



Approved as amended by City Council on September 5, 2017

## **City Council Special Workshop Meeting July 13, 2017**

### **Call to Order**

Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach called the meeting to order in the Franklin Public Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at 6:33 p.m.

### **In Attendance**

Councilor Ribas, Councilor Moquin (arrived at 6:48 pm), Councilor Barton, Councilor Giunta (arrived at 6:42 pm), Councilor Desrochers, Councilor Wells, Councilor Zink (via telephone), Councilor Dzujna, City Manager Dragon and Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach.

Salute to the Flag was led by Councilor Ribas.

Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated tonight's meeting is how to move forward before City Manager Dragon's departure. The council needs to be in sync for finding a qualified candidate. Prior to this meeting he met with City Manager Dragon about options like what free services are available and other contractible options for a fee.

City Manager Dragon passed out some documents. The first document is the administrative code as there is no job description and the job duties and description comes from the code. One thing she mentioned is that development and redevelopment by the city which was not something being done when she was hired. Today that is a big part of her job so when hiring the next city manager they need to think about that person having some redevelopment experience. She also mentioned that since Franklin is the smallest city in NH the NH candidates that apply will most likely come from other towns and not a lot of candidates coming from other cities, as larger cities pay more. She mentioned that they would likely need to look for someone with strengths in the following areas:

- economic development experience
- drug task force as this is tied to the city and no other task force in NH is tied to a municipality
- someone with a good grasp on finances to understand and be creative and also understand grants
- ability to work with a variety of people, personalities, organizations and communities
- has to be very hands on as there is no one else to do it. The department heads are very capable but there are so many strange things that occur that the City Manager has to deal with so that also requires problem solving and conflict resolution.

City Manager Dragon stated she has looked at what other cities have done. Primex is an organization that the city belongs too and they will help get the city organized. They don't do the recruiting. This is a free service. She passed out a document that Primex prepared about what they offer. She has

tentatively scheduled them to come on July 24 to talk to the council. She passed out Keene's RFP that they used to find a recruiting firm, if the council wants to go that route.

City Manager Dragon passed out a listing of recruiting firms that included their pricing and there are only two (2) in NH which are MRI and Brenner (not sure Brenner is still in business). Keene used Novak. The process that Keene went through with Novak was they spent time with the recruiter coming up with the advertisement (writing job description, priorities and profile to use). The recruiter advertised it in multiple places and went through all the resume submissions to narrow it down. Keene had asked for a writing sample and the recruiter did that as well. The final candidates will come in how the council prefers. Keene had one day of five (5) candidates and then the next day it was the final two (2) candidates. The recruiter will do the background check, reference check, criminal check, education check and the final negotiations with the candidate. In the end the council will vote and ratify the contract. Once the job is posted it will be for thirty (30) days and the beginning to end of this process can be up to six (6) months.

City Manager Dragon asked tonight for the council to give direction as what they want her to work on, how soon they will begin the process and what they are thinking for Interim City Manager. She looked back at what was done in the past per request from Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach. The last interim was a contract for a period of time and they were paid for that as they were not doing both jobs at once. She ran a comparison and there are four (4) months that the city will not paying so a stipend could be paid to the interim. City Manager Dragon is recommending \$500 a week and then the amount for the recruiters, in the end there is still a savings.

Councilor Desrochers stated that he doesn't mind Finance Director Milner filling in and the council would be crazy not to hire a recruiter. Councilor Dzujna asked when the recruiter goes out will they look at assistant managers not just the city manager. City Manager Dragon stated that anyone can apply and the recruiter will look based on the qualifications that the council decides.

Councilor Barton asked if the recruiter will meet with the council first and City Manager Dragon stated yes.

Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated the recruiter will be looking for the best candidates. It makes sense to go with a recruiter. Primex is interesting to use and collaborate with as they will offer the first steps. He didn't feel that having Primex come in is energy wasted.

Councilor Giunta stated that he has to ask if Finance Director Milner will consider the position but not to give an answer today. He stated the council won't be able to hire someone who cares and knows the community like she does, so he asked her to think about it and let them know by the next meeting. Finance Director Milner stated she loves filling in but she is also too happy to see the city manager when she returns and doesn't feel she would do the right job for Franklin if she wasn't happy.

Councilor Wells asked if the council needs to look at hiring a person for six (6) months for administration. City Manager Dragon and Finance Director Milner stated that is hard to say. Councilor Wells asked if Finance Director Milner gets overwhelmed she will come to the council to address that. City Manager Dragon stated that Finance Director Milner is not taking on new items or additional tasks but just to maintain what is already happening.

Councilor Desrochers stated that the school superintendent makes a lot more than the city manager would we have to increase that. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated the recruiter will let them know what the range should be. Councilor Desrochers stated that the council needs to be prepared for that and find the money. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated he doesn't feel that the pay will automatically increase and the council needs to do everything necessary to find the best candidate. Leadership is a very important asset to the community and if there is lack of leadership because of the council, being the governing body, then that is a huge detriment to the city.

Councilor Dzujna thanked Finance Director Milner for being honest about her position and he feels that the department heads and the council will have to step up and do more.

Councilor Giunta asked City Manager Dragon when the Interim City Manager would begin those duties. City Manager Dragon stated that it would be September 18. She wanted to readdress the salary as all salaries are on NHMA and you can compare them. When she began nine (9) years ago she was at \$80K and now she is at \$97K which she feels is a fair salary for the size of the community. She feels that if the salary goes over \$100K it is not something the community can afford with such a high poverty rate. Laconia is around \$120K but they are about twice the size of Franklin but feels the starting pay should be raised.

Councilor Moquin asked if the council can come up with next steps or a consensus tonight about a recruiter. City Manager Dragon stated for tonight she would like for the council to decide on an interim city manager. She stated she scheduled Primex to come in for the next workshop meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> to discuss the job description and the process. She would like the council to look at Keene's RFP and to make a decision on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Councilor Barton clarified that Primex is free and that they will get the council started. He asked if they can give recommendations as to which recruiter to use and City Manager Dragon said no. City Manager Dragon stated Primex is here to help with questions and they will make no decisions.

Councilor Wells clarified that the administrative code is her job description. City Manager Dragon stated that is the closest thing they have as well as her contract. Primex will help make a position description.

Councilor Ribas asked if NHMA can help with anything. City Manager Dragon stated that NHMA used to be LGC but that is no longer and NHMA mainly does just training and municipal advocacy. Councilor Ribas asked if the prices on the recruiter sheet are a flat fee or based on the size of the city. City Manager Dragon replied by saying that is based on Keene so she would think it would be lower.

Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach interjected stating that this would be Franklin's upper end as when LRGHealthcare did a search it was based on 25% of the salary of the position that is going to be listed.

***Motion: Councilor Ribas moved that the Franklin City Council nominate Judie Milner as the Interim City Manager effective September 18, 2017 with a stipend of \$500 a week. Motion seconded by Councilor Desrochers.***

***All in favor; motion passes.***

Councilor Giunta mentioned that as a follow up to Primex that the council should solicit candidates and get a list together of people and then go to the recruiter as an alternative. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach feels that the council should use Primex to begin then use a recruiter as they can be impartial to any name that comes forward. The council would have to be committed and would have to sift through all the candidates and be impartial even though it would be nice for a local or in house candidate to get the job.

City Manager Dragon stated that when this hit the news normally someone interested would contact her for information. She doesn't know of many candidates as this time who will apply. Councilor Dzujna stated that the job description is important as is the criteria because when City Manager Dragon began revitalization wasn't part of the job and now it is a big piece of the job. Councilor Barton clarified that when Primex comes they will guide the council and clean up the job description. City Manager Dragon stated that they will do both and it should be done at the same time. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that they can also help negotiate the items.

Councilor Wells asked if there will be a selection committee. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that he feels that since the council makes the final decision a subcommittee is not needed as it becomes too complicated and he suggests the full council as they all have an equal vote. He also stated that there is also a confidentiality piece with the candidates and if the council shares information with the wrong people the council can be held liable. Councilor Dzujna stated that when the school did their superintendent search they had some problems with information getting out. Councilor Dzujna asked if the public will have a say as he has heard people asking. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that these are public meetings and if people wanted to have input they would have to come to the public meetings.

Councilor Desrochers stated he feels the same and all nine (9) members of the council should be the group and not a select group.

Councilor Zink asked if there is a city manager contingency in the budget that can help towards this expense and with the elections in October will the new Mayor be added to the process? Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that there is a manager's contingency of \$20K and this is the beginning of the FY18 budget and there will be 4 months of the salary that will help offset. With regards to the new Mayor he hopes to have a city manager hired before 2017 is over. Councilor Zink

asked if the newly elected members will be brought up to speed about the process and the current members no longer be in the process. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that he will do his best to make sure a city manager is hired before the end of 2017. Councilor Zink asked if the newly elected members be included in the process after the October elections. Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that would not be prudent and Councilor Desrochers stated they can't as they won't be sworn in.

Interim Mayor/Councilor Clarenbach stated that some of this the council has control over and some the process has control over. He suggested the council take home the RFP for a recruiter and look at it so on the 24<sup>th</sup> they can discuss the council's thoughts and changes so an RFP can be sent out.

Councilor Giunta again asked Finance Director Milner to sleep on the decision.

***Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Giunta and seconded by Councilor Dzujna. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauraine G. Paquin