

**Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 10, 2019**  
**Marblehead High School**

**Members Present:** Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Jennifer Schaeffner,  
David Harris, Sarah Fox

**Also:** William H. McAlduff Jr., Interim Superintendent

**Members Absent:**

**I. Public Meeting**

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 7:17pm and confirmed with the school committee that the group was prepared to invite the first consultant firm into the meeting. Four consultant firms were invited to be interviewed for the Marblehead Superintendent Search. Each firm was provided thirty minutes (30) for their presentations including a series of questions and answers to follow the individual interviews. The four consultant firms that were in attendance for the interview night were:

- a) New England School Development Council-NESDEC
- b) Edward J. Collins Center for Public Management
- c) Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates-HYA
- d) Massachusetts Association of School Committees-MASC

**II. Interviews of Consultant Groups for the Marblehead Public Schools Superintendent Search**

**a) New England School Development Council-NESDEC**

NESDEC was the first consultant firm to be interviewed. The interview began at 7:18pm. Ms. Gold introduced representatives from NESDEC, Director, Mr. Art Bettencourt and Senior Consultant of ten (10) years, Ms. Carolyn Burke to the school committee and thanked them for coming. Ms. Gold explained the time frame allotted and that there would be time nearing the end of their presentation for questions and answers.

Mr. Bettencourt and Ms. Burke gave a brief history of NESDEC. They shared that NESDEC started in 1982 and that the company headquarters are located in Marlboro, MA. They stated that their mission is to “maintain a high-performance status for schools.” It was noted that NESDEC has completed over 600 successful candidate searches to date currently averaging about 10-20 searches a year.

Ms. Fox inquired about the renewal of the superintendent contracts to which both Mr. Bettencourt and Ms. Burke agreed that a majority of the contracts are renewed due to the up-front work with matching the proper candidate to the appropriate district. Ms. Burke shared the importance of customer service which she mentioned does not come across during the proposal process and noted NESDEC’s availability throughout the search.

A series of questions and answers regarding public vs. private recruiting, the process of narrowing applicant pools and the involvement of screening candidates was all discussed. Mr. Bettencourt noted that Marblehead would be an attractive search for qualified applicants due to the districts academic scores, the building of a new elementary school and having the support of the Marblehead community.

#### **b) Edward J. Collins Center for Public Management**

The Collins Center was the second consultant firm to be interviewed. Their interview began at 7:52pm. Ms. Gold introduced representative, John Brackett from the Collins Center to the school committee and mentioned that she was sorry to hear their lead contact, Ms. Anne Wilson was unable to attend due to family matters. Ms. Gold thanked John for attending and sent her best to Ms. Wilson. Ms. Gold explained the time frame allotted and that there would be time nearing the end of the presentation for questions and answers.

Mr. Brackett began the interview thanking the school committee for their understanding of Ms. Wilson's absence and stated how unfortunate it was that she could not be present. Mr. Brackett shared that both himself and Ms. Wilson have many years of experience in Massachusetts not only as consultants but as previous Superintendents as well. Mr. Brackett mentioned his familiarity with the search process from both sides and how he understands the importance of confidentiality along with the pressure that coincides with the search. Mr. Brackett stressed, "the goal of the Collins Center is for both the candidates and the school committee members to feel informed, prepared and comfortable during the search process."

Mr. Brackett shared that the Collins Center is made up of small teams that commit to few superintendents searches a year. He stated that the Collins Center intentionally focuses on fewer searches a year to be able to provide the extra support and attention that the searches require. He also noted that the Collins Center began a Superintendents Induction Program last year which provides coaching and mentoring for new superintendents.

A series of questions and answers regarding how focus groups are run, what the Collins Center online surveys look like and how risk is reduced by bringing forward qualified candidates was discussed.

#### **c) Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates-HYA**

HYA was the third consultant firm to be interviewed. The interview began at 8:27pm. Ms. Gold introduced representatives from HYA, Jim Jolicouer and Don Macrino to the school committee and thanked them for coming. Ms. Gold explained the time frame allotted and that there would be time nearing the end of their interview for questions and answers.

Mr. Jolicouer and Macrino started the HYA interview with a PowerPoint presentation mapping out the Superintendent Search Process HYA provides. It was noted that Mr. Jolicouer has been a former Superintendent in Leominster, MA with primarily a financial background. Mr. Macrino shared that his background has consisted of teaching, school administration and consulting. During the beginning of the PowerPoint, it was mentioned that the Lighthouse Mosaic displayed in front of the Village School was symbolic to the current search for a permanent superintendent in that it represented a compass guiding a future qualified candidate to the direction of the beautiful community of Marblehead.

It was mentioned that HYA has taken part in many MA and CT superintendent searches within the last few years. It was explained that the search process would begin with a planning meeting in which a school liaison would be established for future communication. The school committee would then establish their use of the HYA online portal system which provides up to date information daily. Mr. Jolicouer and Mr. Macrino mentioned the option of virtual conferences to accommodate busy schedules.

The types of focus groups that would help develop a leadership profile of the next superintendent was referenced and a series of questions and answers regarding working with screening committees, the interviewing approach and performing thorough background checks was all discussed.

#### **d) Massachusetts Association of School Committees-MASC**

MASC was the final consultant firm to be interviewed. The interview began at 9:00pm. Ms. Gold introduced representatives from MASC, Executive Director, Mr. Glenn Koocher and Ms. Dorothy Presser to the school committee and thanked them for coming. Ms. Gold explained the time frame allotted and that there would be time nearing the end of their interview for questions and answers.

Mr. Koocher stated that MASC conducts Superintendents searches solely in Massachusetts and that he has been part of sixty (60) candidate searches to date with MASC. Ms. Presser shared that she has been consulting for the last five years in central and suburban Massachusetts in regions similar to the town of Marblehead.

Mr. Koocher explained that the search process would consist of focus groups, online surveys, pre-screenings and pare down lists. He also mentioned the availability of workshops for new superintendents to ensure success in their new role. It was also mentioned that MASC already has a familiarity with Marblehead due to their involvement with prior searches within district.

Mr. Harris inquired what the makeup of one of MASC's last screening committee was. Mr. Koocher and Ms. Presser shared that it consisted of about 11-13 individuals-3 school committee members, faculty, central office administration, parents, community members and a police chief. It was stated that each district is unique and that no focus group will be the same.

Ms. Taylor asked how the success of screening committees is ensured. Ms. Presser responded by explaining that orientation meetings are scheduled and confidentiality agreements signed and stated that there is always administrative support available to screening committees.

Ms. Schaeffner asked what the attractiveness of our Marblehead district was. Mr. Koocher replied that it is well known for its high academic performance with a good reputation in a great community.

Ms. Gold thanked MASC for coming and mentioned the conclusions of the interviews for the evening.

### **III. Closing Business**

#### **a) New Business**

At the conclusion of the interviews at 9:30pm Ms. Gold motioned to discuss voting to affirm the amendments to building contracts for Left Field and RDA. After a short group discussion, it was unanimously agreed that a meeting would instead be held on Friday, September 13, 2019 to affirm the contract amendments so that more time could be provided to review the amendment documents.

#### **b) Correspondence**

#### **c) Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah Fox, Secretary  
Marblehead School Committee

*Meeting Documents:  
NESDEC Interview Materials  
Collins Center Interview Materials  
HYA Interview Materials  
MASC Interview Materials*

*Approved 10/22/2019*