

# Community Paradigm Associates, LLC

1 Saddleback  
Plymouth, Massachusetts 02360

November 21, 2015

Ms. Deborah B. Radway  
Director of Human Resources and Human Rights  
Town Hall  
4 Boltwood Avenue  
Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Ms.  Radway:

I am pleased to present this proposal to assist you and the Select Board with the selection of a new Town Manager for Amherst. It is essential that this selection process result in a Town Manager that has the skills, experience and management approach to lead the Town forward through its challenges and new opportunities.

The success of your selection process is to a great extent dependent upon the experience and approach of the recruiting consultant you choose to assist you in your search and hiring decision. I believe Community Paradigm is uniquely qualified to be that consultant.

## **PROPOSAL**

### **I. Experience and Background**

I have 35 years of experience working with and for municipal governments. I served as City Manager of the City of Lowell for nearly 8 years and as Chelmsford Town Manager for nearly 20 years. Additionally, I recently served as Interim Town Manager for the Town of Winchendon where I was also contracted to perform recruiting services for their new Town Manager, and I served as the Chairman of the Chelsea City Manager Search Committee. As a result of this experience I bring the following resources to the recruitment effort:

- A broad network of municipal executive contacts primarily in Massachusetts and New England but extending through other regions as a result of my longstanding membership in the International City and County Managers Association (ICMA). I maintain regular contact with this network in discussing various issues and career opportunities.

- Experience in building strong, high performance municipal organizations and a reputation for the success of these organizations in delivering effective service delivery, strong finances, open and transparent government, and economic growth. In building these organizations I recruited and hired numerous high quality individuals to positions of Chief Finance Officers/Finance Directors, Town Accountants, Public Works Directors, Assistant Managers, Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs, Planning and Development Directors, and a variety of other positions. I have honed my ability to find and identify talented and motivated individuals that can gel within an organization.
- I am very proud that in my selecting those talented and motivated individuals I have developed a cohort of about a dozen new municipal managers now serving here in Massachusetts as Managers or Assistant Managers.

## **II. Approach**

It is a challenging period in municipal management recruitment with a growing number of retirements of current managers providing increased opportunities, and fewer individuals entering the profession and many individuals opting to remain in secure positions. The result of these forces is smaller candidate pools for municipalities. This situation, along with some possible uncertainty regarding changes in Amherst's form of government dictates a need for aggressive outreach to identify good candidates that might be convinced to submit an interest in the position.

It has also become a period in which greater citizen involvement in the selection process is desired and required. Such involvement helps to insure community support for the individual selected for the Town Manager position.

In short, the recruitment and selection process requires an understanding and knowledge of the candidate pool, aggressive outreach, citizen engagement and participation, and a nimble and creative approach to finding and choosing the "right" individual for the community. I believe the approach that I would utilize, along with the already described experience and knowledge will work for Amherst in finding the best next Town Manager.

The following is a description of the process that will be utilized by Community Paradigm Associates, the "consultant":

### **Preparation**

#### **1. Initial Consultation with the Select Board**

It is most important to have a clear understanding from the Select Board on the experience and personal attributes the Board wishes the next Town Manager to possess. The consultant would meet with the Selectmen at the outset to obtain this information. This meeting would also be used to discuss recruitment strategies, discuss contractual provisions including compensation and conditions of employment, and review the timetable for the recruitment and selection process.





## **2. Screening Committee**

Citizen screening committees are an effective tool for adding varied community perspective and participation in the selection process. Their task is to confidentially winnow the field of candidates to a manageable 3-5 finalists that would be recommended to the Selectmen.

The committee is recommended to be 5-7 members and representative of various groups within the Town. For example, a potential make-up might consist of a member with prior experience in Amherst town government, a representative of the school committee, a member of the business community, a representative of the higher education community, and a cross section of residents at-large.

## **3. Organizational and Community Input**

It is generally helpful to gather the views of Department Heads and other key town officials. These individuals will have regular interaction with the Town Manager and their input is valuable. It can also be useful to have a public input session in order to ascertain the thoughts of residents and businesses as to the qualities that would be beneficial for the next Town Manager to possess, though this is optional. The Town's staff would assist in setting up these meetings.

## **4. Preparation of Position Profile/Recruiting Brochure**

The Town Charter contains much of the information that defines the job description of the Town Manager. The consultant would assist in developing the required professional qualifications and recommended compensation package. The information gathered from the Select Board, Department Heads and town officials, and the optional public input session would complete the development of the position profile. A community profile will also be developed with the position profile in order to create a Recruiting Brochure that will provide possible candidates a full understanding of the Town and its current issues, the statutory responsibilities of the Town Manager position, and the expectations of the Board and other members of the community.

The Board will be asked to publicly endorse or amend this Profile, and in Executive Session discuss and decide parameters of a compensation and benefit package. Specifics related to this package are held to be confidential as they will be part of negotiations with the final candidate.

## **5. Advertisements and Active Recruitment of Candidates**

Ultimately, the success of selecting a new Town Manager for Amherst is insuring the largest possible pool of qualified candidates. Certainly, one manner of gaining applicants is advertising the position through various publications and organizations. The consultant will make recommendations on the most effective locations to advertise.

However, the most important activity in recruiting is conducting targeted outreach to prospective, qualified candidates. This activity is imperative, as many qualified candidates do not respond to advertisements for various reasons. In particular, in

highly visible positions such as Town Managers there is some concern about premature public disclosure of candidates, which could impact existing positions. A consultant-initiated contact can ease such concerns and expand the pool of candidates.

## **Review of Applications**

### **6. Receipt of Resumes**

Applications and resumes should be sent directly to Community Paradigm Associates in order to maintain confidentiality of each inquiry and application. This will insure the greatest number of qualified candidates. Any resumes sent to the Town, the Screening Committee or the Select Board should be forwarded to the consultant. All resumes need to be acknowledged by the consultant. All resumes will be made available by the consultant to the Select Board as required by law.

### **7. 1<sup>st</sup> Review of Resumes**

All resumes to determine which meet the Town's criteria as set forth in the Charter and the parameters voted by the Select Board. Those that do not meet minimum criteria will be screened out from direct referral to the Screening Committee but will be made available upon request.

### **8. 2<sup>nd</sup> Review of Resumes and Assessment**

The consultant summarizing each applicant's experience, education and other notable information, will prepare a confidential assessment of the remaining qualified candidates. This information will be reviewed with the Screening Committee on a confidential basis, as will advisement by the consultant as to which candidates are the most qualified. These reviews will occur in executive session and with the advice of the consultant the Screening Committee will choose which candidates to be interviewed in executive session. It is recommended that the Screening Committee personally interview 7-9 candidates. Interviews would be expected to last 75-90 minutes.

## **Initial Interviews**

### **9. Screening Committee Interviews**

The consultant will assist the Screening Committee with the interview process including the notification to candidates and scheduling of interviews, assisting the Committee with the interviews including possible questions, methods of interviews and evaluating responses, etc.)

The Committee should only interview candidates once as second interviews are generally required to occur in public session; and public interviews of candidates prior to being named a finalist could have a chilling effect upon applicants/candidates.



## **10. Selection of Finalists**

At the completion of the initial interviews the Committee will need to determine which 3-5 candidates should be forwarded to the Select Board as finalists. These finalists should NOT be ranked in any way as it can bias the process. Instead, a short description of the candidate can be prepared to accompany the finalists' resumes.

## **11. Reference and Background Review**

The consultant will obtain written authorization from each of the finalists acknowledging a desire to continue through the process and allowing for the consultant contacting the finalists' provided professional references and other conducting an expanded background review. This process protects the finalists' confidentiality and the Town and its Screening Committee and Select Board from any charge of violation of privacy.

## **12. Referral of Finalists**

Upon completion of the Reference and Background review the consultant will meet again for final referral of finalist names to the Select Board. This step will allow for any modification to the chosen finalists if notable information is gathered the background review. The Committee will take the final votes and publicly announce the finalists.

## **Select Board**

### **13. Select Board Interviews**

The consultant will assist the Select Board with the interview process including preparation, scheduling of interviews, etc. The Board may choose to conduct two interviews, a preliminary introduction and review of credentials and experience; and then after an optional meeting with members of the community and staff. (See #14). The second interview with all finalists or a winnowed number of finalists could focus upon thoughts and ideas regarding Amherst and management style.

### **14. Community and Staff Meetings (Optional)**

See #13. One beneficial approach to understand the finalists' knowledge of municipal government and approach to managing the Town is to arrange for visits by the candidates with key staff and Town officials, and several members of the community. This step will provide the candidates with a better sense of Amherst, the municipal organization, and the short and long-term issues facing the Town. This optional step would form the basis of discussion in any second interviews.

### **15. Selection**

At the conclusion of Selectmen interviews the Board will need to make a decision regarding the choice of the next Amherst Town Manager. It is recommended that the vote occur at a separate meeting several days after the conclusion of interviews. The consultant will help with organizing the process of making that decision. Any vote to offer the position of Town Manager to an individual should be "conditioned" upon the successful negotiation of a contract and any additional background checks

deemed necessary. It is worth noting that Selectman may receive anonymous and often negative information once finalists' names are released. Often times the information is biased and unfounded. Selectmen should not take this information at face value. The consultant can assist with separating truth from fiction.

#### **16. Contract Negotiation**

The Select Board can handle the process of negotiating a contract directly or through the use of Town Counsel. The consultant is available to assist with this process and can provide some valuable guidance in reaching a mutually beneficial agreement. It is strongly recommended that Town Counsel review a contract before execution. This should be done for the initial agreement and any future agreements in which language is modified.

### **III. Consulting Fee**

The fee associated with these services is \$11,000.00 with \$4,000.00 payable at the conclusion of Preparation, \$3,500.00 payable at the conclusion of Initial Interviews and the Referral of Finalists, and \$3,500.00 payable at the execution of a contract with the new Town Manager.

The fee does not include expenses related to the search (advertisements, printing, miscellaneous, etc.), which will be paid directly by the Town or as reimbursement to the consultant with appropriate documentation.

Community Paradigm Associates commits to repeat the entire recruitment process without fee should a candidate recommended by the consultant and appointed by the Select Board fail to remain as Town Manager for twelve months. Only expenses would be invoiced in a second recruitment required under these circumstances.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal for recruiting services associated with the position of Amherst Town Manager. I would be happy to respond to any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Bernard Lynch  
Principal

**Community Paradigm Associates, LLC**

Attachment: Anticipated Process Timeline



