
Lombardi chosen to lead Brewster

By Ethan Genter / Cape Cod Times

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After months of searching, Brewster, Mass., town officials voted Monday to offer Peter Lombardi, the town administrator of Wenham, a contract for the top job in Brewster.

The Brewster Select Board held an open house and formal interviews Saturday with Lombardi and Daniel Hoort, the other finalist for the town administrator position.

The board was unanimous in its support for Lombardi, with each member gave him glowing reviews.

“Peter is really an exceptional candidate,” Select Board member John Dickson said.

He told the board his leadership philosophy had five core values focused on maintaining a process, attaining goals, being responsive, being transparent and fostering relationships.

Board members credited Lombardi’s work experience in off-Cape coastal communities and the awards he has won for his budget presentations.

“He has a commitment to professional development and getting the best ideas and the best practices from everywhere,” Dickson said.

The town has been without a full-time town administrator since Michael Embury resigned in June while issues were raised about the town’s finances. Among the irregularities discovered, town officials found that account ledgers and the general ledger were not reconciled, money was spent without town meeting approval, and controls that warn against overspending had been turned off. The finance director at the time, Irene Larivee, also no longer works for the town. An audit of the past fiscal year is ongoing.

Assistant Town Administrator Susan Broderick filled in briefly until the Select Board voted to bring on Yarmouth Selectman Mark Forest to serve as an interim town administrator.

The board put an emphasis on finding a candidate with a strong municipal finance background. Five people were interviewed, with Hoort, Lombardi and Peter Morin, the town administrator in Norwell, emerging as finalists. Morin later withdrew from consideration.

Before he moved to Wenham, Lombardi served as director of policy and administration in the Newburyport mayor's office and was the grants administrator for the town of Winthrop. Hoort is a certified public accountant and served as the director of municipal finance in Provincetown for six years.

During their interviews with the Select Board on Saturday, both candidates emphasized the need for transparency and ethical conduct.

Select Board member Mary Chaffee praised Lombardi's efforts to get the community involved in town affairs.

"He clearly believes in citizen engagement, and so do we," Chaffee said.

"I am honored to have been offered the position and wish to express my gratitude to the Select Board for their incredibly thoughtful and inclusive process," Lombardi told the Times. "I am excited to join this outstanding organization and wonderful community. I look forward to the opportunity to make a lasting difference in Brewster."

One of the first decisions for Lombardi will be to search for a new finance director to replace Larivee.

Forest will continue in the interim role through May to help with the transition. The board will begin contract negotiations with Lombardi, who is expected to start in March or April, following a background check. The compensation for the position was advertised at \$150,000 but could be more based on the experience of the candidate.

The decision to select Lombardi could be welcome news in Wellfleet. In a Jan. 22 executive session, Wellfleet Select Board members voted to renew Hoort's

existing three-year contract as town administrator. But the board has not had a chance to discuss the matter further because an executive session scheduled for Friday was canceled due to illness. The board now intends to meet in executive session at noon Tuesday, Chairwoman Janet Reinhart said Monday.

Hoort signed a three-year contract with the town Aug. 9, 2016, with a starting annual salary of \$115,000. In the contract, Hoort is allowed to resign at any time as long as he gives the Select Board a 90-day written notice, which can be waived or shortened at the discretion of the board.

— *Follow Ethan Genter on Twitter: [@EthanGenterCCT](https://twitter.com/EthanGenterCCT). Staff writer Mary Ann Bragg contributed to this report.*