BOARD OF SELECTMEN

P.O. Box 372
West Brookfield, Massachusetts 01585

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 6, 2022

PRESENT: Mr. David Pierce; Chairman, Mr. Roland Sickenberger; Vice-Chairman, and Mr. Eric von Bleicken, Clerk

ATTENDEES: Mr. Bradley Hibbard, Sgt. Matthew Letendre, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Mr. Kevin Landine, Mr. Larry Bateman and Mr. Nathan Haggland

Called meeting to Order at 6:00 PM
Recessed the meeting to 6:15 PM to move to the Great Hall.

The Board met this evening with the three-finalist chosen by the Police Chief Search Committee. Mr. Pierce stated that this is not an added interview. This is an opportunity for each candidate to provide a little bit of background about themselves to the Board.

LT. KEVIN LANDINE

Mr. Landine currently is employed by the Town of Hardwick and has risen to the rank of Lieutenant. Lt. Landine comes with a varied background which he feels would allow him to serve the town of West Brookfield in a productive manner. Lt. Landine was born and raised in West Brookfield and resides in the next town. As stated, he is currently the Lieutenant in Hardwick which has regionalized with New Braintree in 2014. Lt. Landine has been a successful supervisor rising through the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant and now his current rank of Lieutenant. He also holds a master's degree in criminal justice and have specialized and advanced training in the areas of police administration, leadership, and operations. He has been successful with a number of grants which has benefited his department. He was able to secure $30K in grant funding for radios. He is also the representative to Regional Dispatch. In response to question by Selectboard member Mr. von Bleicken, of what would you do to maintain and inspire his officers. Lt. Landine stated that he would engage with each officer to find out what they are interested in and make sure that each officer knows that he supported them. Mr. Pierce asked how he would handle the fiscal constraints that the town is facing. Lt. Landine stated that there is no easy answer. He would fight for his department and his officers, but he also acknowledged the reality of the issue. The town can only compete financially so much. He would also look into the services of a mental health clinician that we could possibly regionalize with. Lt. Landine felt that the process was very fair and thanked the Board for their time this evening.

LT. LARRY BATEMAN

Mr. Bateman provided a brief history on his background. He was born and raised in Warren and has been a police officer in both Warren and West Brookfield, going full-time in West Brookfield in 2001-2004. Since then for the last 18 years, his law enforcement career has been in Sturbridge, to which he has risen through the ranks to his current rank of Lieutenant. He resides in West Brookfield with his wife and four children who have all gone through the local school system. As with Lt. Landine, Mr. von Bleicken asked

how he would work to inspire his officers. He too, would listen and their concerns and get to know his officers. He stated that in his opinion is the way to also respond to calls from citizens. With regard to fiscal constraints, Lt. Bateman acknowledge the fact that money is tight but with the proper work environment, he hopes that would aid in keeping staff. He also did acknowledge that small towns are stepping stones, which is the reality of the matter. Mr. Sickenberger asked about his success with grants. Lt. Bateman stated that he has done them in Sturbridge (road grant, body camera grant – 45K this year alone with the body cams). Lt. Bateman also offered that responding to mental health calls can be very dangerous which is why he sent his officers in Sturbridge to crisis training so they can gain a better understanding when they come upon a situation. In Sturbridge, they have retained the services of a full-time clinician which is being paid from grant funding. For West Brookfield, he would search for funding sources to be able to do the same. Mr. Sickenberger asked if he had any concerns of going from a larger community to a smaller one. He stated he did not. At this time, the Board thanked Lt. Bateman for coming in and the office will be in touch. Lt. Bateman thanked the Board for their time and the opportunity.

NATHAN HAGGLUND

Mr. Hagglund first expressed his thanks to the Board for the opportunity to be here this evening. He said he has researched the history of the town and feels that West Brookfield would be a great fit. He and his family attended White Christmas and it felt like a Hallmark movie. He has had the spirit of public service since the age of 16. He has been a supervisor since 2010. He also served as union president which handled personnel issues. He is also big into community engagement. He serves on the Leicester school committee and if familiar with the budget cycle. He also has a great support system at home which has led him to applying for this position. He stated that he has felt a spirit of community service since the age of 16. He feels that both inspiration and communication are key to a good department. He fully understands the fiscal constraints and is willing to become creative with the budget. He feels strongly with hosting a citizens/safety/youth/senior academy in order for the residents to become more fully invested in their community. All members were delighted with Mr. Hagglund and thanked him for his time. He in turn thanked the board for the opportunity.

After a brief discussion among the board members, retired Chief O'Donnell and Brad Hibbard praised all three candidates, however both spoke in favor of Mr. Hagglund.

The board will meet in Executive Session on December 13, 2022, at 5:30 pm to discuss further.

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Sickenberger; second: Mr. von Bleicken – unanimous at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra

Rebecca Acerra
Executive Secretary

Eric von Bleicken, Clerk

1-31-23

Date Approved