

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD
Meeting of Wednesday, August, 24, 2022
Ipswich Town Hall | 25 Green Street

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Wednesday, August 24, 2022, at 6:00 PM in Meeting Room A.

Board Members present: William Whitmore, Chair; Sarah Player, Vice Chair; Linda Alexson; Dr. Tammy Jones; Kerry Mackin

Also present: Bernard Lynch, Community Paradigm Associates and Ashley Boudreau, Recording Secretary.

General Overview:

Bernard Lynch, of Community Paradigm Associates and the Town Manager Screening Committee interviewed and selected the following 3 finalists to be interviewed by the Select Board:

1. William Scott (Select Board interview completed on 08/23/2022)
2. Joseph Domelowicz (Select Board interview completed on 08/23/2022)
- 3. Stephen Crane**

Following the final interview, discussion for the Select Board's decision will be made at the next meeting on Monday, 08/29/2022.

Reminder: Feedback survey (available in person or online at ipswich.ma.gov) deadline is Thursday 08/25/2022 at 11:00 pm.

Town Manager Finalist, Stephen Crane, Select Board Interview

Mr. Whitmore begins with asking if Mr. Crane can share why he is the best fit for the town manager position for Ipswich?

Mr. Crane has not managed a coastal community prior, but has great interest and love for Ipswich. Ipswich presents new challenges and opportunities for growth in his career. Climate change is important to him. He also has experience with ELD.

Ms. Mackin questions the issue of coastal resilience/climate change? What are important steps to take to address this issue?

Mr. Crane states that day to day operations, updates to buildings, and being conscious of ways we consume energy.

Ms. Mackin asks if Mr. Crane has considered solar, wind turbines or geothermal heat pumps?

Mr. Crane states that he has past experience with solar.

Ms. Mackin states that the town has 2 current wind turbines and in November 2021, one of the wind turbines failed and needs repair or to be replaced.

Mr. Crane has experience in renewable energy while working in the town of Concord.

Dr. Jones states there are many commercial zones, what are your thoughts on how to best market to bring companies in?

Mr. Crane states he has always been involved in community development. Partnerships and communication are important.

Ms. Player asks on Municipal Light experience, how do you interact with the leadership of that committee?

Mr. Crane shares that Concord has a Municipal Light Plant. The town manager of Concord has the same role as the electric manager and oversees the ELD.

Ms. Alexson asks about the budgeting process and to explain how you would meet and create goals with your department heads?

Mr. Crane replied that a vast majority of the budget is fixed, and the remaining goes to community needs. Regular meetings with department heads to see what priorities are and to meet guidelines.

Ms. Alexson asks during your first few months how would you reach out to all of the community?

Mr. Crane explains that he would be getting out, meeting with regional chambers of commerce, and visiting local businesses.

Ms. Alexson states the town has many Boards and Committees. How would you anticipate getting to know the boards of Ipswich, and advocating for them at the state level for different funding and other programs?

Mr. Crane responds stating that part of the learning process is getting out and seeing how things work, what tools are needed, communicating with staff, and asking questions to see how to best support them.

Ms. Player inquires about conflict management and conflict resolution skills. Asked for an example of how you managed a conflict.

Mr. Crane responded stating that accountability is essential, not allowing the disagreement to escalate, and maintaining open communication.

Ms. Mackin shares that there are differences of opinion throughout the town regarding the town owned Ipswich Mills Dam. Would you be in support of taking steps to remove it?

Mr. Crane would need more information and could not say at this time but would make the best choice for the community.

Mr. Whitmore inquires about community engagement. There are 2 aging elementary schools, and the School Committee is restarting the process. They are hoping to submit it in April. What do you think about building community engagement?

Mr. Crane states that sharing factual and data driven information, educating and open communication.

Dr. Jones asks Mr. Crane to share his experience on collective bargaining. Asks how do you manage unionized departments?

Mr. Crane states he has been the lead negotiator for all of the communities he has worked in. He tries to be fair and reasonable, building relationships, making sure employees know they are valued, flexibility and not taking things personally.

Ms. Player inquires about what experience Mr. Crane has. Asks do you have experience working with neighboring communities for regionalizing?

Mr. Crane states that he assisted in creating regional groups in 2 towns he has previously worked for. There are great incentives and benefits of joining, including saving money, and creating a higher level of service.

Ms. Alexson asks how do you envision working with the select board to develop goals for the coming year, review past goals and monitor them on an ongoing basis? How do you anticipate handling the process?

Mr. Crane believes it helps having a facilitator come in to identify what roles each member has, communicating what is needed to meet those goals.

Mr. Crane asked about the decision process and what characteristics the Board is looking for in their next Town Manager, followed by each board member's response.

Adjourn:

- Vote: Ms. Mackin moved to adjourn, Ms. Alexson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Ashley M. Boudreau on 08/31/2022