

From: CHILDSEJ@aol.com
To: [Nancy Kramer](#)
Subject: Fwd: Webster appointment
Date: Thursday, September 01, 2011 2:20:35 PM

Nancy, will you include Norm's e-mail as correspondence for the next agenda.

Thanks,
Ed

From: norman.n.miller@gmail.com
To: CHILDSEJ@aol.com
Sent: 8/31/2011 6:50:49 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time
Subj: Re: Webster appointment

Ed, yes, please. As I said in the PS, to Steve, please forward to Cook and Ashley as I do not have their address. Ann Seibert says State politics is much easier. Im your agent for the next job. Hi Joyce. Norman

On Wed, Aug 31, 2011 at 4:43 PM, <CHILDSEJ@aol.com> wrote:

Norm, thank you for this message. Do I presume you wish it to be correspondence to the Board? Please advise.

Ed

In a message dated 8/31/2011 11:06:03 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time, norman.n.miller@gmail.com writes:

Ed, Roger, Steve...

There is a lot of concern out here in the hills about this Town Manager issue and I have tried to put it in perspective. I think you all are trying to do what is right for the town and I applaud and support you for this. What became clear to me yesterday afternoon:

1. Pete has strong support from a major sector of the town, particularly those who follow town government and care about issues.
2. My sense if you did a town wide survey on his work you would get at least a 65-35 split in his favor. The 80-20 split in favor of a town manager form carries a lot of this estimate.
3. The Board may have hyper-focused on the Evaluation instrument. I applaud the attempt to develop an objective instrument, but as hard as you have worked on this, it is not adequate. As I said last night, a 5 point spread is not good....on survey questions of this nature you need a 10 point spread of questions to allow the extremes to be dropped. You also...very important... cant rely on such a survey as an all- important instrument. Far more important are the collected comments of say 100 people, randomly selected...Even more important than those answers are the views of the Department heads who have worked with him. My understanding is that he passes muster here, with flying colors...a very important finding. I know from conversations that Jill, Doug, Steve, Andy are very positive on this score. I think Phil is as well. For other sectors, I think there are special circumstances, perhaps in-built tensions that were there before Pete came on. This is powerful

evidence. State-level reports....Margaret, Jim Masland, and others that we could get comments from, are very positive.

4. The fact that some of our experienced citizens...Jack Candon, Ann Seibert, Terry Boone, etc, etc...turned up on Pete's behalf is important. Its important for you good folks to realize that dozens more would have been there if there had been more than a days notice.

5. The tendency to micro-manage the Town Manager is at the heart of the problem.

It is hard to make distinctions in some cases but I think the will of the people and the literature from the state, are clear that you are a policy board, not a detail and process board. I think you must focus on the long-term, developmental issues, the budget and the unforeseen issues that might come up, and try to let the Town Manager do his job. There are so many, good, positive, long term things in this town that you could be working on---parks, river access, nature conservancy, Museum-relations, Dartmouth-relations, greater understanding of our own society, greater help for the aged, better support for the volunteer groups, low-income housing, support of our business sector, to name a few. Look, there is a difference between development and maintenance. The town administration can maintain the house, your job is to find ways to develop the house. Cleaning and painting are different from building anew. The Boards job is policy, oversight, planning, stimulating. It is a mistake to worry about the potholes. Do policy. The job will be a lot easier and more rewarding.

6. All this is to say that it would be unjust and demoralizing to a lot of people in town, including town government, if you do not do the right thing and reappoint Webster. He deserves three years. Please do not plunge this town into an ugly, unnecessary, smear-ridden event that will consume us all.

Sincerely

Norman

Norman N. Miller
177 New Boston Rd
Norwich, Vt. 05055

PS..Steve, please forward this to Linda and Chipper...I do not have their emails.