

**Reading Municipal Light Board of Commissioners  
General Manager Interview Process Meeting  
230 Ash Street  
Reading, MA 01867  
January 23, 2003**

**Start Time of Regular Session: 6:15 p.m.**  
**End Time of Regular Session: 7:20 p.m.**

**Attendees**

**Commissioners:** Messrs. Hughes, Pacino, Ames, Soli and \*Herlihy  
**RMLD Staff:** Mses. Antonio, Gottwald and Cavagnaro  
**CAB:** Mr. Arthur Carakastane

**\*Mr. Herlihy arrived at 6:23 p.m.**

Chairman Hughes called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Mr. Hughes informed the Commission they have a lot of ground to cover and only have until 7:30 p.m. before the start of the regular RMLD Board of Commissioner meeting suggesting a "right to the point" discussion.

As Chairman of the RMLD Board of Commissioners and the General Manager Search Committee (GM Search Committee), Commissioner Hughes commended the members of the GM Search Committee for their enthusiasm and dedication to the Committee and for a job well done. As Mr. Hughes noted choosing the candidates was not an easy task.

Ms. Antonio distributed a list of questions that had been used by the GM Search Committee for the Commission to ask when interviewing the candidates. Ms. Antonio informed the Commission that the GM Search Committee suggested the interviews include a tour of the facility and/or service area, a meeting with a Citizen's Advisory Board member, a brief meeting with the Town Manager and/or a Reading Selectmen. Ms. Antonio scheduled a window of one-half day for the candidate to tour the local facility with Jim Blomley; meet with the Reading Town Manager, Peter Hechenbleikner as well as with CAB Chairman, Roger Lessard. Ms. Antonio pointed out Vin Cameron does not need a tour but will meet with Messrs. Hechenbleikner and Lessard. Ms. Antonio stated, as discussed with the GM Search Committee she offered each candidate a hotel room for the evening since the interviews will be late, however, only two candidates actually accepted this offer.

Mr. Carakastane noted the questions recommended by the GM Search Committee consist of public power contacts, public relations and community involvement, finance and accounting, etc. Mr. Carakastane therefore recommended the Commission should individually decide which questions they want to ask depending upon their own experience and/or interests.

Ms. Antonio informed the Commission there are two interviews scheduled each evening for ninety minutes each with one half hour in between, therefore, each Commissioner will have approximately fifteen minutes each to ask the candidate questions. Ms. Antonio noted since Commissioners Hughes and Pacino were on the GM Search Committee and already interviewed the candidates, they might not need fifteen minutes. Ms. Antonio also noted it will be important to keep track of the time as well as the interviews being very structured.

Mr. Carakastane stated Commissioners Hughes and Pacino have already interviewed the candidates during the GM Search Committee and suggested they only take five to ten minutes each in order to leave time at the end of the interview for the questions of the rate payers, employees and CAB as well as interviewee questions. Mr. Carakastane also suggested that in addition to the straight forward type of questions, they should ask some philosophical questions such as "what does public power mean to you", etc.

It was decided that Ms. Antonio be responsible for escorting the candidate out after the interview so the candidates do not overlap as well as holding the second candidate in her office if they arrive prior to the end of the first interview.

Mr. Pacino suggested Commissioners Ames, Herlihy, and Soli should begin the interview with their questions first considering they have not had an opportunity to meet the candidates previously.

Ms. Antonio reiterated the interviews need to be structured in order to be successful for the Commission as well as the candidates.

Discussion ensued relative to possibly adjourning into another room during the half hour in between interviews since it may be televised live. The consensus was it is an open public meeting and all discussions relative to a candidate must be public, this issue is not an option.

Mr. Carakastane stated the only part of the interview process that can be completed in Executive Session is negotiating the employment agreement. Mr. Carakastane also noted even after the interviews are complete those discussions and decisions must also be made in an open meeting.

Mr. Soli questioned if discussions and decisions are to be made in open, public meetings, how can the Commission handle opinions or uncertainties about a candidate?

Concurring with Mr. Soli, Mr. Ames commented it could be a problem with the discussions being in an open meeting because at some point there must be an honest discussion between the Commissioners in order to make a decision.

Mr. Pacino stated a Commissioner can always ask for clarification from the candidate at the time of the response if not understood, or wait until the end of the interview for clarification.

Mr. Carakastane suggested that the Commissioners take notes during the questions and at the end of the interview they can ask for clarification.

Mr. Pacino commented it is important for the Commissioners not to express opinions during part of the interview process.

Ms. Cavagnaro noted when the Selectmen meet they handle similar issues by asking others for clarity.

Ms. Antonio suggested keeping the discussions short and to the point.

Mr. Soli asked if the tapes of the interviews can be viewed at the February 6th meeting to assist in the decision making process.

Ms. Antonio said the tapes will be made available providing RCTV gets them to us.

Mr. Soli also asked how a decision is made?

Mr. Pacino answered, as all Commission business, it is a majority vote with a motion.

Ms. Antonio suggested Mr. Pacino be the Commissioner who ends the interview and thanks the candidate for his time giving the candidate a time frame as to when a decision will be made.

Mr. Pacino suggested the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting be dedicated to making a final decision with no other agenda items.

At this point, Ms. Antonio reminded the Commission they need to decide upon a Subcommittee to develop an employment agreement.

Mr. Hughes asked for volunteers.

Mr. Soli asked for a deadline for the subcommittee to develop this employment agreement.

Commissioners Pacino and Soli both volunteered for the Subcommittee and CAB member, Mr. Carakastane, volunteered to assist as CAB participation.

Mr. Ames informed the Commission he can not make any of the interview dates, however, he will watch the tapes of the interviews in order to make an informed decision.

As far as a Caliper test, Ms. Antonio informed the Commission although all employees take a Caliper test prior to being hired at RMLD, it was a decision of the GM Search Committee that the GM candidates not be required to take the test.

Mr. Ames suggested the Commission be sure that Messrs. Hechenbleikner and Lessard attend the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting so their impressions of the candidates can be included in the decision making process.

Mr. Carakastane noted some representation for the CAB will definitely be in attendance at the February 6th meeting.

Ms. Gottwald reminded the Commission that in the Press Release, it stated that ratepayers, employees, or any persons who have questions for the GM candidate should submit their questions to either Mr. Hughes or Ms. Antonio. Priscilla also questioned whether a box should be available the evening of the meeting in the Audio Visual room for people to submit last minute questions.

Commissioner Hughes stated he has already received additional questions from the above sources.

It was decided that Priscilla will create a box and have it available as she suggested.

Mr. Ames questioned whether all the candidates will be presented with the same questions.

Mr. Pacino replied, yes, all the candidates should be asked the same questions.

Mr. Hughes stated he will ask the community relation and political involvement questions as well as the general questions submitted to him from others.

Mr. Herlihy noted he will ask questions relative to legal issues, experience with litigation and the candidates thoughts on Deregulation and Chapter 164, etc.

Mr. Pacino will introduce the CAB to the candidate and ask budgetary and financial reporting questions. Mr. Pacino also suggested leaving fifteen minutes for the CAB's questions to be asked by the Board.

Mr. Soli will ask questions pertaining to public power purchasing.

Mr. Pacino informed the Commission that some members of the GM Search Committee recommend that the new GM relocate to the service territory. As Mr. Pacino explained this is just a recommendation, however, it is important for the Commission to decide if they agree with this. Mr. Pacino also noted there could be a compromise of this recommendation, for example, rather than actually living in the service territory the GM would be required to be well involved within the community.

Considering none of the four candidates currently live in the service territory, Mr. Ames questioned whether the RMLD is willing to financially support any relocation necessary if they were to make that a requirement.

Mr. Antonio commented that when this position was advertised no resident requirement was listed.

Mr. Soli stated if a relocation is required it must be put into the employment agreement otherwise the candidate could agree to relocate but change his mind and there would be no recourse.

Mr. Ames noted if relocation is a requirement, the candidate would expect financial assistance from the RMLD.

Mr. Pacino replied, at the very least, there should be a monetary adjustment when negotiating salary.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.