

UMATILLA MORROW RADIO & DATA DISTRICT  
BOARD of DIRECTORS WORK SESSION  
April 5, 2022

Present:        Director Kennedy                      Director Pratt  
                    Director Matlack                      Director Primmer

Absent:        Director Roxbury

Guests:        Jim Stearns, SDAO Consultant (telephonically)

Staff:         Brett Mueller, Rosanna Brown

I.            Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 2:25pm.

II.          District Administrator Position

Brett arranged for SDAO consultant Jim Stearns to be available during this work session for questions. The Board requested that Jim call into the conference line.

Brett also distributed a document from SDAO Consulting that outlined the process for recruiting and hiring an executive.

Director Matlack read the documents provided and was not interested in hiring someone to do the work of filling the administrator position. His opinion was that there was already a competent person, with enough training and experience to fill the position without the process of recruitment. He wanted to hire someone that the Board already knew and had faith in and his preference was usually to hire from within. He was not opposed to using the process to fill the vacancy of a Communications Technician, if Brett were to be hired as the District Administrator.

Jim asked if this opinion was shared by the entire Board. Director Pratt agreed a little, but wanted to first establish if Brett wanted the job, since the responsibilities were quite a bit different. Brett confirmed that he would be willing to enter into negotiations for the position.

Director Kennedy believed that the Board should have a strategic plan before making a hiring decision because whoever became Administrator needed to know what the Board was looking for now and 5 years down the road. Jim pointed out that, since the District did not have a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years, that was something that would be very good to have in place. He felt that it was critical for the Board and the manager to work on a plan, so each knew what the expectations were. It was also helpful to reference during employee evaluations.

As far as promoting from within or going through a recruitment and hiring process, Jim felt that going through that process was often the right action when looking for the best person for the position because it would give the Board more options. He did however note that if the Board already knew they wanted to promote from within, they shouldn't bother going through the steps for show. Jim also noted that the recruitment and hiring process of a manager would likely take 3-6 months.

Director Kennedy asked Jim to outline some steps to help the Board move forward. Jim thought that coming up with a strategic plan was a very good first step. It would provide a clearer path for the District and help to determine if Brett was the right person for the position. It would also be helpful for Brett to determine if it is the job he wants. Jim also pointed out that SDAO had consultants that could help facilitate the strategic planning process.

Director Pratt agreed that putting a strategic plan in place was important. Whoever the Board chose to hire needed to have a clear understanding of what the expectations were. It would also help the Board members identify what they were looking for in a candidate. He felt that working with an SDAO consultant on a strategic plan was a good idea. Director Primmer agreed.

Director Matlack was concerned that an SDAO consultant would be too much of a generalist and would not have the related experience needed to work with the District. Jim agreed that none of the consultants had worked with radios specifically, but most had worked for a special district during their careers. Director Matlack wanted someone that was in the radio communications field and had the subject knowledge. Brett noted that since UMRDD was the only radio district in the state, there weren't other agencies to look to for advice.

Director Pratt did not think the consultant needed to have radio experience to be able to facilitate the discussion and also to steer it in the right directions. He noted that the staff should provide input during the discussion as well. Director Kennedy agreed.

Director Primmer thought it would behoove the Board to get a strategic plan in place, as that would be the most expedient way to get to a new hire. It would also provide measurables for reviews and evaluations. She also felt that it would be beneficial to have someone to guide the Board through the process.

Brett asked if it would be appropriate to invite CDX into the conversation, along with an SDAO consultant. The consultant would be helpful in creating the plan and CDX had knowledge about the District's system specifically.

Directors Primmer and Pratt agreed that having SDAO and CDX involved was the right way to go. The Board directed Rosanna to coordinate a meeting.

III. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 3:03pm.