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## PROCEEDINGS OF THE MANISTEE CITY COUNCIL – March 31, 2015

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A special meeting of the Manistee City Council was called to order by her honor, Mayor Colleen Kenny on Tuesday, March 31, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 70 Maple Street, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Colleen Kenny, Edward Cote, Roger Zielinski, Robert Goodspeed, James Smith, Mark Wittlieff, and Eric Gustad.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager – Mitch Deisch, City Attorney – George Saylor, City Clerk – Michelle Wright, DPW Director – Jeff Mikula, Denise Blakeslee – Planning & Zoning Administrator, Public Safety Director – Dave Bachman, and City Engineer – Shawn Middleton / Spicer Group.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA RELATED ITEMS.**

Kathy Fenstermacher – 302 Fourth Avenue commented on the opportunity to choose an interim city manager and the qualities that person should have.

### **CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL INTERIM CITY MANAGER CANDIDATES.**

The Mayor had requested a special meeting to discuss and consider potential candidates for the position of interim city manager.

Kenny stated the Personnel Committee looked at various options to find candidates for an interim city manager. Options were:

- 1) see what the MML had to offer
  - pros and cons of the MML were noted
- 2) look internally for qualified candidates
  - four internal candidates were identified:  
City Clerk, Finance Director, Public Safety Director, and DPW Director (only one indicated an interest)
- 3) look outside of the MML and staff members
  - Ben Bifoss, former City Manager, indicated he had an interest and the availability to be considered

Mr. Bifoss and Chief Bachman commented on their qualifications and answered questions from the Council.

MOTION by Cote, second by Wittlieff to support the hiring of Ben Bifoss as the Interim City Manager and authorize the City Attorney to negotiate a contract of employment terms.

With a roll call vote this motion passed, 6-1.

AYES: Kenny, Cote, Zielinski, Smith, Wittlieff, and Gustad

NAYS: Goodspeed

**CITIZEN COMMENT.**

*None received.*

**OFFICIALS AND STAFF.**

Deisch thanked the community for the honor and pleasure of being the City Manager for the past 13+ years; highlight of his career was working with talented and dedicated co-workers and Councilmembers; when looking for a new City Manager use the same qualities that we try to install in our children of integrity, ethical behavior, honesty and quality of character; Manistee residents deserve these qualities and should accept nothing less.

Saylor stated it has been a pleasure working with Deisch and wished him the best.

Bachman thanked Council for their consideration.

**COUNCILMEMBERS.**

Zielinski stated in regards to the water meters that the DPW is doing the best they can, don't kill the messenger.

Smith thanked Deisch for his years of service and wished him well.

Gustad also thanked Deisch and good luck in the future.

Kenny stated there are rumors going around the City as to who is next to be let go; asked Council if they are unhappy with any other staff members; consensus was that Council is happy with the current City staff; hopes this will be some reassurance to the staff. Thanked Deisch for his service.

**ADJOURN.**

MOTION to adjourn was made by Cote, second by Goodspeed. Meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Michelle Wright MMC / CPFA, MiCPT  
City Clerk/Deputy Treasurer