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## NEWS LOCAL

# City council will need to determine if retiring Joe Fratesi's position should be filled

By Elaine Della-Mattia, Sault Star  
Monday, January 12, 2015 11:04:21 EST PM



SAULT STE. MARIE - Before a process begins to find a candidate to replace retiring CAO Joe Fratesi, city council will need to determine if the position should be filled.

City council narrowly passed a resolution Monday in a 7-6 vote that asked the Commissioner of Human Resources to pen a report assessing the viability of the CAO position and whether, indeed, it needs to be filled.

Mayor Christian Provenzano voted along with the successful side.

The motion was moved by Ward 6 Coun. Joe Krmpotich, who views the move as a possible cost-saving measure by city council.

Council discussed several options that will map out the plan to replace Fratesi, who announced last week that he will retire April 30.

Fratesi has served the city in both the political and administrative sectors for 35 years.

He received a tribute by Ward 1 Coun. Steve Butland Monday, who has worked "on and off" with him in various roles since 1981.

Butland said that while Fratesi is well known for the English-only language resolution and his hiring as a CAO, "there are hundreds of positive initiatives he has been involved in."

"There is something to say about longevity," Butland said.

He noted that Fratesi can make decisions very quickly and is right "about 90% of the time."

"There is also a side of (Fratesi) that many don't know and that is that he is a softie and he's helped many that no one knows about," Butland said. "He has his fingerprints on everything in this community and he will be missed."

Council agreed Monday that the process should follow the city's own policy and strike a committee for the hiring procedure.

The policy was "amended" so that the mayor and four councillors could serve on the committee – up from the former policy that recommends two councillors.

Provenzano, along with councillors Susan Myers, Matthew Shoemaker, Ross Romano and Marchy Bruni, will serve on the committee to replace the CAO should council decide the move to do so is necessary.

Provenzano suggested the subcommittee hire a professional to help with the hiring process, which that was accepted by city council.

Provenzano recommended the group hire a consultant and set the terms and conditions of the search for a new CAO.

Those terms of reference will be presented to council and approval received before the process moves forward, Provenzano said.

"We need to create a buy-in as the process goes along," he said. "I want this process to be transparent and I want it largely agreeable to."

Provenzano said he's checked with his counterparts in other municipalities, and North Bay doesn't have a policy the city can follow. Sudbury's policy is very similar to Sault Ste. Marie's.

Ward 1 Coun. Paul Christian agreed that hiring a consultant to aid in the process will be "money well spent."

It's expected that Peter Niro, commissioner of human resources, will report to council within a month on whether the CAO position should be filled. In the meantime, the committee will work simultaneously to devise a terms of reference.

Both matters will be subsequently debated by council.

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