

Norwell Board of Selectmen
1/6/21
Open Session – Remote meeting

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2021 JAN 28 AM 10:02

Present: Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Jason Brown, Bruce Graham, Joe Rull, Peter Morin
Police Chief Candidates; Chief John Carbone, Chief Edward Lee, Chief Leon Krolikowski

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Open Session

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 6:50pm. She announced that all votes will be roll call votes as the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting is being recorded and the audio file will be available on the Town website. Ms. Allen noted that this meeting will be conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq.

Approval of Agenda

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimously voted by roll call vote

Ms. Allen gave an overview of the candidate screening process conducted by the Police Chief Search Committee and the candidates' background information reviewed by the board before conducting tonight's interviews.

Board of Selectmen Interviews – Police Chief Candidates:

7:00pm – Chief John Carbone – Barre, MA

The BOS introduced themselves to Chief Carbone.

Chief Carbone introduced himself to the board and summarized his work background and experience.

Questions from the board

Ms. Allen informed Chief Carbone that she will ask the majority of the questions for each interview, with board members adding questions or comments at their discretion. The plan this evening is to focus on some very specific questions within the major topics that have previously been explored in the interviews with both the PCSC and the police department.

1) Budgets:

- a. *Please give us some specific examples of how you reduced costs in tough budgetary times.*

Chief Carbone: In my support role in Barre I managed the department funding given. In Clinton, I managed overtime to within budget. When I took over in Barre, the overtime budget was always over by at least \$100K. I discovered that other line item expenses were being incorrectly charged to

overtime. I created a workable budget with transparent line items. Every expense line item was underfunded, so I cut down on overtime costs by determining actual correct staffing and using part time officers. I worked with the Town Administrator to create line items restricted to actual expenses. Quarterly budget analyses revealed the actual overtime problem so it could be removed. (Chief Carbone gave additional examples of creative funding for department expenses and noted that the department has operated within budget to the extent that they were able to help fund other departments during COVID. He also worked with the finance committee to solve this issue.)

- b. *How do you determine whether it is more cost effective to add overtime or increase the staff?*

Chief Carbone: It is expensive to hire somebody, so the union president and I drafted a 3-year contract template with a payback clause for the training costs that is designed to retain employees. I also use part timers to fill the spot instead of hiring immediately. For example, I like to fill positions after summer because there are less hits on overtime. I would prefer to fill the slot, but I work within the fiscal limitations to control overtime. I sit down with the scheduling officer to follow parameters. He himself has worked a lot of shifts to make budgets.

2) Unions:

- a. *Please describe successfully negotiating a management objective with a union.*

Chief Carbone: We have done so many things! After losing a lot of officers in the department, we gave everyone a big raise to bring them up to commensurate pay. It was not easy to change the entire pay scale! The rank structure was changed because the town wanted a Deputy Chief (DC), so we got rid of the Corporals, etc. We determined what overtime would be acceptable for the School Resource Officer (SRO), police details and other areas in which they would work. We use cruisers on details, which has worked out well, and the department is working to create a canine program.

- b. *What specific ways do you communicate with the union?*

Chief Carbone: I sit down with the union and the DC. If necessary I run topics by labor counsel first. Talk it out! Reason, opinion, discussion, review the benefits, work it out. The union has been reasonable. Keep the negotiation process going, the goal is no animosity. Being brought in on the conversation is key. We have worked to avoid animosity.

Jason Brown: You had an opportunity to sit down with our police department yesterday – what was your takeaway of their top concern?

Chief Carbone: They are concerned about the new police legislation and resultant policies. I stated that I want to be a community based chief. I don't want to continue being a working chief. I am not a micro manager, but rather an administrative chief who supports the supervisors and their leadership. Re: the new legislation, we have a good handle on it. I don't

want them to be afraid of it, it's just something to be dealt with. They are a community based department and I want to continue that.

3) Police Reform:

a. *How will you implement the new police reform legislation?*

Chief Carbone: The legislation lays it out for you. Transitioning to those changes is to understand who is going to make these decisions (gave examples). MA's changes to the use of force will move the policy more towards reflecting CT's policy. (Chief Carbone gave more examples of language and action changes.) The civilian complaint reporting aspect will be changed to meet the mandate. For MA, it will be more of a policy addendum than a series of sweeping changes, such as might be needed in other states. It's not as daunting as it seems; it will be just getting used to it.

4) Getting to know you better in general

a. *Please describe a defining moment in your life—it doesn't need to be related to your work.*

Chief Carbone: My wife became pregnant with twins when our first child was less than 1 year old. Although the team of doctors said that they had a 2% chance of survival, they overcame great odds to grow into lovely adults! There was a lot to go through, including surgeries and special needs to address until they were about 5-7 years old, but they have succeeded in beating the odds without letting this beginning define their lives.

Alison Demong: How do you define "empathy" and what role does it play in police work? Do you believe empathy can be taught?

Chief Carbone: Empathy is so absolutely necessary in police work. Police deal with terrible things (gave examples). Officers are sent to counseling to make sure they are handling the situation. This is an interesting question: on a personality test, the psychologist said that I came up very high on the empathy scale. I believe empathy can't be taught but can be modeled. I try to lead by example (gave examples of empathy in the field). Now in Barre the police department has a people-oriented approach.

b. *Bruce re: favorite dinner guest -who would you like to have dinner with?*

Chief Carbone: My mother, who passed away when I was 5. I would love to ask her questions about my life and hers. I lost my father to COVID, and I wish I could talk to him more.

5) Mentoring:

a. *Our officers have concerns about limited opportunities to advance. How would you address this?*

Chief Carbone: I will give you a personal example; it took me 17 years to make sergeant. I lived this so I can relate. I like to offer the opportunity to do something they really believe in and enjoy. I sit down once a year with my notebook in which each officer has a page and ask what they want to do. We talk about the actual job and I try to direct toward something realistic. We work as a team to reach their goal if it's also good for the

department. I then follow up the next year by reviewing the list of steps completed and "to go" towards that goal. This lets the officer know that we're doing something tangible. (Chief Carbone gave additional examples of mentoring, adding that he works to find a niche for each officer in his department.)

6) Working with other departments

- a. *We place a high value on the strong working relationship our Police and Fire Departments have. Many calls involve the Police, Fire and Public Works departments. How will you successfully work with our Fire & Public Works Departments?*

Chief Carbone: I have always had a good relationship with the fire chief as we are always at the same calls. I try to work with those who have had a "bad working relationship" and make it better. The group should be a triangle of partners; DPW, Fire and Police. I have built the relationships and tried to eliminate the animosity. I like my inter-department colleagues in Barre, who are good people and good partners. Show cooperation and work together, reach out with invitations to department events.

7) *Finally, do you have any questions for us? And please tell us why you want this job.*

Chief Carbone: What is the timeline for this hiring process? Per Mr. Morin, the board will meet to deliberate and vote to make an offer to one of the candidates at tomorrow evening's meeting. They will then go immediately into Executive Session to decide on the contract parameters.

In response to Chief Carbone's question about Assinippi village, Mr. Brown answered that it is really just an intersection in a commercial area, not actually a village.

Chief Carbone: Everything about the job appeals to me. I come from the same size department, Norwell has a great department and I would love to be part of it. It has everything that I would want. I would like to fully commit to the job, move to Norwell, buy a house and live in the community. I haven't heard anything negative about the Town, and who wouldn't want to live here?!

All thanked Chief Carbone.

7:45pm – Chief Edward Lee – Hopkinton, MA

The BOS introduced themselves to Chief Lee.

Chief Lee introduced himself to the board and summarized his work background and experience.

Questions from the board

Ms. Allen told Chief Lee that she will ask the majority of the questions for each interview, with board members adding questions or comments at their discretion. The plan this evening is to focus on some very specific questions within the major topics that have previously been explored in the interviews with both the PCSC and the police department.

1) Budgets:

- a. *Please give us some specific examples of how you reduced costs in tough budgetary times.*

Chief Lee: Woonsocket, RI was on the verge of bankruptcy, and as a Captain, I had a big part in budget oversight. The solutions worked to avoid layoffs by using budget cuts on such line items as overtime, tying up a lot of loose ends and creative use of grants and federal funding to cover some of the cost of overtime. By creating and using great lines of communication we protected people's jobs. Honesty was key. The town of Hopkinton is more well-to-do, and although a % reduction was necessary, we were able to supplement the costs for certain line items with a gift fund.

- b. *How do you determine whether it is more cost effective to add overtime or increase the staff?*

Chief Lee: Look at the numbers; overtime puts a real strain on the force. Budgeting needs good planning, scheduling is major factor, all shifts need to be adequately filled even with vacation and injuries.

2) Unions:

- a. *Please describe successfully negotiating a management objective with a union.*

Chief Lee: I negotiated with the dispatchers, and had great communication with the union, which was always honest and genuine. (Chief Lee gave an example of a pay issue that created a wedge between senior staff and new hires) I have used compromise with incentives when doing contract negotiations for the hiring process. I negotiated the promotion process out of the contracts and into policies and procedures. Hopkinton was not civil service, nor was Woonsocket, RI.

- b. *What specific ways do you communicate with the union?*

Chief Lee: I sat down immediately with the union when I was hired in Hopkinton. I work to keep open communication. I worked with them on the accreditation process. (gave examples)

Jason Brown: When you met with the department yesterday, what was your sense of their greatest concern and how would you address it?

Chief Lee: Chief Ross was great, and I think the department is concerned that the incoming chief would try to change the world. There would be departmental changes for all, but not sweeping changes. I got a good handle on things at yesterday's meeting. I got a sense that officers are worried about enough opportunity, so I will work on recruiting, retaining and education. I will work to get buy in for goals and mission and maybe give added responsibility.

3) Police Reform:

- a. *How will you implement the new police reform legislation?*

Chief Lee: like any other legislation, be vigilant that officers understand the law and are included in the new policies and procedures. I have already seen training guides being issued from the MA police association. There are

a lot of big changes, which is not always a good thing in police work, but I will work to make it happen.

4) Getting to know you better in general

- a. *Please describe a defining moment in your life—it doesn't need to be related to your work.*

Chief Lee: My son Wyatt was born with a heart defect and has had to go through several surgeries. It was so, so tough to go through such an experience, but it has made me a stronger person. He is now a fine, healthy kid who plays sports.

- b. *Alison Demong: How do you define "empathy" and what role does it play in police work? Do you believe empathy can be taught?*

Chief Lee: If you asked any of my staff in Hopkinton, it was one of my biggest, most important things. Put yourself in other people's shoes. (gave examples)

Empathy can be learned, of course. I took a course at the FBI Academy called Emotional Intelligence. (gave examples) I believe it can always be learned by most people. I look for people who display that quality when hiring; I always want to see compassion.

- c. *Bruce re: favorite dinner guest -who would you like to have dinner with?*

Chief Lee: My dad; we lost him to cancer at 53. I would want to go back and have him see things in my career and share successes and life stories. I would thank him for making me who I am today.

5) Mentoring:

- a. *Our officers have concerns about limited opportunities to advance. How would you address this?*

Chief Lee: the department in Hopkinton was stagnant when I was hired, there were several sergeants who were given the extras. I wanted them to have a chance to supervise, and the young officers to have opportunities to be on committees and be part of more activities and tasks. I would try to be as creative as possible. For example; there was 1 SRO on staff. I obtained another SRO position in the budget, and trained 2 more SRO's, who could each get experience by working part time in the position. They were now able to split the SRO duties and could also do 2 jobs. They covered the schools and the officers learned a new skill. Regional SWAT teams are another opportunity for extra-curricular activities and skills. Some officers were interested in a K9 unit. I tried have everybody with something going on.

6) Working with other departments

- a. *We place a high value on the strong working relationship our Police and Fire Departments have. Many calls involve the Police, Fire and Public Works departments. How will you successfully work with our Fire & Public Works Departments?*

Chief Lee: I try to build a friendly relationship with all other departments. I had a great working relationship with the fire department in Hopkinton; the chief was outstanding. We had great friendly rivalries in the town. The same goes for other departments like the Town facilities director. I have always fostered good work relationships. Hopkinton has the teamwork aspect. A good personality helps to build good relationships with departments like the schools (especially the superintendent). The schools are our future! I certainly would continue that in Norwell.

Ellen Allen – Hopkinton won the safest community award 2 years in a row – based on crime statistics; it was the safest in the country!

Chief Lee: Everybody in town works together. I made it an effort to do whatever I could to prevent crime. We trained an officer to help prevent crime in the business community. For example: he did a review of business locations with regard to crime prevention by suggesting installation of adequate lighting, removing shrubbery, etc. When planning a construction project for a business location, major projects are reviewed with the eye to preventing crime.

7) *Finally, do you have any questions for us?*

Chief Lee: I would like to meet as many people as I can. With regard to priorities for the new chief: there is not anything to fix right away, and during COVID everything is different.

Joe Rull: traffic and speeding are a huge issue in the Town. Are you planning to address this?

Chief Lee: This is the Number One issue in Hopkinton! I started addressing this by assigning a traffic officer to oversee every violation and complaint made to the department. Every complaint got a return phone call. I would also review the metrics to create next steps. (gave examples)

Ms. Allen reviewed the timeline for the rest of the hiring process. Mr. Morin will contact the candidate chosen by the board and conduct the hiring negotiation. Ms. Childs will contact the other 2 candidates to inform them of the board's decision. .

8) *And please tell us why you want this job.*

Chief Lee: I still want to work; I'm not ready to retire. Leadership is in my core. I still want to bring experience and leadership to an already good department. I also want to be part of the police reform change in MA. I love the town of Norwell. There are a lot of good officers who are really engaged in the community. I have to say that after the call with the members of the Norwell PD I am even more excited about the job. This is a wonderful place and a beautiful location. I would also like to thank the PCSC for doing an excellent job. It was one of the most professional screening processes I've ever experienced. Thank you!

8:30pm – Chief Leon Krolikowski

The BOS introduced themselves to Chief Krolikowski.

Chief Krolkowski introduced himself to the board and summarized his work background and experience.

Questions from the board

Ms. Allen stated that she will ask the majority of the questions for each interview, with board members adding questions or comments at their discretion. The plan this evening is to focus on some very specific questions within the major topics that have previously been explored in the interviews with both the PCSC and the police department.

1) Budgets:

- a. *Please give us some specific examples of how you reduced costs in tough budgetary times.*

Chief Krolkowski: The town of New Canaan has good command of the budget. (He gave a summary of the hierarchy of budget oversight in that town.) There was concern about the amount of overtime, as in “why” and “how”. I did benchmarking and research, then adopted a robust scheduling system which can analyze and report on overtime aspects. I also request exactly what I need for the budget, and usually end the year under by 1 or 2%. This year with COVID there are unforeseen costs, so expenses are slightly higher. I am very proud of the budget. It is important to explain why you’re doing what you’re doing within the whole framework of presenting the budget. For example, to fund the K9 program in the town after an absence of many years, we used creative funding through donations to restart the program at no cost to the taxpayers.

Sometimes cuts are necessary, but with careful review you can often meet or exceed the budget parameters.

- b. *How do you determine whether it is more cost effective to add overtime or increase the staff? (This question was not asked)*

2) Unions:

- a. *Please describe successfully negotiating a management objective with a union.*

Chief Krolkowski: This is a learned process which is not easy, change management is a delicate process. I used a steering committee composed of a number of department members across the experience levels to participate in the change process. I let them bring forward ideas to the Union. I then created a 5 year strategic plan which created goals and direction. It was a collaborative process. I also budgeted for contract negotiations. (gave examples) There was give and take amongst everyone involved. Good communication is essential. Connect the initiatives, link them to the steering committee, create a strategic plan and work with community. Try to engage with the police force and keep their interest. It will be interesting to see how the nation evolves with the coming police reform.

Jason Brown: You sat in on the department meeting yesterday. What was their greatest concern, and how would you address it?

Chief Krolikowski: Their greatest concern seemed to be staffing. I would have to review this. There seems to be a real desire for reorganizing the department structure. There is some real need and interest in creating interim positions, which can be linked to succession planning. It can be difficult for departments when there isn't a path to get the experience to move up. The department seems to be a dedicated group of officers who love the Town. I would like to hear from the officers what their ideas are. Staffing seemed to be the central concern. I am big on benchmarking and would look at comparable towns that border Norwell for their staffing and structure and what does or doesn't make sense.

3) Mentoring:

- a. *Ms. Allen: We know that because of the small department there is concern about a lack of opportunity and career growth. Besides looking at the staffing model, what other ways would you work with the officers to address these issues?*

Chief Krolikowski: I would meet with each officer personally within the first 30 days, asking about strengths and ideas for improvement. Getting buy-in is important for any structural change. One option would be special assignments in other parts of the state on task forces. (gave examples) I would also create internal opportunities, which might be a way to realign the structure. Maybe pursue accreditation; both state and national might make sense. I would hire a team of people to come in and assess the department to see where improvements could be made.

It is also important to survey both the department and the whole Town for feedback on what the community and the department want. This would probably be a 2-3 year initiative. (Chief Krolikowski recapped the accreditation process in New Canaan, which was not well received at first.) I saw firsthand how important it is to explain change well and get support from both the department and the Town. Realigning responsibilities could help relook at tasks and job assignments.

4) Police Reform:

- a. *How will you implement the new police reform legislation?*

Chief Krolikowski: I have been watching everything happening in the nation. The change legislation in MA is not all that drastic and is mostly common sense. (gave examples) Some of the tactics being changed are not actually used in MA. I think MA going towards the CT standards. I would give guidance about the reform implementation, then move ahead to do the actual changes.

5) Getting to know you better in general

- a. *Please describe a defining moment in your life—it doesn't need to be related to your work.*

Chief Krolikowski: My service in the marines – I have very clear memories. I also have police experience moments, and watching my children growing up. It's hard to point to one specific thing—my love for

learning has certainly defined me; education is never a burden. Becoming a lawyer was a defining moment. I am very proud of my current department. Our town had never had a protest, but we recently had 1500-2000 people protest in a peaceful and thoughtful way. The department got a compliment from a passerby, who said that if all police were like those in New Canaan, there wouldn't be any police problems in the country. It is such a tough job, which can become tainted by bad events. It's nice to see a community that is very supportive of the police, which is not always the case! People call the police when there is no one else to call, and the issues are not always their area of expertise. The issue becomes whether police should deal with areas like non-criminal matters such as the homeless population. Questions are being asked, and the answers will hopefully evolve.

- b. *Alison Demong: How do you define "empathy" and what role does it play in police work? Do you believe empathy can be taught?*

Chief Krolikowski: Empathy can be taught. Certain people are more empathetic than others. In the police profession, it's hard to show or develop empathy. All police officers have seen tragedy, which can make it hard to express empathy. A certain balance of empathy is needed. The current environment makes police officers less reluctant to embrace EAP and get help when needed. I would hope that most officers would interact the way they would like to have their family be helped. Sometimes you don't know what the officer has just dealt with. The job description is often unpleasant tasks that are just hard. Empathy and sympathy are needed on the job.

There is a substance abuse problem in New Canaan. We had early adoption of narcan and built an education website for substance use and other problems that was adopted on a bigger scale. We revamped crisis intervention training. (gave examples of using empathy on the job)

- 6) *Bruce Graham: Who would be your favorite dinner guest? (Mr. Graham did not ask this question due to time constraints)*

7) Working with other departments

- a. *We place a high value on the strong working relationship our Police and Fire Departments have. Many calls involve the Police, Fire and Public Works departments. How will you successfully work with our Fire & Public Works Departments?*

Chief Krolikowski: In our town the Emergency Services Committee meets once a month, which has increased to once a week during COVID. It includes all of the relevant departments, plus the schools. The committee looks at ongoing issues to figure out the commonality. We have had a number of critical exercises that were successful. We work really well with our emergency services partners, prioritizing teamwork and collaborative effort. We have the same goals, good communication. Training is at a high

level. We have observed neighboring communities who are not at our level of expertise.

8) *Finally, do you have any questions for us?*

Chief Krolkowski: Not really. This is a town similar to New Canaan. I am excited to move forward and work together.

Ms. Allen listed the next steps in the hiring process.

9) *Please tell us why you want this job.*

Chief Krolkowski: I could have retired a couple of years ago but would like to continue to work. I have been careful where I have applied. The big plus for Norwell is the community support received by the police department, which is not always the case. There is nothing I'm not comfortable with. My current department aligns very well with Norwell. I also want to look at succession planning and retention statistics: why are officers leaving. I would like to give officers the possibility of promotion as a goal. If people aren't fully vested in being a police officer and job stability, they end up leaving for a different field. Thank you very much for interviewing me for the position.
The board thanked Chief Krolkowski for his interest.

As there was no other business, Ms. Allen asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion; made by Jason Brown,, seconded by Bruce Graham, to adjourn at 9:15pm. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.



Ellen Allen, Chair