

Thursday, November 19, 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held November 19, 2020, by video conference call, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. Present were members Chair John Weldon, Vice Chair Bobbi Brown, Secretary Joseph Lombard, Albert Benejan, Joseph Sokolovic, Jessica Martinez, and Sybil Allen.

The sole agenda item was discussion and possible short list of candidates to be interviewed for the vacancy created by Hernan Illingworth.

Mr. Weldon said the board had received 13 applications and resumes of candidates for the board position. He said discussion relating to their applications may occur in executive session, unless the applicant would require the board to discuss the application in an open meeting. He said all applicants were notified of this.

The full list of candidates were Ileana Cotto, Ra'Shaun Custis, Sosimo Fabian, JoAnn Kennedy, Christine King, Jose Lopez, Tyler Mack, Tavonna McKenzie, Chantel Mendez, Tressa Pankovitis, Ketia Similien, Dasha Spell and Cynthia Torres. Candidates Lopez, Pankovitis and Spell have chosen the option of requiring the board to discuss their applications publicly.

Mr. Weldon said there were many more applications to fill the vacancy than in the past because prior openings were for those of minority parties. He said the board could

interview all the candidates or create a short list of those candidates to be interviewed.

Ms. Allen, Mr. Benejan, and Ms. Brown, said they did not have a preference on the way to proceed. Mr. Lombard, Mr. Sokolovic, and Ms. Martinez said they wanted to interview all the candidates.

Mr. Weldon said the candidates were notified they should be available for an interview on November 23rd. He suggested the interviews be held from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on that day, and that candidates be interviewed in a forum format, like that used by the League of Women Voters for political candidates. He said the board should come up with four questions to ask each of the thirteen. He said board members should e-mail proposed questions to Ms. Valle, which will be compiled and distributed to all board members.

Board members indicated their agreement with the proposal.

Mr. Weldon said according to the board's bylaws the vote to select a candidate has to take place during a Regular Meeting, which will follow that evening at 6:30 p.m.

In response to a question, Mr. Weldon said Mr. Lombard could still participate in the vote even if he could not participate in all the interviews due to work.

Mr. Sokolovic moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Allen and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

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