



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

December 12, 2016

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager *GT*

SUBJECT: Discussion/consideration of report on the selection process for hiring the next Planning and Building Services Director

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss/consider report on the selection process for hiring the next Planning and Building Services Director, appoint Council subcommittee, and direct staff as appropriate.

DISCUSSION

At its November meeting, the Council received public comments regarding the selection process for the next Planning and Building Director. In response, this report focuses on the selection process for the next Planning and Building Services Director, including ways for the community to participate in the process. Typically, a community would be asked to provide input on the desired skills and characteristics of the next director. However, in this instance, it appears the community would like a more active role.

Towards that goal, staff suggests the Council appoint one or two community members to participate in the process. One approach would be for the Council to accept applications from the community with a qualifying requirement such as being a resident or business owner and, perhaps, a requirement that the applicant submit 3 letters of support. At its January or February meeting, the Council would randomly draw two names from the pool of applicants to participate. This would avoid the process of the Council having to interview each applicant.

The selected community members would participate in the selection process along with the Council subcommittee. Councilmembers Coler and Goddard have expressed interest in being appointed to this subcommittee.

With regard to the recruitment process, staff would screen applications for minimal qualifications to narrow the pool to 7 to 10 of the most qualified candidates. These candidates would be invited to be interviewed by a Professional Panel and the Council/Community Panel. The Professional Panel would consist of 3 to 4 professionals very familiar with planning and building such as a Planning Director, Planning Commissioner, and/or other City Manager. The Council/Community Panel may also have a member from an organization such as the Chamber of Commerce. It should be noted that the Town Manager does not participate on either interview panel.

The Professional Panel would ask technical questions about the work of the director. The Council/Community Panel would ask questions that focused on community fit and personality. The panelists would be required to commit to conduct the interviews all on one day. At the end of day, the panels would be debriefed together by the Town Manager. From that joint discussion, a list of who should advance to the next stage of the process would be developed. Hopefully, that list would be narrowed down to the top 3-4 candidates.

The Town Manager would interview the top candidates who would also meet with Town staff. The Manager's appointment would be brought to the Council for ratification per Town Code.

In terms of schedule, staff envisions job applications being due in mid- to late January with interviews in early to mid-February.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time