

City of Cambridge

The Government Operations Committee conducted a public hearing on Tuesday, June 2, 1992 beginning at 2:05 p.m. in the Ackermann Room, City Hall.

Councillor Francis H. Duehay, Chair of the above referenced Committee, convened the hearing and stated that the purpose of this date's proceedings was to discuss the procedure to be employed in order to make recommendation(s) to the full City Council in the election of a City Clerk. Also to be discussed was the duties and responsibilities of the City Clerk. Present at the hearing were: Committee Member Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Councillor Sheila T. Russell, Vice Mayor Ed Cyr and Deputy City Clerk John E. Flynn.

To begin the discussion, Councillor Duehay presented to the Committee and to those assembled a prepared statement outlining a proposed procedure for the hiring of the City Clerk. (A copy of the proposed procedure is attached).

Councillor Myers noted his general agreement with the Chair's recommendation but inquired if the Committee should set a target figure in the initial screening and interview process. He further stated the need to work within certain parameters.

The Chair concurred with the comments made by Councillor Myers but stated that interviews should be scheduled with any applicant that three Councillors request.

Councillor Myers stated his desire that the initial screening process not be bogged down.

Councillor Duehay further stated that the procedures can be changed depending on the number of applicants and number of requests for interviews by Councillors.

Vice Mayor Cyr stated that in the initial screening process obvious cuts will be made by the Committee. The questions that arise will deal with what the Council is looking for in a qualified candidate. He further stated that qualifications include administrative experience, public sector experience, legal/regulatory experiences and some Management Information System (MIS) experiences.

Councillor Russell noted the fact that given the qualifications outlined by the Vice Mayor, a tremendous amount of candidates would appear and submit their resume for consideration for the position.

Vice Mayor Cyr concurred with the comments of Councillor Russell that a possible large number of candidates could emerge but suggested to the Committee that they look at previous employment postings and advertisements by the City Manager for positions that resulted in a limited pool of candidates.

Councillor Myers further stated his concern with the number of applicants to be reviewed and interviewed by the Committee.

Councillor Duehay in response stated that the Committee was comprised of three members of the Council and that not one person should be making a management decision for the Council as a whole. He further stated his intention to preserve a role for Councillors not on the Committee in the recommendation(s) for a City Clerk.

Councillor Duehay then inquired if the proposed process seemed fair to the members of the City Council.

Councillor Russell and Vice Mayor Cyr stated their agreement with the procedures provided that no parameters exist with the number of interviews and that the rights and responsibilities of each Council member is honored by the Committee.

Councillor Duehay in response stated that he did not anticipate any difficulties in these areas and that any and all Councillors who want to participate in this process can and that a vote will only be taken at the end of the interview process.

At this point the Chair steered the discussion to the proposed "Duties of the City Clerk"; he noted the last paragraph that authorizes the City Clerk to supervise the City Council Office.

Councillor Russell inquired of the job qualifications for the position.

Councillor Duehay in response stated that the Committee required experience in government; a Bachelor Degree expected a graduate degree would be helpful and that the salary was negotiable.

The Chair further stated after listening to suggestions regarding the process that he would be not only flexible but would ensure a fair process.

At this time the Chair moved the acceptance of the proposed procedure and job description of the City Clerk.

Councillor Myers moved the following amendments in the proposed "Duties of the City Clerk":

Paragraph one, line three, add the word "City" before Council and in paragraph two in line three after the word fee "for the City of Cambridge".

On a voice vote the amendments carried.

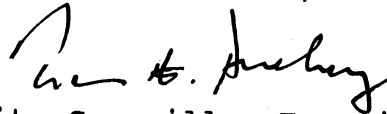
On the main motion as amended, a voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Councillor Duehay then moved that the recommendations be forwarded to the full City Council.

On a voice vote, the motion was forwarded.

The hearing was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

For the Committee,



City Councillor Francis H. Duehay
Chair

Procedure recommended by Councillor Duehay for hiring City Clerk.

Applications will be accepted through Friday, June 26, 1992. Applicants will file a resume and a letter of interest directed to Government Operations Committees, Cambridge City Hall - 2nd Floor, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139. Notices announcing the vacancy will be placed in the newspapers ordinarily used by the city's personnel office. Career offices of appropriate graduate schools of public administration and management will be notified.

The council office will number and date each application and keep the applications in a locked file, under the direction of the Committee chair. Each application will be acknowledged and each applicant will be sent a copy of the job description. Any city councillor may review any and all applications at any time. The council staff will make copies of any application for any councillor who wishes one. Councillors are asked to keep the names of applicants confidential until the final stages of the appointment process.

After applications close, all city councillors will be sent copies of all applications, or, if they wish, they may review those on file in the council office. the Government Operations Committee will then schedule interviews with any applicant any three councillors request.

After initial interviews are held, the Committee will meet to determine further procedures. At that time it may wish, for example, to compile a list of finalists and to develop a way to check out each person's work experience. Or a single candidate may emerge as an obvious choice. These final decisions are better left until the initial screening has been completed.

All Committee meetings will be open to the public as required by law.

CITY CLERK

Duties of the City Clerk

The City Clerk is one of three major appointments of the Cambridge City Council. The City Clerk is elected by the City Council for a three year term and is accountable to the City Council. The Clerk performs those duties prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the ordinances of the City of Cambridge and such other duties as the City Council prescribes.

The City Clerk is statutorily responsible for developing, maintaining, and disseminating certain records and vital statistics, such as marriage, death, and birth certificates. The office of the Clerk collects, records and deposits fees for the City of Cambridge as required by law. The City Clerk or the Clerk's designee attends and keeps records of all meetings of the City Council and of its subcommittees and carries out the action required by decisions at those meetings.

The City Clerk performs a crucial public information function. The Clerk notifies the public of all on-going City Council business and of all meetings of official city boards and commissions. The Clerk is responsible for assuring that all members of the public have access to public documents and are given information as appropriate about City Council meetings, business, and action. The City Clerk provides public information to the media as well.

The City Clerk assists the City Council, its members and subcommittees, in their development of public policy. In that role, the City Clerk performs the staff work and research that may be required for the council efficiently to carry out its policy-making responsibilities. The City Clerk assists members and the Council in preparing testimony and providing information for other agencies or levels of government. As directed by the City Council, the City Clerk shall file and monitor legislation of importance to Cambridge at other levels of government.

The City Clerk supervises the operations of the City Council office to assure that all functions of that office are performed smoothly.

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COMMITTEE REPORT

Government Operations Committee Report
for a hearing held on Tuesday, June 2,
1992 relative to the procedure to be
employed in order to make recommendations
to the full City Council in the election
of a City Clerk.

In city Council,

June 15, 1992

*Report accepted
with amended duties
of City Clerk.*