

Select Board Work Session Minutes

September 10, 2024, Work Session Meeting

Via Zoom Platform (Hybrid)

Select Board Members Present: Susan Areson-Chair, Robert Weinstein-Vice Chair; Nancy Medoff-Clerk; Stephanie Rein-Member; Susan Girard-Irwin-Member

Select Board Members Absent:

Others Present: Darrin Tangeman-Town Manager; Kelly Clark-Assistant Town Manager

Chair Areson opened the meeting at 1:01 pm and read aloud the information for members of the public to join the meeting. She stated that comments and votes would not be taken during the work session.

QUESTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF EVALUATION PROCESS

Chair Areson stated the Select Board would be discussing the process and timeline for Town Manager Tangeman's evaluation. Town Manager Tangeman had previously shared material with the Select Board members for them to review. Chair Areson polled the board to see what expectations and questions they may have about the process or about the materials and schedule. She also suggested that Town Manager Tangeman review what he had sent for the benefit of the public.

Chair Areson opened up a discussion to the Board Members. Member Rein noted that each Board Member was asked to come prepared with three of the twenty-eight evaluation criteria selected to include in the evaluation and requested of the other Board Members and the Town Manager that they share what areas on which they need to focus for the community. During past evaluations, she noted each Member came with one suggested goal.

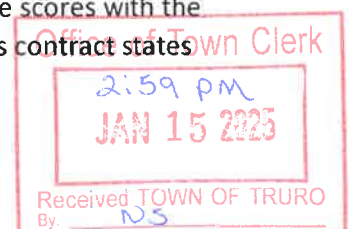
Chair Areson stated that if each Member has three, it may result in too many goals and Member Girard-Irwin noted that these suggested goals may overlap, and their purpose was to come up with criteria that seemed important based on what had been provided by Town Manager Tangeman and their discussion. She stated they would not use the 360 Tool but instead review the ICMA criteria outline in the work plan.

Chair Areson stated and Board Members agreed that the time frame for the evaluation would be between the current date and June 30, 2025. She also suggested that completing the 360 tool be one of the Smart Goals for Town Manager Tangeman to complete. Town Manager Tangeman has given each Board Member copies of two possible companies and suggested they select which they prefer.

Member Rein suggested the purpose was to understand the criteria and Chair Areson stated they were to begin setting goals based on the criteria. It was noted that the Board had not completed this process as a group in prior years and instead each met with the Town Manager individually. Clerk Medoff suggested they begin with five goals and other Board Members agreed.

TOWN MANAGER COMMENTS

Chair Areson allowed Town Manager Tangeman to make comments. Town Manager Tangeman reviewed the process that had been used in previous years as suggested by the Town Counsel. Each Board Member would score him, he would score himself, and he would discuss these scores with the Select Board Chair to receive an overall score and identify areas of improvement. His contract states



that the Select Board identifies his goals and focus areas because each year has different priorities. Town Manager Tangeman suggested focusing on the ICMA Best Practice Evaluation. He stated it may be difficult to address all 28 areas of focus and suggested that the Board develop Smart Goals by refining the focus areas for the coming fiscal year. This would provide clear expectations of what the Town Manager was to accomplish and criteria by which to be evaluated.

Clerk Medoff asked why the Board was not using the prior evaluation forms, to which Town Manager Tangeman responded that the ICMA form is what they would use and he could receive a maximum score of forty-five based on the Smart Goals. They would be using an existing evaluation to frame the conversation and develop goals that were more clear and focused than in previous years. Town Manager Tangeman stated this process would incorporate qualitative and quantitative aspects into his review and enable him to provide updates and identify any issues with achieving the goals with more input from the Select Board.

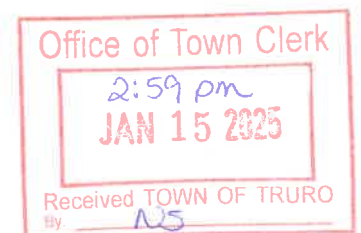
Town Manager Tangeman stated that he hopes this process will improve community engagement. He received comments from the public that recommended the work plan be posted and annual surveys from the community and internal staff be conducted. The Select Board would also have regular opportunities to communicate with staff to give and receive feedback.

Town Manager Tangeman provided each Select Board Member with the 2021 version of the evaluation, the Town Manager job description, two versions of the 360 tool, and a memo from April about how the evaluation process was conducted in the past.

DISCUSSION OF GOAL SETTING AND SCORING PROCESS

Vice Chair Weinstein stated that the information on which he was focused included the job description, the Town Manager's contract, and the town charter. He stated that the evaluation conducted last April was used for contract renewal and was therefore much more limited. Vice Chair Weinstein also noted there is a disconnect between the Board and the community and the community should be able to see the evaluation criteria being used. The town charter states that the Board's role and the Town Manager's job description are to be a guide for the Town Manager and they should therefore be focusing on what the board is after rather than the elaborations of the ICMA. The negative atmosphere in the community could be calmed if the people knew what they were using to judge the Town Manager's performance.

Chair Areson noted that the Board had never conducted a public evaluation and Town Manager Tangeman's suggestions would improve the process. The Board would agree on the criteria and report out publicly. Although the previous process was legal, the lack of a public portion worked against the Select Board and the Town Manager. Member Rein stated that the public process was currently being set up and Member Girard-Irwin noted that the evaluation would not be for a full year. All Select Board members agreed that it would be best to use the old form rather than "reinvent the wheel" and remember they must have measurable goals determined by different buckets and Select Board members would need to explain their scores. Agreement on the criteria would add a level of subjectivity to the process and provide clear expectations. The Board would also discuss their scores and agree on final scores with qualitative explanations.



The Select Board discussed whether it was fair if each Board Member did not determine the same score. Member Girard-Irwin stated that if they set guidelines for what each score indicates and what the highest score showing exceeding expectations would look like, averaging their scores would be fair.

DISCUSSION OF EVALUATION CRITERIA

Chair Areson stated the Board should look at the 28 criteria and narrow it down to about fifteen, with each Member suggesting three focuses for criteria. Clerk Medoff suggested going through all 28 evaluation criteria and deciding which ones to use and which ones to put aside. Town Manager Tangeman informed the Board that the ICMA has defined each element of criteria and that this may help inform their discussion. Each area of critique was reviewed and put into larger categories (“buckets”).

The Select Board discussed what the criteria for integrity meant and agreed it indicated whether the Town Manager has been moral, ethical, and transparent with a strong legal backing for any decisions. Chair Areson stated that she believed it indicated that the Town Manager was making decisions based on assessment of what is best for the community as a whole. Other Members disagreed and questioned how that can be scored objectively with a measurable goal. They agreed to continue their review of the list of 28 criteria categories to see where they could be narrowed down to fewer categories. Chair Areson stated the Board should be evaluating the Town Manager’s ability to help the Select Board achieve their goals and objectives.

EVALUATION CRITERIA CATEGORIES

The Select Board decided on five larger categories under which other criteria would further define and help guide priorities.

1. Team Leadership

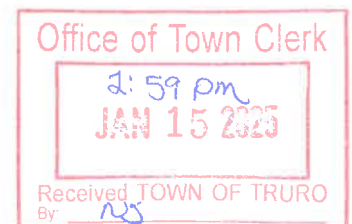
- Coaching and Mentorship
- Empowerment
- Delegation

2. Organizational Planning/Management

- HR Management
- Functional Expertise
- Crisis Management
- Strategic Planning

3. Effective Communication

- Media Relations
- Interpersonal Communication
- Communication with Select Board Members



- Presentation Skills

4. Community

- Citizen Services
- Citizen Engagement
- Community Relationships

5. Financial

- Budgeting
- Financial Analysis

Chair Areson stated the Board should use the above framework to develop Smart Goals, with each Board Member returning with five to review during the next discussion. Each category may have multiple goals and some may have none. All of this would be discussed at a subsequent work session.

Assistant Town Manager Clark informed the Board that she would share the documented list of categories they created with each Member and they would be able to write their goals under the appropriate "bucket". Town Manager Tangeman stated they would decide on what was acceptable for each score (3, 2, 1, or 0).

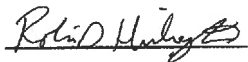
Chair Areson noted it would be helpful for the community to see how the Board collaborated to create a fair assessment of Town Manager Tangeman's performance.

Member Rein made a motion to adjourn at 3:07pm.

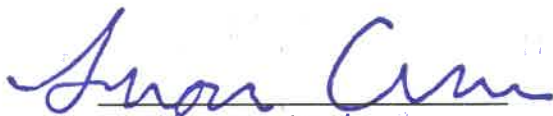
Member Girard-Irwin seconded the motion.

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

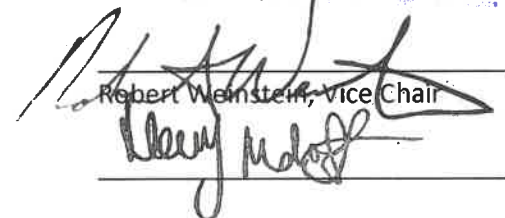
Respectfully submitted,



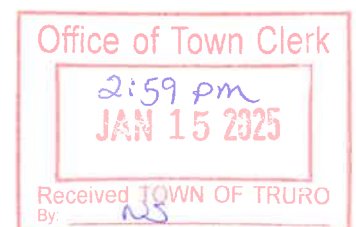
Robin D. Huibregtse
Board Support/CPC Coordinator



Susan Areson, Chair



Robert Weinstein, Vice Chair



Nancy Medoff, Clerk



Stephanie Rein, Member



Susan Girard-Irwin, Member

