jason Fogue, Richard (Andy) Sutton

Applicant Chris Nolan

Tax Collector Mary Ann Pease, Town Clerk Terry Donovan, Residents Robert Daley, Jane Sutton, Richard Holzman

Interviews called to order by John B. at 5:37.

Introductions were made and Chris gave an overview of his life and experience. Currently executive assistant to town manager in Ware with one year's experience. Looking to advance in the field.

Chris took questions from all selectboard members regarding experience, comfort level with aspects of the position, interaction with state legislators, grants, among others. Chris stated he believes in communication and a "calm, rational approach" to issues. Said he has had "some" state legislative interaction and if appointed, will communicate regularly with legislators and will be aggressive on Chester's behalf – "will not be ignored". He currently handles licenses, workman's comp, minutes, payroll, warrants, agendas, and is the insurance clerk. His current employer has a Grant Coordinator, but he has done a grant application with MIAA and received the full amount of the grant. When asked how he would work with joint ventures such as GRSD and Chester/Blandford Police Department, Chris stated he "believes interaction with all parties is key". He sees the BOS as his boss and will "initiate and maintain communication" with the Board. When asked what he sees as one of the biggest issues facing the town he responded, "infrastructure". When asked how he would respond to any remarks that he is "too young", Chris stated he would respond that he is "energetic, impressionable, forward-thinking, and not stuck in old ways". When asked "why Chester?", he responded he "likes the Hilltowns", sees the potential for visiting and living in the town and sees himself "putting down roots".

Chris then asked if there is anything he should know. John responded both positive and negative input from townspeople; push for West-East Rail. Jason acknowledged perceived "divide" between those living on "the hill" and "downtown" and Chris said he can be impartial.

Asked his timeline to start, Chris responded two weeks and asked for the timeline for the selectboard's decision and John said it would soon. The entire Board thanked Chris and complimented him on the interview, telling him he "presented himself well".

Second applicant Don Humason's interview, scheduled for 6:30, started at approximately 6:15 due to the first interview being concluded. Introductions were made and Don gave an overview of his life and experience, including his first "getting into government" immediately following college. His career has included him serving as a state representative, state senator, and mayor of Westfield. John asked why Chester and Don responded he "likes the feel of the town" and has been coming here for years. When asked if he has a desire to run for office again, Don responded, "No", he's been an elected official and enjoyed it but "is done with it". He said he can be comfortable as a "front person" but will serve the Board going on to say, "I don't need to be the guy in charge".

Jason asked how we make sure Chester isn't forgotten by the state. Don said he has relationships with elected officials and will stay in communication with them and be a "conduit" or collaborate. Will invite them to town and make them feel welcome. John explained most positions in Town Hall are part time and asked if Don would be comfortable being "the gate-keeper". Don stated he would expect that and understands the difficulty in getting positions filled. John asked how Don feels about the shared services between town and Don said he believes there is "more power together than separately". When asked about grants, Don he will get the town on lists for grants and apply for those that benefit Chester. He said he will work to promote appropriate business with community involvement and selectboard input and he will make sure Chester is known by the legislature. He acknowledged the importance of infrastructure and has extensive experience in dealing with any number of issues important to a town. Jason mentioned there is a bit of "budget animosity" and asked Don how he would deal with it. Don responded he will have an open-door policy, will listen, look at budgets, and work with finance committee and the selectboard for the best interest of the town. He said one the biggest things is to listen. Andy asked what he's currently doing for employment and Don responded he is doing consulting for nonprofits. With no further questions from the board, Don ended by saying believes "Chester is a great town" and he would "be a cheerleader" for the community both inside it and out. The board asked Don if he got the position what would be his timeline and he responded a couple of weeks. The board then thanked Don for his time and informed him they will interview until they are satisfied but would act soon.

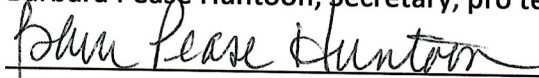
At this point, with both applicants having left town hall, the board discussed each. Andy stated, "both candidates have positives" and he "would be happy with either." John said he was impressed by the first candidate, but he doesn't measure to the experience of the second candidate, whom he believes is prepared for the position. Jason said, "Where does that get

us?" and he was impressed with the first candidate as well. He worries despite the experience of candidate #2, the town could still be ignored by the state. John said he believes candidate #2's experience and connections would help the town. Andy wondered how candidate #2 would do with "the day-to-day" and John conceded he didn't know but said with either the board could set a six-month review. Andy went to state he really had "no strong preference". Jason expressed concern candidate #1 would "go back to politics" and said the position would mostly be dealing with Chester residents and less with legislators. John said we need to expand our connection with legislators and candidate #2 would do that and candidate #1 "needs seasoning". The entire board acknowledge candidate #1 "has a future" and was impressive. All agreed there were positives to both, but in the end, experience outweighed other factors. Jason made the motion to offer the position of Chester Town Administrator to Don Humason, Andy seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Business concluded; John made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Jason.  
Adjourned at 7:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Pease Huntoon, Secretary, pro tem



8/29/22

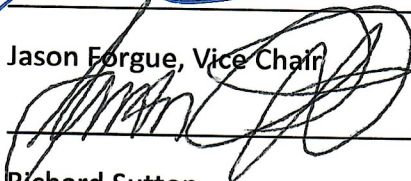
Chester Selectboard

John Baldasaro, Chair



8/29/22

Jason Fergue, Vice Chair



8/29/22

Richard Sutton

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