

Special Called Meeting April 24, 2018 at 1:00 PM

Mayor Horace Reid called the meeting to order. Commissioners present were Mayor Pro Tem Archie Aples, Commissioners Sid Eley, Frank Norman, and Quentin Jackson. Others present were Town Manager Brandon Shoaf, Town Clerk Cindy Sharber, Hartwell Wright, a Consultant for N. C. League of Municipalities, Tim and Kim Brinn, Sara Winslow, Murielle Harmon, Frank and Connie Jaklic, Diane Stallings, Pam Hurdle, Sharon Smith, Skip and Kay Matthews, Barry Ford, Peter Williams, Virginia Miller, Don Keith, and Johnnie Finch.

Mayor Reid led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Sid Eley had the prayer.

Quentin Jackson wanted to add council concerns to the agenda before accepted. Brandon Shoaf advised they shouldn't amend the agenda since they could only discuss what was advertised for the special called meeting.

Motion by Quentin Jackson and seconded by Sid Eley, and passed 5-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

New Business

Brandon Shoaf presented a resolution and agreement with Municipal Insurance Trust for group medical insurance for employees for fiscal year 2018-2019. Brandon said that our current medical insurance carrier, Aetna, will no longer cover employers with a small number of employees. He said that we can get equal, if not better coverage for less per employee. He said he could have waited until the June meeting but needed to go ahead and get approval to allow staff and MIT time to get employees enrolled. Motion by Quentin Jackson and seconded by Archie Aples, and passed 5-0 to approve the resolution and agreement with Municipal Insurance Trust as presented for medical insurance for employees for fiscal year 2018-2019.

Hartwell Wright, consultant for the N. C. League of Municipalities presented an outline format for selecting a town manager.

Hartwell urged council to ask questions at any time.

Hartwell advised the board they needed to appoint an interim town manager as soon as possible after May 28. He advised they could only have one manager at a time.

Hartwell called the manager the ambassador for the town. Frank ask for clarification of him using the term ambassador. Hartwell said the manager is the town representative to your citizens.

Quentin Jackson said the manger works for council and the employees work for the manager.

Harwell said that was correct that Hertford had a Council/Manager form of government and the N. C. General Statues empower the manager to hire and fire all employees and that they work at the pleasure of the manager not the board. The board is empowered to hire and fire the manager, town clerk, and town attorney.

Hartwell presented the outline format for selecting a town manager as follows:

A. Roles

1. League

- Identify Positive Process to the elected body

Hartwell said the League does not get involved in individual personnel issues.

2. Town

- Conduct Process?
(Select Staff/Resource Person: Clerical Support will be necessary) he said the board could do this themselves or hire a consultant
- Confidentiality? (when does it become public?) if you share a name with permission you are in violation
- Employee search firm? (determine how much you will do and what you want the search firm to do)

Hartwell suggested that each member of council write down 3 or 4 things they felt the manager should have. He said them compile their list to narrow down the items they would like which would create a profile. He suggested that they not use absolute words such as must or required. He said if council is doing the process themselves it could take 6 months or more and a firm could possibly shorten that time.

Quentin Jackson asked could they appoint the mayor as the interim town manager. Hartwell said they could not and that no member of council could be an employee of the Town.

Frank Norman asked what the average consulting fee was. Hartwell said he would estimate \$15,000 - \$20,000.

Sid Eley said council was responsible for setting policies and approving the budget.

Quentin Jackson began reading from a School of Government book about the role of Mayor, Council and Manager.

Mayor Reid stopped Quentin Jackson and informed him he was reading information for the whole state which didn't pertain to our individual charter.

Quentin Jackson left the meeting after this at 1:34PM, wishing the Mayor a good day.

B. Importance of Process

- The Manager "manages your Town"., this equates the importance.

- Possibly the most important decision in your term of office.

Hartwell said if you have an employee that is good friends with a council member and is being protected by council from any actions by the manager then your manager just as well go home.

C. Agree on What You Want in Manager

1. Consider:

- Where the Town is administratively
 - Look at needs of Town
 - Look at strengths and weaknesses
 - Past successes and failures
- Manager should mirror the executive and administrative needs of the Town
- Express the above in the form of desirable qualifications
This becomes the guideline for screening of applicants

Examples

Education: MA in Public or Business Administration Preferred/Required

Experience: 3-5 years of Local Government Manager/Asst. Manager experience required/preferred

Special Qualifications: (competence, skill, abilities)

- Degree?
- Finance Experience?
- Engineering Experience?
- Previous Manager Experience?
- Computer Skills?
- Budget Experience?
- Water/Sewer Experience?

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D. Agree on Time Frame/Procedure for Selection

1. Timeframe

- Plan on a 6 month's time frame: it could be less, however.
- Selection Timetable:
 - 2 months Application Process
 - 1-month Screening Down, Interview Process
 - 1 month selecting the candidate: The Manager gives notice in present position (4-8 weeks)
 - 2 months Manager on Board

2. Salary Range (Perks)

A competitive starting salary range for this position based upon Hertford's size, service delivery, geographic area, and population is roughly \$85,000 to \$90,000. (Car or allowance? Life insurance plan? Disability insurance? Deferred income? Cover cost of individuals state retirement contribution? Health care for dependents? Etc.)

Hartwell said they could review a salary spreadsheet of other towns their size by logging on to the league website.

Frank Norman asked wouldn't the salary history of those applying be on the application? Hartwell said most application only list a few jobs he recommended getting a history.

3. Publication of Vacancy

- ICMA Newsletter (bi-weekly newsletter)
- National league of Cities publication
- League Letter
- Southern Cities
- Local Newspaper
- Statewide Newspaper(s) with general distribution in community; Raleigh and Charlotte newspapers

4. Screening Process

(a) Alternatives

- Use full elected body, with Staff/Resource person.
- Use committee of elected body, with Staff/Resource person.
- Let Search Firm screen down to a set number

Note: Preferably use full elected body, all gets involved in selection of Manager; most municipalities use this process.

Hartwell said they needed to have 1 person doing the reference checks and report back to council. He said with technology they wouldn't have to spend a lot of money doing interviews to help narrow their search.

Sid Eley asked if all the information they receive was confidential.

Hartwell warned that all the information was confidential and if they took a hard copy home they needed to protect the information. He warned if they mentioned anybody by name they should do so in closed session.

Hartwell told them they needed to select who would be responsible for receiving the resume' and that person needs to send a letter acknowledging that you received their resume'.

Hartwell recommended they set firm rules and stick with them and make sure whoever is responsible for the applications that they provide that information to all members of council at the same time and that they all use the same profile criteria when reviewing. He recommended they have a good file and a bad file and if council is using the profile they set up will help each of them to be consistent.

(b) Procedure

- Accept resumes BUT require each candidate to complete a Town application to be considered further.
- Acknowledge receipt of each application – this is important.
- Eliminate applicants who do not meet minimum qualifications or complete an application; Staff/Resource person can assist here.
- Another device to assist with the screening is to ask each applicant to answer one to three supplementary questions using more no more than one page to answer each question. Some sample supplementary questions are attached. (See attachment A)
- Screen down to 5-7 (preferable 7) top candidates; each committee member does this individually; meet and compare notes – you will be surprised how close each of you will come to same consensus on candidates.

Alternativ *Draft*

- Let Staff/Resource person screen down to 5-7 candidates and each committee member review all and concern (or not),
- Staff/Resource person or other designated person does preliminary background review and investigation. (See Attachment “B”)
- After the preliminary review and investigation, you may lose 1-2 candidates – preferably have 5 candidates to interview.
- Recent technology allows for interactive TV interviews, using PC’s, with candidates anywhere in the USA. Also 30-minute video tape interviews are available anywhere in the USA. Using one of these methods would allow a personal look at a larger number of candidates for less cost than bringing the candidates on site. It would boost the effectiveness of the screening process. (See Attachment “C”)

5. Interview Process

- Notify each applicant (letter from Mayor) of the Town's interest and notice to interview giving all particulars; Staff/Resource person to assist here.
- Send with letter, copy of town Charter, budget and Organizational Chart.
- Send with letter, Personal Agenda of Interview Day Activities (chronology of activities on day of interview); (See Attachment "D")
- Pay travel expenses for the applicant? Spouse? Pay moving expenses?

6. Interview Session with Board

- The interview session should be planned and organized. Prepare questions ahead of time. Some sample questions are attached to get you started. The same interviewer should ask the same question of each candidate to help maintain consistency of treatment of all candidates. (See Attachment "E")
- The applicant should sense that the interview session is being done in a dignified business like manner.
- Remember, the applicant is looking at the Town's elected body as his potential employer and source of livelihood and commitment for the next foreseeable future. Therefore, the applicant has a big a "stake" in you as you have in him. You are not just hiring a Manager, you are selecting the leader of your Town Government and a community leader.

Hartwell suggested that they build in their interview questions about information you have sent them. He recommended allowing plenty of time for interviews. He suggested assigning someone to show them around town. He suggested a mock exercise to see how well they would respond such scenarios to see how well they would govern and a mock personnel issue to deal with. He recommended that they have an evaluation form and that they complete that as soon as the interview is over. He stated it is better to start the process over than hire the wrong person. He said there are currently 30 manager vacancies in the state

Hartwell recommended they run a separate federal background investigation. He recommended them hiring a consultant to do the background check because once they are hire the assume responsibility.

Hartwell said he wasn't sure about their residency requirement, but he recommended allowing the new manager the option of renting to allow time for them to sale their current home. He was certain that the next manager was going to ask for a contract

7. Select (Appoint) Top Candidate

The final step is to make the job offer. This can be done by phone, preferably from a written document outlining all conditions that are part of the job offer. The job offer is then confirmed in writing, including a request for a written acceptance.

Sid Eley said what if they make someone an offer and their wife don't want to come.

Hartwell said for reasons such as this you don't eliminate the next 2 or 3 choices in case your first choice backs out. At that point they have the option to choose from the other choices or start over.

Hartwell said they needed to write the remaining candidates informing them of the selection.

Hartwell advised them to have the Town Attorney craft the offer you tell him and have him review the contract because he assured them the next manager was going to ask for a contract to give them some protection because the town manager works for board.

Hartwell apologized for not being able to address Quentin Jackson's concerns before he left.

Archie Aples asked Hartwell if the League had a list of search firms. Hartwell said the League doesn't promote any of the search firms but does know the firms.

Sid Eley asked how much citizen involvement they should seek.

Hartwell encouraged engaging citizens for the public profile process only and not engage the community in your selection process.

Hartwell said he would be available to answer process questions but couldn't help them with their decision making.

Frank Norman asked how he preferred to be contacted.

Hartwell said phone call or email was fine he will always return call by at least the next day.

Motion by Archie Aples and seconded by Sid Eley, and passed 4-0 to adjourn the meeting.