

The Claremont City Council held a meeting on Wednesday, August 3, 2016, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Lovett at 6:31 p.m.

Members of the Council present were:

Ward II Councilor Scott Pope  
At-Large Councilor Keith Raymond  
Assistant Mayor Victor Bergeron  
Mayor Charlene Lovett  
At-Large Councilor Bruce Temple  
At-Large Councilor John Simonds

Absent:

Ward I Councilor Carolyn Towle  
At-Large Councilor Allen Damren  
Ward III Councilor Nicholas Koloski

Also present were:

Guy Santagate, City Manager  
Jane Taylor, City Solicitor

## **CITIZEN'S FORUM**

Mayor Lovett opened Citizen's Forum. No one spoke. She closed it.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Review of City Manager Executive Search Firm Services Subcommittee's Recommendation, Possible Interview and Possible Vote

Mr. Pope gave an overview of the City Manager Executive Search Firm Services RFQ Subcommittee's actions. He and Mayor Lovett followed up with the references that were submitted by each company. The committee recommended: 1) Municipal Resources Inc. of Meredith, NH and 2) Randi Frank Consulting LLC of Wallingford, CT.

Mayor Lovett gave an overview of the August 1 meeting and she explained the scoring. Both recommended companies scored 57 on the matrix. MRI was penalized because they didn't answer one question in detail. Mayor Lovett followed up and got more information from MRI and had they put that detail in their response, they would have been 2 points higher and would have been slightly higher than Randi Frank. She said Ms. Towle was not available for that

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meeting, but her notes were incorporated into the decision. Ms. Towle's top two selections were Randi Frank and MRI.

Mayor Lovett said at the first meeting that Ms. Hall, Claremont citizen, had said she had worked with Randi Frank and offered to submit a reference.

Mayor Lovett said telephone interviews were scheduled tonight for MRI at 7:00 p.m. and Randi Frank at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Lovett gave an overview of the discussions she had with some of the MRI references. She said that MRI has done 29 searches for city/town managers. As a whole, MRI is different from Randi Frank as MRI has a vast network and they reach out nationally and internationally for candidates. Randi Frank Consulting is based in Connecticut and has done a few city/town manager searches; they contract with another company, Slavin Management Consultants, who has a broader range. She said the selection committee felt it would cost more money to bring Randi Frank in as Mr. Slavin is located in the south.

Mr. Pope gave an overview of the discussions he had with some of the Randi Frank references he spoke with.

Mayor Lovett read a letter of recommendation for Randi Frank Consulting from Margaret J. Hall. Ms. Hall was a department head for the town of Branford, Connecticut, when Ms. Frank was hired to perform a comparative salary analysis.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, commented on two possible biases in the references. One reference for MRI was from Moultonboro and MRI is headquartered in Meredith (possibility of local bias on the part of the respondent). The second was an HR Director hired as a result of a Randi Frank search (possibility of favorability bias).

Mayor Lovett said regarding Moultonboro, NH, that she would like to think that people responded based on performance and that the town administrator has been in place since 2015.

Councilors were asked if they had any questions for Mr. Gould, MRI.

Mr. Raymond asked Mr. Temple about his experience with MRI. Mr. Temple said on occasion the City asked them for direction on RFQs, but was not involved in a search with them.

Councilors had no questions for Mr. Gould.

At 6:58 p.m. Mayor Lovett stepped out of Council Chambers to call Mr. Gould to let him know a telephone interview would not be needed.

Mr. Pope noted that during the process, the committee did not discuss the cost for service. They were looking for qualifications, not cost.

At 6:59 p.m. Mayor Lovett returned to Council Chambers.

Mayor Lovett said the question had been asked if MRI had done a search for the school superintendent. MRI provided interim support to the business administrator position while the position was vacant. Mike O'Neil was that person and has been hired to permanently fill the position. One consultant, Diane Agendra is at the SAU handling the school grants.

Mr. Pope asked if the City has had MRI employees in the past. Mr. Santagate said we have dealt with them on the surface a few times. They were not chosen for a project Mr. Temple referenced. Mr. Santagate said he has no opinion on them.

Mr. Temple asked for consensus of the Council to bring both firms up and to interview them face-to-face to see who is on the teams.

There was a discussion about whether or not to have both companies come to Claremont for interviews.

Mayor Lovett said she didn't see any red flags.

Mayor Lovett said that in the RFQ, it was stated that interviews could be done by phone.

There was discussion about the cost for travel as Mr. Slavin is in the southern part of the US.

Mayor Lovett read the proposed prices.

- MRI submitted a lump sum bid of \$14,500 which doesn't include advertising, candidate travel expenses, cost of family visit, medical exams or psychological exams. In addition, client is responsible for providing food and interview rooms.
- Rand Frank Consultants bid \$15,500 which includes printing of profile reports and reference checks for up to eight candidates. Additional expenses: actual travel expenses of consultants not to exceed 50% of the professional fee (\$7,500); actual cost of advertising is estimated \$1,000-\$2,000; add travel cost plus \$500 cost per candidate. Maximum cost \$25,500.

Bernie Folta, Ward 3, wished there had been an opportunity to ask about the current market (tight/shortage of candidates or loose/abundant candidates).

**A motion was made by Mr. Bergeron and seconded by Mr. Pope to accept the City Manager Executive Search Firm Services RFQ Subcommittee's recommendation to hire Municipal Resources Inc. of Meredith, NH.**

Mr. Temple wants the record to show that he tried to get the Council to at least interview the top two candidates that the selection committee brought forth. He said he has an opinion as to what is going on and he will vote no.

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Mayor Lovett said all Councilors had an opportunity to read the RFQ which included doing interviews by telephone and no Councilor said they had a problem with that.

**Roll call vote: motion carried 5-1 with Mr. Temple voting no.**

At 7:26 p.m. Mayor Lovett left Council Chambers to call Randi Frank Consulting to let them know a phone interview would not be needed.

Mr. Pope said the committee will meet one more time to send thank you letters to the applicants and then will be done.

At 7:26 p.m., Assistant Mayor Bergeron took over for the final vote.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**At 7:26 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Pope and seconded by Mr. Simonds to adjourn.**

**Voice vote: motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorée M. Russell  
Clerk to the Council