



Office of the Town Manager
Frank Cassidy

STAFF REPORT

Warrenton Town Council
Carter Nevill, Mayor
Roy Francis, Ward 1
William Semple, Ward 2
Larry Kovalik, Ward 3
Michele O'Halloran, Ward 4
Eric Gagnon, Ward 5
Paul Mooney, At Large
David McGuire, At Large

Council Meeting Date:	January 13, 2026
Agenda Title:	Town Attorney & Town Manager Staffing Status
Requested Action:	Town Attorney & Town Manager Staffing Way Forward
Department / Agency Lead:	Human Capital & Risk
Staff Lead:	Kasey Braun, Director of Human Capital & Risk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This staff report provides an overview of the Town's current progress and next steps in the hiring processes for the Town Attorney and Town Manager positions.

BACKGROUND

The previous Town Manager, Mr. Frank Cassidy, was separated from employment on October 14, 2025. Subsequently, Town Attorney Mr. Peterson submitted notice of his departure, effective December 31, 2025. These vacancies created an immediate need to fill both positions.

The first priority is to hire a Town Attorney by January 1, 2026, either on an interim or permanent basis. In regard to the Town Manager, the Town's Deputy Town Manager/Director of Finance Stephanie Miller was appointed Acting Town Manager while we search for an interim/permanent Town Manager. It is anticipated that an interim or permanent Town Manager will be in place no later than January 31, 2026.

In November, several staffing options for backfilling the Town Attorney and Town Manager positions were presented to Town Council. These include the following:

- > Cooperative Agreement
- > Request for Proposal (RFP), and
- > internal recruiting efforts.

Additionally, Town Council members were asked to submit firms or individual lawyers to Kasey Braun for direct outreach and consideration.

In December, the Town Council voted to appoint Dycio & Biggs as Town Attorney for a period of 90 days. The engagement has not been executed and will be under review at the January meeting.

The Council also voted in December to engage the Berkley Group for the recruitment of the Interim and Permanent Town Manager. Once this agreement has been executed, Human Capital will work with Berkley on the interim placement and the recruitment of the permanent Town Manager.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Town Council take the following actions:

1. Approve the Berkley Group as the vendor of record for the permanent Town Attorney search.
2. Approve the Berkley Group as the vendor of record for the Interim Town Manager engagement.
3. Approve the Berkley Group as the vendor of record for the permanent Town Manager search.

Should Town Council decide to proceed with this option, the following steps will be required:

- > Execute the contractual agreement with the Berkley Group to initiate services.
- > Begin the permanent placement process for both the Town Attorney and Town Manager. This includes defining needs and requirements, confirming salary expectations, reviewing and approving the recruitment brochure, posting the positions, conducting candidate interviews, and completing the hiring process. This effort may take up to six (6) months.
- > Initiate the interim Town Manager placement. The identified candidate, Christopher Martino, is available to begin immediately in January.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

Establishing a clear staffing plan for the Town Attorney and Town Manager is necessary to ensure continuity of operations, maintain legal compliance, and provide stable leadership. This action supports the Town Council's priorities and promotes transparent, effective governance during the transition period.

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

Ability to meet the plan directives.

Fiscal Impact

1. **Town Attorney Transition & Hiring Costs.** These costs include interim legal coverage during the transition and headhunter

- > Chap Petersen & Associates will continue to bill until the full transition is complete. Additionally, any ongoing cases being handled by Mr. Petersen or Mr. Corish will continue to incur costs until those matters conclude.
- > Fees for the legal firms under consideration will be presented to Town Council once the analysis has been completed.

2. **Town Manager Transition & Hiring Costs.** These costs will represent a significant budget increase.

They include:

- > The severance package for Frank Cassidy
- > Headhunter fees for the recruitment of permanent Town Manager
- > Compensation for the interim Town Manager during the search period

Legal Impact

Unknown, but specifically not having a Town Attorney, the Town may be exposed to, but not limited to:

- > Legal noncompliance and litigation exposure
- > Slower and less informed decision-making
- > Weakened governance and policy integrity
- > Higher financial and reputational costs

ATTACHMENTS
