

I have historically been willing to risk making "nontraditional" or unorthodox selections in key managerial positions. Most have worked out very well. For example, David Haley had no Public Works experience when hired as the Public Works Director. He was recruited by my staff to apply for the position because of my belief that the Public Works Department required, above all, a strong manager, who could set goals, develop staff and achieve results. Mr. Haley fulfilled those expectations admirably, and the department was much improved during his tenure.

I hope for and expect similar results with Mr. Nicoloro. What the Water Department needs most over the next several years is strong management of staff and supervision of the complicated process of reconstruction or replacement of the existing antiquated facility. In Mr. Nicoloro we get both. As a registered professional civil engineer he has the technical background to work with, challenge, and be sure we get the maximum productivity out of the consultants we hire to help design, plan and build the replacement or renovated facility. Technical capability and leadership in the department is significantly improved by the addition of Mr. Nicoloro. Similarly, I believe he has shown the strong management skills necessary to succeed in what has been a very difficult managerial and staff supervisory challenge over the past several years. We needed someone who has demonstrated the ability to get results through other people in a highly unionized and occasionally conflict laden public utility. The water quality problems we experienced in the late 1980's did not arise from a lack of technical water treatment knowledge or experience. They arose because of the lack of management systems for accountability and command and control to make sure that, day to day, business was being attended to. Although much improved in recent years, much remains to be done. I believe Mr. Nicoloro has demonstrated the capacity to do that.

I do not regard Mr. Nicoloro's lack of paid water treatment and distribution experience as a significant issue. Gas distribution is significantly more complicated than water distribution, although the tasks, moving product under pressure through piping, are the same. Concerning treatment, we have a highly trained and experienced second level management staff fully capable of ensuring that the technical requirements for water treatment are fully complied with. I also expect Mr. Nicoloro to have mastered the basics of the chemistry and related details of the treatment process in a very short time. As an illustrative analogy, let me suggest that, when John O'Brien was hired as the Cambridge Hospital Administrator, although he had an excellent record there as chief financial officer, he had never run a hospital before. He also had no qualifications or credentials in medicine or nursing. He supervises those functions very well however.

The fact that Mr. Nicoloro is a life long resident of Cambridge was of course a plus. The City Council made very clear last year, its desire, expressed through Section 2.58.010 of the Municipal Code, that I pay much more attention to residency as a hiring criteria than I ever have in the past. In my recent appointments I have tried to honor that policy to the fullest.

Finally, Mr. Nicoloro's desire to serve this City is remarkable. He has impressed me with the level of his commitment to want to work to improve this community. In taking this position, he has left his long term employer, with many promotional opportunities

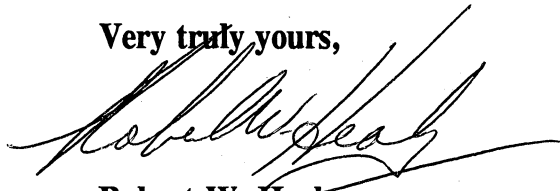
remaining to him. He did that because of his desire to serve Cambridge. I was and am convinced I would find no one else with his level of technical and managerial talent coupled with such a strong sense of service to this community.

I am assured by Mr. Maloney, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs that the appointment of a Registered Professional Engineer with strong management experience will in no way impact the interest rates or the bond issue for the new plant. Rather, the rating agencies have been most impressed by the stability in the management structure of the City. Mr. Nicoloro's long term commitment will be viewed as a positive.

Additionally, in response to printed articles raising the specter of public health concerns, I assure you that meeting more than the minimum standards and requirements of the safe drinking water act remains a top priority of mine and will be enhanced by this appointment. To raise the controversy over essentially the process used to reach an executive decision to the level of a scare tactic as to the safety of the residents of the City of Cambridge is completely unnecessary and, I believe, borders on the irresponsible.

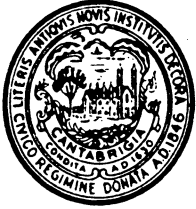
In summary, I felt Mr. Nicoloro was the right person for the job, I felt there was very little likelihood that a local or national search would produce a better candidate, or one I had more confidence in, and I was not prepared to invest the time and money in such a search when we had the clear need to put someone in place as soon as possible. In retrospect, given all the controversy, perhaps I should have done a very abbreviated local posting, though I am sure the result would have been the same. As you know, I do not make a habit of hiring without recruiting. In this case, for all these reasons, I felt it was the right thing to do.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Robert W. Healy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

March 17, 1994

To The Honorable, The City Council:

There have recently been comments, both positive and negative, about my recent decision to appoint Michael Nicoloro of 156 Spring Street, Cambridge to the position of Managing Director of the Cambridge Water Department. I am writing to you now to explain the basis for my decision, which I stand by, as consistent with the needs of the City.

The decision of Ms. Nancy Barnes to leave the Water Department on very short notice was made more difficult by her request to be absent from the City for a substantial period of time before she officially left. I granted this request reluctantly even though it meant the Water Department was without executive leadership for most of the winter of 1994.

I thus felt that the need to act quickly was imperative. As we always do when vacancies occur, we reviewed our file of recent applicants for other positions to see who in that group might be considered. The Public Works process has produced many candidates, and we reviewed that group as well as other local applications we had received for a variety of positions. In conducting that process, Mr. Nicoloro, who had been a finalist for the Public Works position, stood out. I considered the value and cost of running a further recruiting campaign, and decided, on balance, that it was not worth it.

When we undertook an extensive screening process in 1990 to replace the prior Water Superintendent, I was not particularly impressed with the quality of the candidates, with the exception of Ms. Barnes, who was not the first choice of the Cambridge Water Board. I had no desire to go through an expensive (advertising alone for such a position can cost over \$5,000) and time consuming process with no expectation that I would find any one as well qualified as Mr. Nicoloro for this position. I did not want the five or six month delay in filling the position that inevitably accompanies a "national" search. We had just completed the Public Works process and I regarded the skills needed for those two jobs to be highly similar. Our experience with the 1990 screening process and subsequent developments led me to conclude that we should not limit ourselves to finding someone with extensive waterworks experience.

Consent Agenda #12

S-106

Transmitting comm. from R.W. Healy relative
to the Managing Director of the Cambridge
Water Dept.

In City Council March 21, 1994

Placed on file.