

Leelanau County Board of Commissioners
Committee of the Whole – Tuesday, August 30, 2022
Tentative Minutes

Proceedings of the meeting are being recorded (audio and video). The video of the meeting can be found at the following link:
<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2379#video>

Meeting called to order by Chairman Ty Wessell at 9:00 a.m. Today's meeting is being held at the Government Center, 8527 E. Government Center Drive, Suttons Bay, Michigan.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited, followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call:	District #1	Rick Robbins	PRESENT
	#2	Debra L. Rushton	PRESENT
	#3	Lois Bahle	PRESENT
	#4	Ty Wessell	PRESENT
	#5	Patricia Soutas-Little	PRESENT (via Zoom, Leland, MI)
	#6	Gwenne Allgaier	PRESENT
	#7	Melinda C. Lautner	PRESENT

Guests present.

Public Comment:

Steve Mikowski, Leland Township.

All public comment copies can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2379#handouts>

Commissioner Comment:

Chairman Wessell said that he appreciates Mr. Mikowski coming forward today and we have heard from him before. It is true that this Board had discussion on the process and many of us had concerns about the process. He stated that all of us have a responsibility once decisions from a Board are made to move forward. He continued that Commissioners are all optimistic that things are moving forward on this and we are pleased with the organizational plan that is going forward but he appreciates Mr. Mikowski's comments.

Purpose of Meeting – Discussion:

County Administrator Candidate Interviews –

Administrator Chet Janik provided the Board with the County Administrator Interview Schedule handout, the Administrator Candidate Interview Questions handout, and the Administrator Interview Score Sheet handout, which are on file with the Clerk's Office.

The following individuals were selected for the County Administrator Interviews and each was invited to appear before the full Board of Commissioners individually in person or via Zoom:

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	James Palenick, interview concluded at 9:52 a.m.
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Deborah Allen, interview concluded at 10:42 a.m.
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Dan Ryan, interview concluded at 11:48 a.m.

Opening Questions:

Chairman Wessell asked each candidate the following question:

While we have had the opportunity to review your resume, our audience/public has not. Would you very briefly review your background and what causes you to be interested in this position at this point in your career and how does this position fit into your long-term career goals?

Each candidate gave a brief response about themselves and career goals.

Chairman Wessell asked each Commissioner to introduce themselves to each candidate.

Chairman Wessell asked each candidate the following question:

What is the most important responsibility of the County Administrator and what are the priorities/issues facing Michigan counties in general, and specifically Leelanau County?

Management Style:

Commissioner Rushton asked each candidate the following question:

Please provide us your definition of integrity and in terms of ethics, what standards are you unwilling to compromise in your leadership role?

Commissioner Robbins asked each candidate the following question:

If we were to ask your current and/or former staff how approachable you are, what would they say?

Commissioner Lautner asked each candidate the following question:

Time Management and balancing multiple priorities is an important skill to be effective in this role. How do you make decisions about how you spend your time, and what strategies do you use for balancing multiple priorities?

Board Relationship:

Commissioner Soutas-Little asked each candidate the following question:

What would be your approach to establishing and maintaining a good work relationship with the Board of Commissioners and what is your understanding of the role of the County Administrator, relative to the relationship with the Board of Commissioners?

Commissioner Bahle asked each candidate the following question:

County government is a unique form of government. The Board of Commissioners and other elected officials (e.g., clerk, sheriff, treasurer, etc.) are co-employers. Have you ever asked a co-worker to perform a task and he/she refused? How did you resolve this conflict?

Employee Relationships:

Commissioner Allgaier asked each candidate the following questions:

Describe the experience you have had in disciplining and/or dismissing an employee, and the steps you followed in the process and then please tell *us* about a time when you had to give feedback to an employee who displayed a lack of professionalism in their work relationship; what did you say? What standards did you set? What was the outcome?

Have you ever been a member of a group where two of the members did not work well together? What did you do to get them to do create a team atmosphere?

Budget:

Commissioner Robbins asked each candidate the following question:

Describe your experience with budget development, financial management and developing grant proposals?

Commissioner Lautner asked each candidate the following questions:

Have you researched the County's past audits? If so, what *is* your impression of the County's financial condition? Please describe your experience in establishing a budget accountability system.

Leadership:

Commissioner Bahle asked each candidate the following questions:

What are the three effective leadership qualities you think are the most important? How have you demonstrated these qualities in your *past* or current position?

Commissioner Soutas-Little asked each candidate the following question:

Describe the methods you would use to effectively relate to and work with elected officials and key leaders in Leelanau County and its communities. Please provide us an example where you built collaborative partnerships.

Job Effectiveness:

Commissioner Bahle asked each candidate the following questions:

Name one of your best accomplishments, including where the assignment came from, your plans in carrying it out, and any obstacles you overcame. What types of problems do you most enjoy tackling? Give us some examples of such problems you faced. What did you enjoy about them?

Commissioner Rushton asked each candidate the following questions:

What is the riskiest decision you have made? What was the situation, *and* what happened? Tell us about a time when you had to make an unpopular decision.

Wrap Up:

Each candidate responded to all interview questions.

Chairman Wessell thanked each candidate for their interest in the position and thanked the candidate for coming. Wessell asked each candidate if they had any questions for the Board and Wessell responded on behalf of the Board.

Chairman Wessell called for a break at 9:53 a.m. and the meeting resumed at 10:02 a.m.

Chairman Wessell called for a break at 10:42 a.m. and the meeting resumed at 11:00 a.m.

Chairman Wessell called for a break at 11:48 a.m. and the meeting resumed at 12:07 p.m.

Chairman Wessell asked Janik for his suggestions and next steps. Commissioner Soutas-Little arrived to the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Janik gave a brief explanation on how to proceed and move forward selecting candidates to return for second interviews.

Chairman Wessell asked the Board if they would like to move the topic of selecting candidates to the Committee of the Whole meeting on September 14, 2022. Janik replied that the Committee of the Whole is a format where no action can be taken and there can only be recommendations. Consensus to change September 14, 2022, to a Special Session.

Commissioner discussion ensued if a meeting should be scheduled for after the Executive Session on September 13, 2022 and scoring the candidates that interviewed. No consensus to schedule a Special Session after the Executive Session.

Janik stated that Executive Assistant Laurel Evans sent privately via email the video link to the meeting from yesterday's Committee of the Whole and that Evans could shortly send out today's meeting to the Board. He said that if you think you are going to interview more candidates then he won't make the videos public. Janik continued that if you think you are not going to interview more candidates then he will make the videos public. He said that what he doesn't want the Board to do is decide you want to interview more candidates and that they will have the ability to watch and listen to all the questions.

Commissioner discussion ensued relating to scoring and if the meeting should include Commissioner results relating to the interviews and each Commissioner's thoughts or if that should be at the September 14, 2022. Chairman Wessell stated there was consensus to keep proceeding with today's meeting.

Commissioner Robbins stated that he would like to see Harris, Lamb, and Allen return for second interviews.

Commissioner Rushton said that at this time she would like to review the interviews that have taken place and have more time to make her decision.

Commissioner Bahle stated that she would like to see Fulmer, Palenick, and Allen return for second interviews.

Commissioner Soutas-Little said she would like to see Fulmer, Lamb, and Allen return for second interviews.

Commissioner Allgaier stated that she would like to see Fulmer, Lamb, and Allen return for second interviews.

Commissioner Lautner said that she would like to see Harris, Lamb, and Allen return for second interviews.

Chairman Wessell stated that he would like to see Fulmer, Lamb, and Allen return for second interviews.

Commissioner discussion ensued regarding second interviews and checking references on each of the candidates.

Janik stated that Human Resources Director Darcy Weaver can create the questions relative to reference checks.

Public Comment:

Steve Mikowski, Leland Township.

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Commissioner Comment:

None.

Adjournment:

Chairman Wessell adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Ty Wessell, Chairman
Leelanau County Board of Commissioners

Jennifer L. Zywicki, Chief Deputy County Clerk
for Michelle L. Crocker, Leelanau County Clerk