

The Seneca Falls Town Board held a Joint Meeting with the Citizens Advisory Committee on Wednesday, June 30, 2021 at the Seneca Falls Community Center, 35 Water Street.

Present were Supervisor Michael Ferrara; Councilpersons Steve Churchill, David DeLelys, Douglas Avery and Dawn Dyson. Also present were Committee Members Gerald Macaluso, Tara Montoney, Samantha Prayne, Robert Markel, David Clark, Charles Cappelino, Steven Gleason, Robert McKeveney and David Swenson.

Supervisor Ferrara called the Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. A roll call of Board Members was taken and all were present; the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Mr. Ferrara stated this Special Meeting was called to discuss the ongoing work with the Citizens Advisory Committee which was charged with giving the Board a recommendation relative to having a Town Manager. There were a couple of Joint Meetings and some recommendations were made. The final recommendation was to solicit a Sub-Committee made up of two Members from the Town Board and two Members of the Advisory Committee. The Sub-Committee met a couple of times and came up with some recommendations.

Mr. Avery stated the four Sub-Committee Members met, and they all agreed to everything that Tara Montoney put in the recommendation. They thought the next step would be a recommendation from the Sub-Committee to Mr. Macaluso.

Tara Montoney stated that she, Mr. Gleason, Mr. Avery and Mr. Churchill met and talked a lot about whether there should be an outside committee brought in and looking at the structure and all kinds of things. They decided that the RFPs they had had a much broader scope that everybody was uncomfortable with, especially spending-wise. They agreed that would be wonderful but it was not in the Budget. Ms. Montoney said they were comfortable with narrowing the scope down and lowering the overall cost and the time frame. They were hoping to do a smaller scope, taking a look at what was going on and making a recommendation.

Ms. Montoney said they were looking at a time frame they were comfortable with, two to three months, and lowering the cost to a \$10,000-\$15,000 range. They agreed it would be a good fit to hire a company to do a deep-dive analysis, but they felt it was not necessary at this time. CGR is a company that gave them a couple of presentations and spent a lot of time with them. They worked with the school district and they were also involved with the dissolution of the Village, so we have a history with CGR. Ms. Montoney said there were four areas that they agreed they would like them to look at:

1. Assess the Town organizational structure and staffing of all departments to determine if the existing operations meet the Town's day-to-day needs and plans for future growth and development.
2. Assess the Town's budget process, expenses and services – a lighter version of that.
3. The light version of reviewing the Town's use of outside consultants and/or vendors.
4. Identify areas that could be more efficient and more cost effective.

Mr. Avery said he agrees that it would be good to do a deep study of the Town's structure and operations, but to do that in the next year or so makes sense. He added they don't need all that to make this decision as to a Town Manager. He thinks CGR is the best bet here because they do have a history with the Town – they come in, do a study and leave; they are not engaged with the Town in any other way. Brief discussion followed.

Mr. Churchill stated one reason why he supports CGR is that it is all they do. He added they have been doing this longer than any other folks that submitted an RFP. He thinks this piece is important for the Board to make this decision. The Board needs this objective and information to find out if it makes sense to have this position. Mr. Churchill mentioned that it's not budgeted – we need to keep the expense down.

Robert Markel said if CGR comes back and says they cannot do all four, is there a priority of what we want them to do. Ms. Montoney said she feels that we should go to them and say these are the areas we are looking at - what can you do for \$10,000-\$15,000. Mr. Ferrara stated from his prospective, he would say that we have a Citizens Committee that has been working on this since February with the Board. As far as prioritizing, and as far as number three and four, the Town does not use a lot of outside vendors. Mr. Ferrara said he would definitely say, priority would be looking at the efficiency of the Town and organizational structure as far as staffing. Mr. Macaluso stated from his objective, the first priority is to refer this to the Board unless the Committee has any objections. Mr. Macaluso said what he doesn't want to see is once an RFP is developed and discussions ensued, it comes back that it's not viable – that's his concern. He asked what the Board's feelings were as to what the priorities are, especially with the price range of \$10,000-\$15,000.

Mr. Ferrara stated originally, the RFP was put out and the range was \$25,000-\$45,000. The Committee is saying they would like to go with CGR; there is no need to go with an RFP as it will hold this up. He clarified that CGR

has not worked with the Town; they worked with the Village during dissolution. Mr. Ferrara said CGR is a quality company, and he is sure they will do a fine job. He said after further discussion he will make a motion to reach out to CGR with priorities and price range. Once CGR gives him an answer, he will report back to everyone with what they say, and go from there. Mr. Ferrara stated we don't have to legally put an RFP out because this is for professional services; that's already been done and we have a range. He hopes the Board agrees that this is the direction in which we should move forward.

Mr. Churchill stated he doesn't feel we should or have to prioritize – just present the four areas and ask them what they can do. He wouldn't mention the range of \$10,000-\$15,000; just ask them to give an estimate for this. Mr. Churchill stated all four areas are important to him – he doesn't think we should rank them. He said present all four and see what they can do within our budget constraints.

Robert McKeveney complimented the Sub-Committee. He said it says – to assess; that's what they will do. They will tell you what the current state is. Is there interest in asking them to provide the Town with feedback on future direction – is there an intended outcome. It doesn't mean you have to do it. Mr. McKeveney said he would consider adding that only if it's more focused on what is requested and they do what it says. Mr. Ferrara stated we want recommendations and suggestions – it's a great idea.

Mr. Ferrara made a motion to seek a price to assess the Town's organizational structure and staffing not to exceed \$15,000 from CGR, money to be transferred from the Contingency Fund to the Operating Budget. Mrs. Dyson seconded the motion.

After discussion regarding Mr. Ferrara's motion, Mr. Ferrara rescinded his motion, and Mrs. Dyson rescinded her second to the motion.

A motion was made by Michael Ferrara and seconded by Dawn Dyson authorizing the Town Supervisor to reach out to CGR to give the Town a proposal for the Town's organizational assessment with future recommendations, based on the following four areas:

1. Assess the Town's organizational structure and staffing in all departments to determine if existing operations meet the Town's day-to-day needs and plans for future growth and development.
2. The light version of assess the Town's budget process, expenses and services.
3. The light version of review the Town's use of outside consultants and vendors.
4. Identify gaps, areas where we could be more efficient and more cost effective.

No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Mr. Ferrara again thanked the Committee for their time and effort they put into this all these months – he really appreciates all their hard work. He mentioned some of the Agenda items that will be discussed at next week's Board Meeting.

Mr. Churchill suggested that if we go with this and they do the analysis and come back, we would want them to present it in front of the Committee as well, and the Committee can give the Board its feedback as well.

Being there was no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the Meeting by Dave Delely and seconded by Dawn Dyson. No questions. Motion carried 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

NICALETTA J. GREER  
Town Clerk

