

MINUTES
OF THE
GENERAL MANAGER SEARCH COMMITTEE
OF THE
WOODS HOLE, MARTHA’S VINEYARD
AND NANTUCKET STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY

May 12, 2025

Virtual meeting only

Committee Members present: Board Chair James Malkin of Dukes County; Board Member Robert R. Jones of Barnstable; Port Council Chair Nathaniel E. Lowell of Nantucket; and Port Council Member Robert S.C. Munier of Falmouth. All members participated via Zoom videoconferencing.

Authority Management present: General Manager Robert B. Davis; General Counsel Terence G. Kenneally; Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll; and Director of Human Resources Janice L. Kennefick. Mr. Davis participated remotely; the remaining staff members were in Room 201 at the Authority’s Administrative Offices.

1. Mr. Malkin called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.
2. Mr. Malkin announced Mr. Driscoll was making a video and audio recording of the meeting.
3. Mr. Malkin announced that, pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, as amended, search committee members were participating remotely in the meeting because their physical attendance would be unreasonably difficult. The members participated via Zoom videoconferencing and were clearly audible to one another. As a result of the members’ remote participation, all votes taken were to be by roll call vote.
4. Mr. Kenneally highlighted the agenda items for the meeting and suggested that the committee discuss and approve the minutes of its meetings on January 15, 2025, January 28, 2025, February 10, 2025, February 20, 2025 and March 4, 2025. Mr. Jones noted that he had a minor correction for the January 15, 2025 where he was incorrectly credited with a suggestion that was attributable to Mr. Malkin. That change was agreed and implemented.

Minutes:

IT WAS VOTED – upon a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Lowell – to approve the minutes of the Committee’s meetings in public session on January 15, 2025, January 28, 2025, February 10, 2025, February 20, 2025 and March 4, 2025.

VOTING	AYE	NAY
Mr. Malkin	25 %	
Mr. Jones	25 %	
Mr. Lowell	25 %	
Mr. Munier	25 %	
TOTAL	100 %	0 %

5. Mr. Malkin then invited Jonathan Pearse of Faststream to provide an update on its search efforts to date. Mr. Pearse reported generally concerning Faststream’s discussions with each member of the Search Committee. He stressed that they are seeking a leader who is accountable, collaborative, a proactive communicator, who has a customer service-oriented mentality and delegates responsibilities to staff. Each member also communicated the different interests that each of their communities have but acknowledged the Authority’s overall mission to serve the wider community. A successful candidate needs to be diplomatic and continue to support the Authority’s long history of good service.
6. Mr. Munier stressed the importance of strategic thinking and forecasting the long term for the organization.
7. Mr. Pearse mentioned their initial timeline was twelve (12) weeks but acknowledged that the summer months may slow the process as candidates are on vacation. In two (2) weeks, Mr. Pearse will provide a brief update on the process to Ms. Kennefick and in four (4) weeks, Mr. Pearse proposed to have a more formal review of the process and status update. Mr. Jones mentioned that he doesn’t wish to rush the process forward. Mr. Pearse acknowledged the concern and indicated that the approach will be earnest, but the quality outcome will be the mission.
8. Mr. Lowell expressed the need to find the “right person” and acknowledged the Authority’s lack of experience with the current approach.
9. Mr. Munier commented on the search’s timeline and the logistics of having interviews and meetings that may have prolonged the search efforts. Mr. Lowell mentioned that the legal requirements of the open meeting law have affected the process, but it’s unavoidable.
10. Mr. Pearse expressed confidence that his team could find individuals with talent to fill the role even though it’s a unique role at a unique organization. Mr. Pearse mentioned the need

for “panel interviewing” at some point in the process. Mr. Malkin followed up by clarifying that initial interviews will be in executive sessions so as not to put a candidate’s current role in jeopardy. Mr. Pearse agreed and expressed that initial interviews are a two-way street where each party is attempting to get to know the other party. Mr. Jones expressed a concern about losing potentially qualified candidates due to the public setting that the role presents. Mr. Pearse mentioned that a candidate’s willingness or confidence in a public process may influence how the process and the individual’s candidacy are managed.

11. Mr. Pearse introduced Mr. Matthew Barwell of Faststream to provide his comments on the role’s job description. Mr. Barwell explained that the job description is the “shop window” for candidates to be introduced to the role. Mr. Barwell previously provided a draft copy of the description to Ms. Kennefick. Mr. Malkin requested that the draft be shared with the committee members for their potential comments.
12. Mr. Pearse also stated that he and Mr. Barwell have been developing a “scoring system” that may be useful for the process. Mr. Malkin expressed his interest in the “rubric.” Mr. Jones asked for a more general approach rather than numeric scoring, such as “advantageous” or “outstanding.” Mr. Pearse advised that they are working on something that is “practical, functional, and not overly complicated.” He also mentioned that candidates will provide an executive summary along with their curricula vitae for consideration.
13. In response to a question from Mr. Munier, Mr. Pearse advised that the role is unique, and the process is in its early stages and to provide comments on potential candidates is premature at this point.
14. During public comment, Ms. Amy Cody inquired whether it was “standard practice” to have the current general manager involved in the process of finding his successor. Mr. Pearse advised that “if we’re talking about a replacement, it would be usual that the senior individuals in this case, who they report to, and let’s say the board, would take the first rounds. That doesn’t preclude the possibility, but I’ll defer to the board’s comments around whether they would like that to happen or whether there’s any reason why they’re not in favor of it.”
15. Mr. Lowell advised that Mr. Davis’s involvement is important given the amount of knowledge that he possesses about the Authority, its history, and its operations. The “new person” in the role is “is going to need a lot of support, and they’re going to need Bob’s support, as well as the senior staff.” Mr. Jones concurred that Mr. Davis should be involved in the search process.
16. Then, at 12:56 p.m., upon a motion from Mr. Jones and a second by Mr. Lowell, the General Manager Search Committee **voted** 4-0 to adjourn its meeting.

A TRUE RECORD

Terence Kenneally, Clerk of the Authority

Documents and Exhibits Used at the Committee's May 12, 2025 Meeting

1. Agenda for the Committee's May 12, 2025, meeting posted and revised on May 6, 2025.
2. Recording announcement.
3. Statement regarding remote participation.