

From: George J Cianciolo
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2006 7:57 AM
To: Town Council
Subject: Thoughts from G. Cianciolo

Dear Kevin and Council Members:

I would like to begin by thanking Council members for appointing me to serve on the UNC Leadership Advisory Committee. I am honored to serve as one of your representatives on this Committee and will do my best to insure that the priorities and needs of the Town and the Council are adequately addressed as part of this Committee's work.

I also wish to say that I watched with great interest last evening your deliberations concerning the process of recruiting and hiring a new Town Manager. This is obviously a very important project, certainly one of, if not the most, important projects you will deal with in your capacities as Council members. Although I did not hear a request for citizen input on this issue at this time, I thought that I would like to take the opportunity to weigh in with my "two cents" worth.

First, the decision on the hiring of the new Manager should be yours and yours alone. I don't think you need citizen input on either the evaluation of candidates or the final decision. You've already gotten it when you were all elected by the citizens of Chapel Hill to represent us in the governance of the Town and, as our elected representatives, you have our proxies to make such decisions. We have entrusted you to make the right decision, and we certainly hope that you do, but I see no need at this point for us citizens to be inserted into the process. We had our say on election day. After all, isn't that why we pay you the big bucks? (Alright, maybe not so big). We would just add to the complexity of the process.

Second, while it is appropriate to maintain confidentiality during the early part of the recruiting process, I believe that the finalists (say the top 3-5) must be willing to have their names be public. After all, if there are any skeletons in the closet you want to find out before you make your final decision, not after. And a well-qualified candidate should, at that point, be willing to discuss with their current employer their interest in our position. If they can't do that it is probably indicative that they have the type of employer-employee relationship that you don't want to inherit here in Chapel Hill. I would also suggest that applicants describe in writing, as part of the formal application process, why they want the job and why they think they're qualified to manage our wonderful town. Resumes don't always tell the whole story and you can't read passion, vision, and commitment from a resume. Because some people can express their thoughts in writing better than others, this part of the application process should not be a potential exclusionary issue for less-talented writers. But it can allow a really superb candidate to shine brighter than the rest and that can be very useful in narrowing the field.

Third, the interviews of the finalists should be at least an all-day process. I know this is asking a lot, in terms of time commitment, from Council members but this is such an important component of the process I can imagine short-changing the process at this point. The interviews should NOT be in front of a panel of interviewers. Have you ever seen anyone relax in front of a senate subcommittee? People tense up (both literally and figuratively) in front of a panel. They measure their answers carefully and you get what they think you want to hear. Ideally, interviews should be one-on-one or two-on-one and conducted in small, well-lit (preferably natural) rooms with comfortable seating. Ideally perhaps 45-60 minutes with adequate breaks between interviews.

In addition to Council members I would suggest that representatives of the people that the Manager will manage should participate in the interview process. This might include several senior directors but it should also include some staff and town workers (e.g, transit driver,

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policeman, etc.). I have seen candidates relax with those they view as their potential subordinates and thus let the "real" candidate emerge. Candidates often speak more openly with people whom they know will not be their potential supervisors should they get the job. I have found that this type of interview process can sometimes reveal some of the best and most interesting and valuable traits. On other occasions I have seen this reveal (I kid you not) paranoia, bigotry, insecurity and control issues.

Finally, I think you would do yourselves and the Town a disservice if Cal Horton wasn't asked to interview the final candidates. Whether you're looking for a candidate who is similar or dissimilar in experience or style with Cal, his wealth of experience with running the day-to-day operations of this Town and in dealing with 9 employers and a large, diverse staff and workforce should make his thoughts about the finalists valuable to you. Equally, candidates should find his perspectives useful in determining how they feel about the job should it be offered.

Sorry to have taken up so much of your time. But as I think you all know, Chapel Hill is very important to me and I'd like to see this process proceed as smoothly as possible. I hope that these comments/suggestions might be of some help.

Best wishes,

George

Mayor/Council,

I watched the Council's discussion of the process for hiring a new Town Manager on television with great interest this past Monday, February 27.

I was a member of the Town Council, along with Bill Thorpe, that made what I hope most people would agree was the superb selection of Cal Horton. We had a similar debate on the issue of public versus private deliberations, and I'd like offer a few points for your consideration.

While one role of the Manager is to implement the Council's decisions, the Manager is also the face of the Town to the citizens and the world outside. If the search and selection process is successful, one would hope that the new Manager will stay in the position for a decade or two, well past the tenure of sitting council members.

Because the Manager is the face of the Town to the citizenry now and for many future years, it is critical that a key criterion in selecting a Manager is the person's ability to interact with citizens, not just the cognizenti, but the public'at large. There must be mutual respect and eventually a degree of comfort between the Manager and the public.

The only way to measure the ability of a candidate to interact with the public is to observe the candidate interacting with the public in Chapel Hill.

The Council's responsibility is to the public, not to the privacy of a candidate. If a candidate does not wish to participate in a public process, so be it. Selection of a new Manager without full and open participation of the public would court disaster.

Best wishes for a successful process and outcome,

Art

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March 2, 2006

To the Mayor and Town Council:

The Search for another Chapel Hill Town Manager is a critical responsibility for the wellbeing of this municipality. We have been blessed by the foresight and oversight of our current Town Manager.

Mayor Foy made an excellent first step by consulting the UNC School of Government. They can probably give further guidance plus direction to good consultants who can work with the Search Committee.

1. The efficient, effective handling of funds is the primary way in which a municipality runs. A Town Manager must be proficient at dealing with town budget numbers, understanding the reports and projections of the town accountant regarding tax revenues, expenses, salaries, bond issues, bond ratings, insurance, and more.

2. The Town Manager must be someone who is able to think of the town as a whole. This is particularly important in Chapel Hill, where "neighborhoods" sometimes see themselves as the whole. This capacity to maintain a comprehensive view while attending to discussion of details prevents the most "active" Council members from overwhelming the Town's overall needs.

Thus, our Town Mgr must be a person with a broad base of knowledge willing to continue to expand his/her areas of knowledge in order to add insight into Council motions.

For example, Cal Horton has been able to suggest a national consultant to begin the Downtown Revitalization process and a N.C. university dean to refine the downtown developer's response to Town Council suggestions. If the Town Council reviews its own original concept plans, it should be obvious how necessary the oversight by a Town Manager with foresight has been.

3. We all sometimes make unexamined assumptions almost unconsciously.

The assumption that "the Town Manager answers to us," the Town Council, is a bit erroneous, because the definition of "us" may change at elections.

Certainly the consequences of meetings between the Town Manager and Town Council have changed Council viewpoints throughout each year. Every Council should be able to benefit from a Manager's input.

4. The Council discussion about confidentiality sounded to me like it ended with the most reasonable conclusion. The Dean of the UNC Law School was announced in the media as a finalist for President of another university. It was never suggested UNC would value him less if he had remained at UNC after that. Revealing the last 3 or 4 candidates, with their salient qualifications, sounds workable.

5. For whatever consideration the Council would want to give to it, I recommend that the Council members of the Town Manager Search Committee be Kevin Foy, Bill Thorpe, Jim Ward, and Mark Kleinschmidt.

Life, the conditions we all must deal with, has been changing faster every year. I suggest that the Town Council look for a Town Manager who can give them valuable guidance in dealing with ever new situations rather than focus on the technicality that the Town Council's vote is the final step.

With best wishes for success in finding a Town Manager as good as we are accustomed to,

Lynne Kane

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