

**Board of Selectmen's Meeting
December 11, 2017 -- 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall, Town Hall
155 Village Street**

Present: Maryjane White, Chair; Richard D'Innocenzo, Vice Chair; Dennis Crowley, Clerk; Glenn Trindade; Member; John Foresto, Member.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Administrator; Allison Potter, Assistant Town Administrator.

Others Present: Armand Pires, Superintendent; Ellen Quinn, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent; School Committee: Diana Borgatti-Chair, Susan Dietrich, Ahn Le, Jeff Segarra.

At 7:00 PM Selectman White called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Joint Interviews of Applicants for School Committee Vacancy with School Committee

The Board reviewed the letters of interest and resumes for the following applicants; (1) Katie Brown, (2) Carla Cataldo, (3) Rondi Chapman, (4) Amanda DelConte, (5) Jane Harris and (6) Cynthia Sullivan

Selectman White requested the Selectmen's opinion on not broadcasting tonight's meeting. Selectman Foresto stated he would like to see the meeting broadcasted for the following reasons: (1) It is a public meeting, (2) residents are expecting it to be live broadcast and (3) the Selectmen have received negative feedback in the past regarding not broadcasting meetings. Selectmen Trindade and Crowley were in agreement on the live broadcasting and sequestering of candidates.

Chair Borgatti stated that since all candidates were not available for sequestering, there would be no guarantee of those not present having an unfair advantage of watching/listening to questions ahead of their scheduled interview time. It was noted that one of the six candidates is not in attendance.

The Board of Selectmen requested to broadcast the meeting live and asked the candidates present if they had any objections. All the candidates present did not have any objection to the live broadcast.

Selectman White thanked each candidate for their interest noting the importance of the position. She stated this would be filling the vacancy through May as the position would then be placed on the ballot for the May Town Election. Selectman White explained the interview process to each candidate as they were called up to be interviewed including: (1) the interview time allotment of 20 minutes for each therefore requesting concise responses, (2) each candidate will be asked the same four questions by Ms. Borgatti and (3) if time allows, the Board may ask follow-up questions of each candidate.

Carla Cataldo:

Ms. Cataldo explained her background. She has been a Medway resident since 1995. She is self-employed as a professional development consultant, assisting non-profits with grant funding. She has worked in politics in various forms including the Federal, State and Municipal governments.

She became involved in the Fin Com immediately once she became a Medway resident. She has two children. Her 23 year old was a graduate of the Medway High School Class of 2012. Her 20 year old is currently receiving special education services in the district.

What interests you the most about being on the School Committee, and, whether you are appointed or not, would you run for election in May?

Ms. Cataldo stated she has run for the School Committee in the past, has children in school system and has been involved for over 18 years in the schools including SEPAC. She stated she is not sure if would run again in May if not appointed.

Selectman White asked if she would run in May if appointed and Ms. Cataldo stated yes. Mr. Segarra asked for clarification if Ms. Cataldo would run in May if she was not appointed. Ms. Cataldo stated she had not thought about that option.

What do you feel the commitment for a school committee member is, and what involvement have you had with the Town or Medway Schools that has prepared you for this position?

Ms. Cataldo stated that being a parent of a special needs child, she needed to become an expert in Special Education and insurance and had to learn from the ground up. She has a lot of experience with classroom teachers, counselors, testing requirements and is familiar with the staff with two children in the school system. She understands the commitment since she is involved with other Town committees noting the when appointed to the Cultural Council, it was a five member board. Over time the committee was down to one and she was instrumental in rebuilding the membership.

Selectman Trindade asked specific to the School Committee, what she thinks the time commitment would be to do as she would want. Ms. Cataldo stated to be effective, you need to be involved with a lot of people and have a sense of what is involved. Selectman Trindade then asked about ideas on improving communication and involvement with parents and the school committee. Ms. Cataldo stated it is important to appeal to the parents when they note interest as there are many committees to get them involved in. She attended the elementary PTO meeting to understand their issues and works from home so is readily available.

Selectman Crowley asked for Ms. Cataldo's opinion on full time kindergarten. She stated there are multiple issues to be addressed including full time kindergarten, recess, etc. and decisions should be evidence based. She agrees full time kindergarten is beneficial to all students especially those with special needs.

What do you see as the current challenges and opportunities for the Medway Public Schools?

Ms. Cataldo stated there are a lot of wonderful opportunities and committed people noting the new high school is a gem. She would like to work on taking advantage of resources in the area, i.e. local colleges and be proactive to bring those resources into the district, noting some of these are her clients. She then discussed the challenges including (1) MCAS scoring disparities with low income and special education students who need more attention and resources than are currently provided and (2) New growth in town resulting in increased enrollments requiring sufficient plans in place to manage the influx. She said the school's strategic plan is a wonderful roadmap and noted the budget reflects the school department's plan and fiscal priorities. The strategic plan would drive what she would like to do.

A big part of your role on the School Committee is analyzing a lot of information and coming to an agreement for the benefit of the schools overall. Tell us about a time when you were part of a group that had a difference of opinion but you still needed to work together. What was the issue/disagreement, what actions did you take to resolve the issue and what was the outcome?

Ms. Cataldo stated when she was a member of the Finance Committee (Fin Com) their discussions on resources was at a time when there were no reserves and the town did not have a good handle on their finances. Therefore, trying to get anything done was a challenge, especially with budget numbers they couldn't trust. However, they were successful in getting improvements over time including the new roof and boiler at the Burke school. She needed to build consensus first on Fin Com, then with the Selectmen and finally at Town Meeting to fund this project as a debt override was required. She was the Liaison to the School Committee while on Fin Com.

The group asked for any final comments. Ms. Cataldo stated she would be humbled and honored to accept Rich Eustis's seat. She looked at his committee assignments and is comfortable as the liaison with those committees. She cited her expertise and experience being a volunteer in Medway and experience with the strategic plan.

Jane Harris:

Ms. Harris reviewed her background as a 15 year resident of Medway with 4 children, three who started in the school system from pre-kindergarten and continued to and through high school. Her 4th child is a five year old. She is very invested in the town and schools and does a lot of teaching as a Nursing Manager at Metro West Medical Center.

What interests you the most about being on the School Committee, and, whether you are appointed or not, would you run for election in May?

Ms. Harris stated what interests her most is ensuring the success of all children stating she would run in May whether appointed or not. She has been attending school committee meetings.

What do you feel the commitment for a school committee member is, and what involvement have you had with the Town or Medway Schools that has prepared you for this position?

Ms. Harris stated the importance of collaboration with other board members and to have goals and evaluate committee goals. She has seen an evolution with her involvement in the schools with her four children and feels she can offer new perspectives to new issues. She cited her familiarity with budgetary constraints from her administrative role at the medical center. She is an excellent problem solver and looks outside of the box for effective solutions. She noted accessing community volunteer resources in as a focus for her. She noted high school students are overwhelmed with the college process and would like to develop a pathway beginning in Middle School of community volunteers and role models they could shadow.

Mr. Segarra asked what she thought the time requirement would be. Ms. Harris stated she did not think you can place a time limit on the commitment and would be willing to put in the time necessary to get done what needs to happen to help the students to achieve.

What do you see as the current challenges and opportunities for the Medway Public Schools?

Ms. Harris stated the challenges included budgetary constraints and would like to see Math and Science expansion starting in pre-kindergarten. She noted this leads to reasoning and logical thinking. She noted a wealth of opportunities with the need to look outside of the box utilizing our Town resources, i.e., shadowing. Another challenge is to look at ways to provide better education to special needs children with one option of starting a parent volunteer program noting high school students are also looking for volunteer opportunities.

A big part of your role on the School Committee is analyzing a lot of information and coming to an agreement for the benefit of the schools overall. Tell us about a time when you were part of a group that had a difference of opinion but you still needed to work together. What was the issue/disagreement, what actions did you take to resolve the issue and what was the outcome?

Ms. Harris stated she had a problem identifying one specific issue noting her need to collaborate a lot in her position at the medical center. She cited an example of two patients both needing the OR but only one OR team available and the action steps she took to resolve that issue.

Selectman Crowley asked for this candidate's opinion on full time kindergarten. Ms. Harris stated full-time kindergarten is beneficial noting the need to start high quality math programs at young age based on research. Kindergarten is a basic foundation and questioned if those children in half day are receiving the same benefits as those in full day kindergarten. She has heard from many parents that first graders are struggling.

Selectman Trindade asked the same question as previously noted above. Ms. Harris stated it is very important for parents to be involved in the process and was astonished with lack of participation in the School Committee meetings. She stated the need to increase publicizing that these meetings are available live and on-line with one option of sending this information home with students. She noted the need to search to find this information on line and suggested making this easier to locate on the schools web site. Current e-mails from the schools are outstanding but could include the schedule and agenda of these meetings.

The group asked for any final comments. Ms. Harris stated she looks forward to collaborating and working with the team.

Amanda DelConte:

Ms. DelConte reviewed her background including her move to Medway six months ago specifically for the schools. She lived in Milton previously for 11 years. She has twin 4 year olds and is invested in being a part of the system where goals are achieved and executed in the best manner. She also wants to make sure we are doing what is best for children from a policy perspective.

What interests you the most about being on the School Committee, and, whether you are appointed or not, would you run for election in May?

Ms. DelConte stated she is most interested in looking at policies and the budget from a structural versus emotional side. She stated she would more than likely run in May if she was not appointed. She stated her sincerity in being invested in the schools and would like to get involved now that she has the opportunity and can adjust her schedule to the time requirements.

What do you feel the commitment for a school committee member is, and what involvement have you had with the Town or Medway Schools that has prepared you for this position?

Ms. DelConte stated this is a big responsibility requiring a lot of time, research, and doing your own due diligence. She does not take it lightly that it will be time consuming. She has had no prior involvement with the Town and Schools and therefore has no preexisting bias and the ability to see things as they truly are.

What do you see as the current challenges and opportunities for the Medway Public Schools?

Ms. DelConte stated she understands there are several vacancies that need to be addressed and that full day kindergarten has been approved. She stated she does not have information regarding the challenges without having children in the system but would like to be more informed.

A big part of your role on the School Committee is analyzing a lot of information and coming to an agreement for the benefit of the schools overall. Tell us about a time when you were part of a group that had a difference of opinion but you still needed to work together. What was the issue/disagreement, what actions did you take to resolve the issue and what was the outcome?

Ms. DelConte cited her work in a financial consulting firm that is currently moving its focus. She is constantly looking at how one firm and background worked looking for similarities and articulating what works best. She noted daily occurrences of differing opinions working in a small firm with no ability to hide citing the need for open dialog. Nothing is personal and noted the need to have conversations regarding efficiency improvements and addressing issues that arise.

Selectman Crowley asked for this candidate's opinion on full time kindergarten. Ms. DelConte state she thinks it is positive. There are a lot of expenses in pre-kindergarten and her children will have three years of pre-kindergarten and therefore don't need part time kindergarten.

Selectman Trindade asked the same question as previously noted above. Ms. DelConte stated because the schools take up some of the budget, the community should have a voice. This includes looking at current programs and if interest and demand is there, then the budget should be reassessed. The budget should be reassessed every five years regarding community interest.

The group asked for any final comments. Ms. DelConte asked the group if they are open to considering someone who has lived in Medway for only 6 months. She wants to provide a fresh perspective with no biases from past experience.

Katie Brown:

Ms. Brown reviewed her background. She has been a Medway resident for almost fifteen years. She attended Notre Dame with the goal to work with the Department of Defense then decided her senior year that her passion was education. She holds a Master's degree in special education and works with out of district placements. She worked for Town of Medway for four years and is currently working in the Natick schools. She has a daughter with a disability so knows how to be on both sides of table and is very involved in the school. As the transition coordinator, her role is a blend of guidance counselor and social worker as she helps plan for post-secondary placements working with many state agencies. Her

adjunct profession role involves teaching assessment of transitions skills and how to imbed these within the Individual Education Plan.

What interests you the most about being on the School Committee, and, whether you are appointed or not, would you run for election in May?

Ms. Brown stated it is in her blood to be on the school committee. Her father was president of the School Board for many years and her husband has been on the Town's Fin Com. She would like to be on the other side of how decisions are made having a unique perspective as an educator and parent. She brings her skills of data analysis and program evaluation along with her knowledge of state mandates for education. She stated she could not say if she would run in May if appointed without the experience to actually understand the necessary commitment.

What do you feel the commitment for a school committee member is, and what involvement have you had with the Town or Medway Schools that has prepared you for this position?

Ms. Brown stated until you are in it, it is hard to know the actual commitment. She expects a large time commitment along with outside preparation with budget planning in the coming months. She is the type of person to take on a lot. She was a member of the Medway Foundation for Education (MFE) for eleven years specifically involved in fund raising and grant funding. She has taught CCD for ten years and runs the Lego club in at the Memorial and McGovern schools which was a good fund raiser for the MFE.

What do you see as the current challenges and opportunities for the Medway Public Schools?

Ms. Brown stated the opportunities include the strategic plan starting in 2016 as setting a path to success. She noted the need for a systematic approach with the need to be strategic with the mission, goals, and plans, as these need to adjust with state mandates. She noted the challenges include drawing and maintaining good teachers and needing to maintain consistency in administration. She noted having a strategic plan that included teacher support as crucial.

A big part of your role on the School Committee is analyzing a lot of information and coming to an agreement for the benefit of the schools overall. Tell us about a time when you were part of a group that had a difference of opinion but you still needed to work together. What was the issue/disagreement, what actions did you take to resolve the issue and what was the outcome?

Ms. Brown is currently a member of a committee tasked with developing a list of six qualities a high school graduate must have. The committee is comprised of students, parents, the school principal and teachers. It has been very challenging to decide on these and come to group consensus. Her view is different from everyone else at the table so you need to listen and ask questions of the others. Content mastery is not on the list as it is assumed that is a given, so qualities under consideration include cooperation, collaboration, etc. She understands the need for compromise knowing that all are working toward what is best for the students.

Selectman Crowley asked for this candidate's opinion on full time kindergarten. Ms. Brown stated as a parent, she would have loved it. It is important for the special education students and those who require it already do receive it. The State needs to have a mandate that kindergarten is important and with that mandate should come funding and clearly thought through curricula.

Selectman Trindade asked the same question as previously noted above. Ms. Brown stated that her role and career has been getting parents involved in the process. She noted parents' knowledge is not always there while also acknowledging that their opinions matter. She holds parent events five times per year to assist them in understanding their role to ensure their child's progress. What and how you can partner at home with parents and that it goes both ways is important. She feels the committees, MFE, PTO, etc. have been open and encouraged parent involvement and that mutual respect and trust are needed to have that involvement.

The group asked for any final comments. Ms. Brown noted that her adjunct professor role is in the fall only and close to ending so she would be available for this time commitment.

Rondi Chapman:

Ms. Chapman reviewed her background. She has lived in Medway for thirteen years and was a member of Fin Com six years ago and on the CIPC prior to the Fin Com. She has two children in the school system. She has a finance and accounting background.

What interests you the most about being on the School Committee, and, whether you are appointed or not, would you run for election in May?

Ms. Chapman cited her interest noting with her finance background and the limited resources available, she can add value with the current budgeting and planning needed. This is also what she likes to do. She is not sure if she will run in May, stating she would spend the five months left in this position to decide where she could be of most value for the town.

What do you feel the commitment for a school committee member is, and what involvement have you had with the Town or Medway Schools that has prepared you for this position?

Ms. Chapman stated she has a kindergartener and a second grader which was the biggest push for her to becoming involved. They have added to their home in town and plan to stay here. She is aware the time committee is significant during the February to March budgeting season up to the time of May Town Meeting. She stated her experience on the Fin Com for two years and the CIPC for one and one-half years prior followed the time of budgetary issues with no cash flow to do capital planning has prepared her for this role.

What do you see as the current challenges and opportunities for the Medway Public Schools?

Ms. Chapman stated the challenges are not specific to Medway as all are trying to do more with limited resources and do the best for students while still be governed by Prop 2 ½. She noted the opportunities include already having a great school system and the need to stay there. We have a lot of good people in place and need to give them the resources they need to continue to do the great job they are doing.

A big part of your role on the School Committee is analyzing a lot of information and coming to an agreement for the benefit of the schools overall. Tell us about a time when you were part of a group that had a difference of opinion but you still needed to work together. What was the issue/disagreement, what actions did you take to resolve the issue and what was the outcome?

Ms. Chapman stated in her prior job, she was randomly put in charge of freight with many groups involved with differences in opinion. She needed to bring the members of each group together to air their issues and work together as to what would solve the identified issues.

Selectman Crowley asked for this candidate's opinion on full time kindergarten. Ms. Chapman stated the data speaks for itself. We are down to six part-time kindergarten students. It is clear residents see the value noting the School Committee has echoed same indicating that neighboring towns have gone to full time kindergarten. The issue is now down to finding the funds and weaning off the revenue stream.

Selectman Trindade asked the same question as previously noted above. Ms. Chapman stated any parent involvement is helpful and the importance of encouraging their participation in meetings. She suggested networking to inform parents that even small issues are worthwhile.

The group asked for any final comments. She stated she had no final comments but since most of the Board are still here when she was on the Fin Com she thanked the Board for their service.

Cynthia Sullivan:

Ms. Brown reviewed her background. She has been a Medway resident for ten years, six of which she served as member of the School Committee. She has a finance and accounting background. She cited that she did not seek re-election when her last term ended due to personal reasons but sought out a candidate to run who she felt was qualified.

What interests you the most about being on the School Committee, and, whether you are appointed or not, would you run for election in May?

Ms. Sullivan stated she would run for election in May and would not be here if she was not interested in running in May. She noted her past service on the committee so understands the role and the need during this budget season. She can step in and function without needing to get up to speed. She believes in education and likes to use her skills to foster positive learning and high academic achievement.

What do you feel the commitment for a school committee member is, and what involvement have you had with the Town or Medway Schools that has prepared you for this position?

Ms. Sullivan is very aware of the commitment based on her past service. She understands the need to foster relationships with other town boards including the Selectmen, Fin Com and to participate in other committees. She has served on the Recess Taskforce Committee that started in May and is wrapping up their final recommendations.

What do you see as the current challenges and opportunities for the Medway Public Schools?

Ms. Sullivan stated the challenges include fostering a positive learning environment and culture. She noted that in August of 2016, while participating in the leadership dinners and discussing what out of the five goals of the strategic plan are most important, this was one goal that she sees as still a need to be addressed. Without a positive environment, it is difficult to foster a positive learning/teaching environment. She sees as opportunities, the ability to reach out to other stakeholders noting there is a

lot of dissatisfaction related to transparency and would like to help to effect change to that. She helped to start the Superintendent chats with community members and believes there are other opportunities for implementation of similar programs.

A big part of your role on the School Committee is analyzing a lot of information and coming to an agreement for the benefit of the schools overall. Tell us about a time when you were part of a group that had a difference of opinion but you still needed to work together. What was the issue/disagreement, what actions did you take to resolve the issue and what was the outcome?

Ms. Sullivan works for a church on their financial and accounting systems where this is a lot of conflict. Many of the groups had been managing their accounts at home and there were not a lot of internal controls. Once a group had its own bank account, they are very adamant not to bring it into the mainstream. She has set up accounting processes and has had to implement outreach with one specific committee member to bring confidence and trust in the processes she has implemented.

Selectman Crowley asked for this candidate's opinion on full time kindergarten. Ms. Sullivan stated that we should absolutely have tuition free full time kindergarten. It is no longer a choice but a need. She understands that the half day students are mixed in with full day students noting the inequity for both groups not getting the same opportunity. She believes the challenge will be to find finances to implement and sustain this year after year.

Selectman Trindade asked the same question as previously noted above. Ms. Sullivan stated communication and involvement with parents and the school committee is very important. Looking at Massachusetts General Law, the Attorney General cites the more public participation the better. Fostering parent communication and involvement is needed including looking at the public participation policy and the frustration that parents are unable to generate dialog. She would like to see it adjusted and to work to find ways to make that happen.

The group asked for any final comments. Ms. Sullivan stated she is aware that her level of commitment has been questioned. She is here to assure everyone that she would be ready to go day one and would run again in May for the open position. She has historically had a high level of commitment on this committee even though she was not most vocal but worked behind the scenes to work with stakeholders and would work with the same level of commitment as in the past.

Selectman White stated the group will meet at 7:15pm this Thursday to vote to fill the vacancy. Selectman Crowley asked the School Committee what the total the number of open seats will be in the May election. There will be two open seats; one for three years and one for one year. Selectman Foresto noted there were six great candidates with only one available position.

At 8:44 PM Selectman Trindade move to adjourn; Selectman Foresto seconded. No discussion. Vote: 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Langley
Administrative Assistant
Town Administrator's Office