

John Parow Consulting & Associates

32 School Street

Chelmsford, MA. 01863

978.490.4736

John.Parow@comcast.net

Parowconsulting.com

Overview of the evaluation/hiring process for the Nantucket Fire Chief

A current job advertisement was developed by the Town and me based on the current position of Fire Chief and job requirements (see Appendix A). Some of the requirements were:

- Minimum of fifteen (15) years of professional experience in an organized fire department
- At least five (5) years of experience in a command capacity
- A two or four-year degree
- A valid driver's license
- Salary \$160,000 commensurate with experience
- Nantucket residency required

Eighteen resumes and cover letters were received. On May 10, 2022, the resumes and cover letters were reviewed, in a virtual meeting, by three members of the Town and me to determine, by consensus, the best qualified candidates that should be moved to the next step in the process, the structured interview.

Eight candidates were moved to the structured interview process. The interviews were scheduled and held online over two afternoons, May 20th and 24th, 2022, four candidates each day. The breakdown of candidates were:

- Six had served as Chief of Department all between 4 and 15 years in that position
- One Assistant Fire Chief with 9 years in that position
- One Deputy Chief

The structured interview process offers more objectivity into the hiring process. By creating a standardized list of questions and assessment methods, you can make equitable comparisons between candidates because there is less room for common interviewer biases.

Sixteen questions were developed to address aspects of the job of Fire Chief, including management and leadership experience and style, Human Resource issues, professional development for self and department members, employee motivation, budget and grant

writing experience and success, labor management and collective bargaining experience, etc. At the end of the prepared questions, follow-up questions could or were asked and each candidate was given an opportunity to ask questions if time allowed.

All candidates were rated individually by those on the interview panel and then a general discussion about each candidates' strengths and weakness in the interview and a deeper review of their resumes was done. The deeper review of the resumes included time as a Fire command officer, time in grade as a chief officer, management experience, budget experience, labor relations experience, EMS certification, education, relative certifications, etc. After a thorough review and again by consensus, it was decided that three candidates met the criteria to move to next step in the process, the assessment center.

During the resume review meeting, May 10, 2022, the Town Manager asked Parow Consulting to reach out to the Union President to get his input on what the Union would like to see in their next Fire Chief and current and future issues. I contacted the Union President by email on May 16, 2022 but did not receive a response back until May 22, 2022. On the 22nd we set up time to talk and met via telephone on May 25, 2022. The meeting with the Union President was cordial, professional and very informative.

The assessment center was custom designed for the position of Fire Chief in the Town of Nantucket. It was held virtually on June 29, 2022. Five specific exercises were developed. Two of the exercises developed were directly related to the meeting with the Union President. The other three exercises were developed by Parow Consulting with input from the Town.

The value of an assessment center is that it evaluates the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities required for this specific position (Nantucket Fire Chief) in an objective manner. As a Fire Chief, most of the responsibilities are with day-to-day management, budgeting and moving the department into the future, however, with much less frequency, dealing with emergencies is also an important piece. The assessment center was designed to cover all these aspects. The following five exercises were developed and then administered and scored by four independent and experienced assessors. The five exercises were:

- A written/oral exercise. Candidates address an issue unique to the Island of Nantucket. The written part of this exercise was given to the candidates ahead of time and needed to be submitted by a certain date. The oral exercise was to present and answer questions, from the assessors, on the plan itself.
- An In-basket exercise. The candidates needed to respond appropriately to multiple items that they might experience as Fire Chief. These items were customized to the department and were based on current and future issues. Items included daily situations, emails, memos, letters from citizens, phone calls, etc.
- A Community Meeting exercise. Candidates addressed a community group and answered questions from concern citizens.

- Human Relation issue(s). Candidates had to address an HR issue which was disrupting the operations of the department.
- Incident Simulation. This exercise was computer-generated and simulated an emergency incident in the community. Common Nantucket response was used by using current staffing and incident run cards.

All Exercises were viewed virtually by representatives from Nantucket. After the assessment center was complete and scored the Town representatives and the assessors discussed the outcomes of the process as it related to each candidate.

A final report was developed and given to the Town Manager.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John E. Parow". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

John E. Parow

Town of Nantucket, MA Fire Chief Opportunity

The Town of Nantucket seeks qualified candidates for the position of full time Fire Chief. Appointed by the Town Manager, the Fire Chief performs and oversees a wide variety of functions related to the physical well-being of residents and visitors. Coordinates and supervises the divisions of the Department that handle emergency calls, fire protection and prevention, fire inspection and arson investigation; as well as building and vehicle maintenance including ensuring compliance with all related laws, rules and regulations

Qualifications: Minimum of fifteen (15) years of professional experience in an organized fire department with at least five (5) years of experience in a command capacity; Successful completion of two or four-year accredited fire science technology schooling or any equivalent combination of education and experience desired; Must have a valid Driver's License; Current Commonwealth of Massachusetts EMT certification desired.

The Town of Nantucket offers a retirement pension through Barnstable County Retirement, 90% employer sponsored health insurance plan options and a diverse selection of supplemental insurance policies.

Salary \$160,000 commensurate with experience and subject to negotiation; Residency required.

Application Deadline April 30, 2022 at 4:00pm

Complete posting: [Fire Chief](#)

Send cover letter, resume and completed Town of Nantucket employment application to Human Resources, 16 Broad St., Nantucket, MA 02554 or email the application to HR@nantucket-ma.gov . Visit our website at www.nantucket-ma.gov to apply online and view the full position profile. AA/EOE