

**THE WORKSESSION
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BENSON, ARIZONA
HELD FEBRUARY 11, 2013, AT 6:00 P.M.
AT CITY HALL, 120 W. 6TH STREET, BENSON, ARIZONA**

CALL TO ORDER:

Acting Mayor McGoffin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present were: Acting Mayor Lori McGoffin, Councilmembers Ron Brooks, David Lambert (arriving at 6:37 p.m.), Nick Maldonado, Chris Moncada and Al Sacco. Excused was: Mayor Toney D. King, Sr.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion and direction to Ken Strobeck of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns to develop an advertisement and position profile for the City Manager position

City Manager Glenn Nichols introduced Ken Strobeck of the League of Arizona Cities and Towns. Mr. Strobeck addressed Council stating the position of a City Manager is really one that is without doubt, the most important hiring decision a City Council will make. Mr. Strobeck then stated under the City Council-Manager form of government in this state, the City Council approves the budget, sets policy and goals, looks out for the vision of the City and then hires professional staff to implement Council policy, adding this is really a system that works well for local government. Mr. Strobeck stated this is the most prominent form of government across the United States for cities and counties, noting it works so well because it establishes credibility and accountability in the governmental system by having Council be the policy-makers who hire and hold the City Manager accountable, who then holds City staff accountable. Mr. Strobeck then stated the reason it works is not too many Councilmembers have degrees in public administration or experience in the system of government, adding they may be really good business people, but as the Council has learned, running a business is very different from running a government and this is why Councils have professional people who do that. Mr. Strobeck then stated the City Manager makes policy recommendations to the Council and answers to the Council following policy direction of the Council, but Council ultimately sets the policy. Mr. Strobeck then stated this is why cities have code provisions that generally prevent elected members of the Council from going and giving individual direction to City employees, adding if there were 7 people who came in every few days and directed Staff or told them to drop that project and pick up this project, it would result in chaos. Mr. Strobeck stated another reason this form of government was developed and works is to give assurance to the public, that their tax dollars are being spent professionally and objectively, adding it also addresses favoritism by separating Council and the political side of government from the administration and managerial side of government. Mr. Strobeck then again stated hiring a City Manager is an important decision, adding it is the most pivotal position in the City.

Mr. Strobeck then gave an overview of the League's recruitment process and discussed the hiring process, stating the League first works with the Council using a worksheet to create a profile with the characteristics Council would like to see in the City Manager, works with the Council on the advertisement they would like to use and advertises for the position.

Mr. Strobeck then stated in terms of what to expect in the marketplace, this is a good time, adding there is always a certain amount of churning in the profession of City Managers. Mr. Strobeck then stated ICMA (International City/County Manager Association) has determined the average length of time a City retains a City Manager is about 5 years, noting this means some stay 15-20 years while others have a very short

tenure. Mr. Strobeck then stated he expects to receive a lot of applications from people who have worked in other cities with some experience and knowledge and he also expects to see applicants who may have been dismissed from a previous position or left for a particular reason, adding it's not unusual to find managers in the business who have left under less than positive circumstances in one city but who work out fantastic in another city. Mr. Strobeck then stated with turnover on Council and other outside pressures creating a difficult situation, the Council should not look at someone's background and resume necessarily negative, but should look for a series of stability, without a lot of turnover and someone who has moved up with larger, more challenging duties and positions. Mr. Strobeck then stated the Council wouldn't want to hire someone who has no intention of being part of the community. Mr. Strobeck then stated some applicants will be people who are early in their career as well as people who are at the end of their career, adding some will probably be just out of college and looking for their first chief executive job as a City Manager and Council should think about whether they are willing to consider those applicants. Mr. Strobeck then stated City Managers operate with a personal services contract that outlines the employment agreement with the City and usually includes a severance package, adding it may contain a relocation allowance allowed also. Mr. Strobeck then stated the City Manager serves at the pleasure of the Council, noting at any time a 4 vote majority can terminate the City Manager, adding the severance provision protects both the City Manager, who enters the contract with his eyes open and the Council, who wants to attract a quality person.

Mr. Strobeck then stated the City Manager advertisement will be placed on the League's website and they recommend placing it on the ICMA national website as well, stating it would then be included in the ICMA newsletter, which goes out to several thousand members of ICMA, adding this is where the vast majority of qualified applicants come from. Mr. Strobeck then stated it is also a good idea to advertise in the local paper and on other job boards, noting the League often get applications from those, but usually those applicants don't understand the unique job of a City Manager. Mr. Strobeck then stated he feels it is also a courtesy for the City to advertise in the local paper to let the citizens know Council is looking for a manager and gives them the opportunity to see the advertisement. Mr. Strobeck stated the League will assemble the applications and resumes, acknowledging each one, and once the closing date occurs, they will screen the applicants based on the material Council has in the profile, the job description and anything else the League knows about them, adding since they do a lot of these recruitments at the League, they see a lot of the same names. Mr. Strobeck then stated sometimes you can look at a resume and think the applicant is fabulous, but research reveals a lot about some individuals, adding the League's recruiting process is a valuable service for Council. Mr. Strobeck stated at the end of this process, they will narrow the applicants down to 8-10 people they believe meet the qualifications Council wants and will then send those applications, along with all other applications, adding Council could review all of the applications or could choose to focus on the applicants the League recommends. Mr. Strobeck then stated the League would then ask the Council to narrow the applicants to 4 or 5 to consider as finalists, adding Council may want to go through a process of phone interviews of the 8-10 applicants the League recommends, but once Council has identified the finalists, the League will do an education verification, a courts background check to check for any criminal records and reference calling which will all be sent back to Council. Mr. Strobeck then stated to make the Council's selection even more refined, they may want to select 2 or 3 applicants to consider interviewing in person.

Councilmember Moncada asked if the League looked at accreditation for the educational institution with Mr. Strobeck stating that is something the League would look at before making a recommendation, adding education doesn't necessarily have to be in public administration and they usually say it should be in public administration or a related field, noting sometimes work experience has reasons for serious consideration. Councilmember Moncada then asked about the cost of the advertisements with Mr. Strobeck stating the League's fee is all inclusive.

Mr. Strobeck then reviewed the profile with the Council, stating the job description contains duties and expectations for job functions and responsibilities, but the profile is the characteristics and attributes of the people Council would like to see in the job, based on Council's experience. Mr. Strobeck then stated the

profile is not only a good tool for the League, but is also a good tool for the Council when they are interviewing candidates. Mr. Strobeck then stated Council should never hire a manager on a 4-3 vote, noting this is giving someone a handicap right out of the gate, so the Council needs to agree on what they want, who they want and then the candidate they want, once they have those people in front of them. Mr. Strobeck then stated it's important Council agree once they make a hiring decision, adding if they get to the point at the end of the day, that they are not really sure about the candidates or are not happy with the applicant pool, they shouldn't hire someone because they feel like they have to, adding Council can choose to have an Acting or Interim Manager before they have to make that decision.

Mr. Strobeck then began with education requirements, stating the job description says a master's degree is preferred, adding in today's world, a majority of the applicants will probably have a master's degree, noting this wasn't true of his generation, but now people generally think of getting a master's degree. Council discussed the education requirement for the profile, agreeing applicants should have at least a bachelor's degree in public administration or a related field with 10 years of experience or a master's degree in public administration or a related field with 5 years of experience. Council then discussed work experience, noting they would prefer someone with experience in addition to education since an education alone doesn't mean the applicant would be the most qualified. Mr. Strobeck then stated the ICMA does credentialing, which is a good indicator of professional commitment to the field of City Management and Council could use this as a differentiator in candidates.

Council then discussed experience and the preference for experience in the state of Arizona with Mr. Strobeck stating in general, it's easier for someone to start off with Arizona experience, but City Managers, especially with master's degrees, are going to be fairly adaptable from state to state, adding often times, people coming from other states bring other perspectives and have been very successful in Arizona. Council then agreed they were more interested in municipal government and municipal management experience and if the experience were in the state of Arizona, it would be a bonus. Mr. Strobeck then stated most of the time in the recruitment for a City Manager, the League looks for about 7 years of experience either as a manager or in a management capacity in cities, adding in that timeframe, the person has had time to realize what the job is and how it works. Mr. Strobeck then stated sometimes, applicants are fresh out of school, but the League recommends that they go somewhere and be a department head or a deputy manager for a few years before they become a City Manager. Council agreed with Mr. Strobeck.

Mr. Strobeck then moved to the subject of private sector experience and stated he wouldn't require it, but sometimes people really like the idea of private sector experience and to others, it doesn't matter, adding this is something Council needs to think about. Councilmember Maldonado stated he would take someone's private sector experience into account with Councilmember Sacco stating private sector experience would be a plus. Councilmember Brooks stated there are many times a municipality is directly aligned with the private sector and how that sector does a lot of times is how the municipality does. Councilmember Brooks then stated the relationship between the municipality and the private sector needs to be understood and if it isn't, there are conflicts between them, adding he also feels private sector experience would be a plus. Mr. Strobeck then stated many times, the applicants have military experience, adding he wouldn't recommend an applicant with military experience only, but if someone has military and civilian experience in municipal management, it would be considered good also.

Council then discussed administrative skills with Mr. Strobeck stating this covers what type of leadership style, characteristics and communication skills the Council would like in a City Manager. Acting Mayor McGoffin stated she would like to see a people person in the position and not someone who is condescending, adding the job consists of a lot of public relations. Councilmember Brooks agreed, stating we have had problems in the past and he would also like someone who can work with other departments to get solutions that leave both parties happy. Councilmember Maldonado stated he would like to see a person who can delegate, adding we have people who know what they are doing in their departments and while the City Manager should oversee them, he would like the City Manager not to micro-manage Staff, but allow them to do their jobs. Councilmember Brooks stated he would like someone with good overall

personal relations. Councilmember Moncada stated he would also like for the City Manager to have good communication skills as well as an open-door policy for Council, Staff, the public and City employees. Mr. Strobeck then stated he would write up the profile and then send it to Mr. Nichols and the Council, adding they can review it to make sure he captured everything accurately, noting he can then modify it based on the comments he receives back.

Council then discussed the area of budgets, finance and grants with Council agreeing the City Manager should be able to understand audits and reports the City generates, so when the Council has questions, he can answer them. Council then agreed the City Manager also needs to know where to look for grant opportunities and direct Staff toward them, actively pushing department heads to pursue them, as well as overseeing any grants the City receives. Mr. Strobeck then stated the profile would include the applicant being conversant in and having some financial background to include being able to present and explain the budget, being comfortable with presentations, and to be able to keep abreast of what is being built under Council authority.

Mr. Strobeck then moved the Council discussion to personnel and labor relations, stating Council has already decided they want someone who isn't a micro-manager and who isn't heavy-handed, since there is basically a good staff in place, adding they want someone who hires good people and works well with the current staff. Acting Mayor McGoffin stated she would like the City Manager to also be able to handle negative or disciplinary situations when they arise. Councilmember Brooks stated he would like to see someone with some inspirational ability and who knows how to empower people to get the job done. Councilmember Moncada stated the current City Manager, Mr. Nichols, is flexible with employees' schedules as long as their jobs are done and he would like to see someone who is flexible with employees to a point. Mr. Strobeck then stated he sees the Council doesn't want someone with a dictatorial style with the Council agreeing, adding the City had that and it was a bad idea.

Mr. Strobeck then moved to community relations stating the Council had stated earlier they would like to see someone with good public relations skills, good communication skills and someone who is accessible. Council then stated they would like someone to attend the Mayor/Manager luncheons and regional meetings, with Mr. Strobeck stating those subjects were under the subject of Intergovernmental Relations, adding this is more localized such as local club memberships and things like that. Council then stated they would like to see the City Manager belong to some local organizations and to meet at least once with each organization in the City to show the City is aware of them, and to be comfortable in making presentations in the community and being visible. Acting Mayor McGoffin stated it was also important to have someone who could get along with media. Mr. Strobeck stated he was assuming the Council would want someone who would live in the City and would put down roots, with Council stating they had made an exception to the City resident requirement with the current City Manager since he already owned a home 2 miles outside the City limits. Councilmember Brooks stated he felt it was important that the City Manager live inside the City limits with Council agreeing to discuss the issue. Mr. Strobeck then stated normally City Attorneys will tell Councils that a hard and fast residency requirement is probably not enforceable, but requiring a certain response time to City Hall or something like that is something Council could require, but it is perfectly fine to say they expect someone to live within the City as well.

Mr. Strobeck then discussed Council relations with Council stating they want the City Manager to have an open-door policy, adding Council should be able to contact the City Manager and come into his office to talk to him. Council then agreed and stated they wanted an honest person with great communication skills who was accessible and accountable. Acting Mayor McGoffin then stated she didn't want someone who was a "politician" or someone who would try and play politics. Councilmember Moncada agreed stating he wants someone who is more focused on doing a good job instead of worrying about whom they upset and whom they keep happy. Councilmember Brooks stated the Council currently gets reports from the City Manager on his activities and he would expect something like that to continue keeping the Council informed of substantial information.

Mr. Strobeck then briefly touched on intergovernmental relations stating Council had already addressed much of this with local meetings, such as Chamber meetings, and regional meetings attendance expected of the City Manager. Councilmember Moncada stated the Council would also expect the City Manager to attend the League of Arizona Cities and Towns' annual conference and to keep in contact with the League. Mr. Strobeck then asked about contact with other districts, such as the school district with Council stating the school usually contacts the City when they are requesting anything from the City.

Mr. Strobeck then asked if there were other things the Council would like to consider for an applicant, mentioning public works projects, tourist attractions or other knowledge about the City with Councilmember Moncada stating if the candidate had any experience in bringing businesses to their city and had some creative ideas on economic development, it would be very beneficial. Council then agreed that would be a big plus for the applicant. Mr. Strobeck then asked about a track record of success in other cities and a record of longevity with the Council agreeing that would also be something to look at. Mr. Strobeck then stated he would be sending the profile to Mr. Nichols and to Council for their comments.

Mr. Strobeck then addressed the advertisement for the City Manager position with much of the discussion focused on the salary range that would be advertised. Councilmember Moncada stated he would like to advertise a minimum to mid-point salary with Councilmember Brooks stating he would first like to see the League's salary survey Mr. Nichols had mentioned to the Council. Councilmember Brooks then stated he would like to put the City Manager's salary range on the next Council agenda to discuss what range should be advertised and he would like to review the salary survey to see what other cities our size were doing before that discussion. Acting Mayor McGoffin stated the City couldn't afford much higher for the City Manager position and she felt it would be better to advertise the minimum to mid-point salary, adding the City could always go up once they entered into negotiations with an applicant. Councilmember Brooks then stated he agreed, but he would like to make sure the salary range advertised makes sense for the City. Mr. Strobeck then stated the Council needs to be careful in this decision, adding \$89,000 looks really low in print for people who are professional City Managers with a master's degree and 7-10 years of experience, noting the City won't get very many applicants. Councilmember Brooks stated he didn't want to make a decision now about the pay range, but wanted to look at the survey and make sure what he was doing was right instead of just passing a range and then finding out later that for \$80,000, the City could have a really good manager for a City of our size. Mr. Strobeck then stated the Council needed to remember the adage about being penny-wise and pound-foolish, noting you get what you pay for, especially in the ranks of a City Manager, adding that was just a word of caution. Mr. Strobeck then stated the Council needed to be careful, adding he would not recommend the low number of \$89,000. Councilmember Brooks then stated he had no knowledge of the pay range and would like to look at it before deciding.

Human Resource Coordinator Melissa Quiroz stated a salary of \$89,000 would be less than some of the current employees with Councilmember Brooks stating that may be something the Council needs to look at also. Councilmember Maldonado stated the salary could be dependent on education and experience with Mr. Strobeck stating that is why the advertisement contains a salary range instead of a set salary, adding he is just cautioning Council that if they put in low numbers and think they are going to get a bargain, people won't even apply for the position. Councilmember Maldonado stated the League survey has the pay for the surrounding communities with Mr. Strobeck adding the survey information is grouped by population. Councilmember Sacco then asked if the League still completed an annual salary survey with Mr. Nichols stating he would have the City Clerk send it to the Council. Councilmember Brooks then stated again, he would like to have the salary range for the advertisement come before the Council at the next Council meeting, so he could review the salary survey before making a decision.

City Clerk Vicki Vivian then stated approximately 8 years ago the City hired a Human Resource consultant who completed job descriptions and salary studies of the surrounding communities and competitive entities for employment, adding when this was completed the Council adopted the salary plan, which has been updated each year. Ms. Vivian then stated each year since then, the League's salary survey came out and

she didn't recall the salary for the City Manager being out of line with other communities of our size. Ms. Vivian then stated she would email the salary survey to the Council and they could address the issue at the next Council meeting, but reminded Council they were only setting a range for the advertisement, adding any change to the salary range would require official Council action at a Council meeting.

Councilmember Brooks stated he wanted to address the salary range for the advertisement at the next Council meeting. Mr. Strobeck stated after Council reviewed the survey, they should give him the salary range they wished to include in the advertisement, adding they should maybe leave a little bit of room on the high-end of the salary range so there is room for negotiations. Councilmember Brooks then stated he wasn't saying he wouldn't agree with the figures, but that he wanted to review the information and make sure the figures were appropriate for a City our size. Councilmember Brooks then stated he would hate to put out a maximum salary of \$135,000 and miss out on someone with a master's degree and 30 years of experience in City administration. Councilmember Moncada stated he felt the Council should move ahead and advertise the minimum to mid-point salary range. Councilmember Brooks then stated he would like to direct the City Manager to place the salary range for the City Manager position advertisement on the next Council agenda. Mr. Nichols then reminded Council that the City Manager salary range had been approved by Council as part of the City's budget with Councilmember Brooks stating the Council should look at that and they may have to change it, adding it may make sense, but he would like to review it.

Mr. Strobeck then asked Council if they had any additional language about the community or anything else they would like to see in the advertisement with Council stating the advertisement was fine. Mr. Strobeck then stated he would finalize the advertisement and send it to Mr. Nichols and the Council for review, but he believed we were ready to move forward. Council thanked Mr. Strobeck for his time.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Maldonado moved to adjourn at 6:56 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Brooks. Motion passed 6-0.

ATTEST:

Lori McGoffin, Acting Mayor

Vicki L. Vivian, CMC, City Clerk