

SC Campaign Finance Board Meeting Summary
March 31, 2020 - 9:00 AM
via Conference Call

Participants on call: Lisa Scott-Chair, Honorable John Toomey, Adrian Fassett, Dan Dubois, Steve Randazzo, Gina Popovich

1. Call to Order: 9:00 AM

2. Public Comments: None

3. Review March 24, 2020 meeting minutes:

Motion by **Honorable John Toomey**; Seconded by **Adrian Fassett**

4. Discussion on Resumes received from Indeed, Executive Director Posting:

Lisa Scott: Seems like everyone who has had an accounting job has applied for this job. Both Honorable John Toomey and Adrian Fassett agree. It looks like we have to go back and change some of the keywords. I looked at the job listing in Indeed and it looks like the keyword that it is looking for is “finance”, it is pulling applicants that have a finance background.

Dan Dubois: It might be hard to take the word “finance” out of the posting since it is part of the title. Maybe Steve Randazzo can call Civil Service and find out what we can do.

Lisa Scott: I did go back to look at what we wrote and it seems that no one is reading any further down the posting than its about finance and it would be good if you have at least one-year experience in accounting, I think that it is going to be a major problem.

Honorable John Toomey: I agree. I was overwhelmed by the amount of people with an accounting backgrounds and CPA’s that applied. It seemed like we were short on anyone with government experience of any kind and very little legal background, which I thought we would get some people with some legal background. I’m new to this and I had no idea what to expect.

Lisa Scott: I think we are not getting “legal” simply because there is no word with “law” or “legal” in the posting title.

Honorable John Toomey: Is it because as the result of the title “Campaign Finance Board”, that it goes in as “Finance” and everyone who reads this has a financial background? It is nothing that I thought of when we drafted the posting, that it would just funnel accountants into the application process, exclusively.

Lisa Scott: I assume, the world of job search, it’s like the old classifieds in the newspaper, you have to find out what category to look under, so now what is happening

is that people with a law degree are probably searching “law” or “legal”, and that’s not showing in our posting.

Honorable John Toomey: I was kind of looking for someone that was employed in the Campaign Finance Board with NYC to apply. I thought it might be one of the people under the Director then, would be making an application, but it seems like no one from any government agency has been making an inquiry into it, which I thought was surprising.

Lisa Scott: I thought that Amy Loprest in the city was getting the posting, but I don’t know now if she got the write up.

Honorable John Toomey: Maybe we should make sure we send it to her. But now, I think everyone has other things on their minds dealing with everything that is going on and people are working from home, now isn’t the best time to be looking for an Executive Director. It didn’t enter my mind about key words or phrases.

Adrian Fassett: I agree, we need to go back to the drawing board, I was disappointed with the resumes we received, they were good, but not what we were looking for, but something needs to be done.

Lisa Scott: It said at the top of the page that the job posting has been pulled.

Dan Dubois: I wouldn’t say that you need to go back to the drawing board, it’s really the experience section, it has “accounting/1yr. preferred”, I think that might be skewing things a little bit. As for the posting being pulled, I think that’s a question for Steve Randazzo. I think they probably pulled it to give you time to go through the resumes you have received already. You can go back and reactive the posting at any point.

Lisa Scott: We can reactivate with different verbiage. I was looking at what Dan mentioned. It looked like if you graduated college and you worked a year in accounting then you are in.

Dan Dubois: I spoke to Rob Calarco and about that the resumes were skewing towards the financial sector with finance experience and he thought that could be a useful experience since they have to deal with financial regulations and dealing with regulatory structure that this person will be responsible for setting up. So, he doesn’t think that is a bad experience to be drawing from.

Lisa Scott: Right, but that seems to be the only thing that these people have been doing in companies. What do you guys think?

Adrian Fassett: My CFO who is great and I worked with for 20 years, is a Duke undergrad and Warden MBA, she wouldn’t fit this position. I don’t want to sound like I am anti-finance people, but no one jumped out at me.

Honorable John Toomey: I'm glad that you said that, because nobody jumped out at me either. I think we looking for applicants with a lot more administrative experience than what we got, it really went toward the accounting aspect, which is important and useful, but I think we are looking for applicants with a lot more administrative experience because a lot of this is going to be going out there and selling the product that we are bringing to the public.

Dan Dubois: Maybe the key is to retool that experience a little bit. Switch it up and maybe put "Finance" a little bit lower, and change to "Public Administration" or Public Policy" experience, and rather than "preferred" change it to one to three years' experience or higher, so at least this way you get someone with a government background.

Lisa Scott: With Indeed how and where do you actually put it so it pops back when someone is looking rather than only finance. Would it make sense for us, as a group, to call Amy Loprest and see if we can send her this and ask her input on how to tweak it?

Dan Dubois: I will be happy to shoot her an email and kind of outline what we got back and what the board is looking for.

Lisa Scott: Before you do that Dan, can you shoot the board a draft of the email before you send it to Amy Loprest?

Honorable John Toomey: I'm interested if she's even aware of the Indeed posting. If she's not, then we missed our whole target and we are way off on it.

Lisa Scott: So I think we need to take a more active role in this and whether we subdivide among the three of us on the board just to follow up, but I think possibly part of the problem is the timing, not just in general but even in the Civil Service Department for Suffolk County, we are really not understanding the process and how all this works, and I think that is important for the three of us to really understand better. I'm wondering if it makes sense, in the next week or so, for the three of us to also have a short conference call with the senior manager, or anyone at civil service just to better understand how this works, the postings and the relationship with Indeed. There might be other areas that we can put it in. Again, because so many people and companies are on hiatus there are people that are just looking at other options even if they are employed and don't want another job, but are trying to see if there is more stability out there and civil service, which of course would be, so I think we are getting low hanging fruit and might not even be getting the right kind of candidates.

Steve Randazzo: Joined in on the call @ 9:12 AM

Adrian Fassett: Basically Steve, our issue is with the resumes we saw basically all skewed toward finance, I think everyone except for one. We are trying to figure out the best way to tweak the job description so Indeed could have less emphasis on the finance part. So maybe you can assist us on how Indeed works and any ideas you may have.

Lisa Scott: Clearly the key words that are popping up in people's searches are "finance" so we got 29 and a half accountants most with minimal experience. It appalls me that a former head of a company, almost nobody, had even an introductory thing relating to this job posting, it's like they popped the resumes in and there is no attempt made to correlate with what they do to with what we are looking for. As Adrian said, we need an understanding on how Indeed and how civil service driving Indeed works, we need to know if the key word function is something we need to control better since the searches are clearly not getting to the right people.

We realize that the experience level on the job posting when it says, one year legal or accounting, is bringing us people who literally worked for a couple years and don't have any experience other than a corporate accounting thing. We also don't even know if Amy Loprest got the posting. We were wondering if we should run it past it to her. It's just not getting to anyone in public service, public policy, public administration or law.

Steve Randazzo: I think its great feedback. I don't have great insight into the keyword aspect, I'm sure if you go into Indeed there are probably different bucket jobs like, finance, law, or education, I don't think you can control that. Let me talk to labor to see if there is anything we can do about keywords. The thing about this job is that it doesn't fall into any bucket. Finance is in the title so let me trouble shoot that to them and I will get back to you. It's just the nature of putting this on a national website. What I would encourage the board to do is to maybe tweak the posting. Civil Service will vet the resumes as they come in if you want them to, but it seems like the posting is so broad that even the people that are applying have technically met minimum qualifications. You may want to explore raising those minimum qualifications then civil service will vet the resumes that don't meet the minimum qualifications.

Lisa Scott: That is what we reached as well before you got on the call. We were just thinking that because the nature of the times, this is not a typical period. We get everybody, because everyone wants job stability and if the economy is really going to tank for a while, civil service seems great. So, they are all looking to see if there is any place that my work history overlaps with this job description and they send it in. I think that's what any person would do.

We need to somehow figure out if there are other ways we can get the posting out through a network that isn't a typical national search. Maybe through various organizations, there's got to be other ways, it's all about networking.

Steve Randazzo: I couldn't agree more. I think graduate institutions, government groups, groups that have an interest in campaign finance, probably have networks that you can post it and it will reach more targeted audience. We just have to figure out what those organizations and groups are, and I'm sure many of them will be more than happy to pass this posting along to their networks.

Lisa Scott: We know Amy Loprest now, she has 130 people working for her, she belongs to a lot of organizations and she networks nationally. What we really need to do now is to cement our bond with her and have her give us a little advice here and there.

Dan Dubios: She did mention that she would pass this on to her networks, and I think you are right, I don't think you are right, she did not get the posting. I think that is a good avenue to take.

Lisa Scott: We have three steps right now;

Action Items:

- 1) *understand the job posting system a little better and how Indeed works so that we are more conversant in it, I think we need to know that.*
- 2) *tweak the title of the posting where the keyword searches come in, we need to add "public administration" or "legal". I need to figure out the best way to do that.*
- 3) *network with Amy Loprest and figure out how to get that revised posting out there.*

That's my input.

Honorable John Toomey: That's what we said before, at this point we don't even know if Amy Loprest or anyone in her organization even has that job description. I think Dan Dubios said he would send it to her or send it to her contact if she didn't get it. We need to tweak the posting with Indeed. We need some type of resumes with administrative experience more than the accountant or legal, so they can actually start up a company and go with it.

Lisa Scott: I think we need to redo the posting before we send it to Amy Loprest or we will end up back in the same situation.

Honorable John Toomey: The sooner she realizes we are looking for somebody, the people in her network or organization will be able to read between the lines in the posting they will know what to do to it since they are in the business.

Lisa Scott: There are two parts to the Amy Loprest contact; **1)** we have to give her a slightly revised version of the posting now, because we know that having the one-year experience needs to change, **2)** then have her look at it, and not yet give it to her network until she and we, have a short conference call just to make sure we don't need to tweak it a little more. Once we get it out there to her people we might end up with a similar problem if it's not cleaned up a little bit. So maybe it's good in a way "in theory" that she didn't get the posting. But I think the first thing we need to do is just understand if this really a good description. "Is it too long? Do we need to redo the experience level? Do we need to slightly tweak the title so that there is Public Administration somewhere higher up on the page?" When I took it off the website it was just a sea of words. And I think anybody looking just skims through and sees "finance", and they are not really reading all the other stuff.

Adrian Fassett: Why don't we have Amy Loprest give us her input first, then we could tweak it from there. I think it is important to get her input first before then we tweak it from there. Then we can give her a final version to send out to her network.

Lisa Scott: Dan if you are going to do an initial reach out to her, send us a draft first, then we will all sign off on it before you send it to Amy.

Action item

Steve can you help with having someone in civil service give us a short tutorial with Indeed? It's crazy for the three of us to try to figure it out, it will be easier to have the people who use it all the time to give us a simple version of it, so we better understand how to target.

Steve Randazzo: I will either get clarification or maybe get someone from civil service do a future call, but I'm not sure myself if it's a matter of changing keywords or a matter of heightening the requirements within the posting or a combination of both, so I would like to ask them that myself.

Action item

Lisa Scott: Now all of this happens with algorithms and we are missing how to get the algorithm to capture what we want. Where do we need to tweak to narrow the results a little bit?

Lisa Scott: Do we want to talk to Amy Lorprest or once Dan sends her the email we can just do it all via email?

Adrian Fassett: No, we don't need to talk to her first. Let her look at the email first then we will get some suggestions.

Everyone agreed.

Next Meeting: April 7, 2020 @ 9:00am

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.