

# LEBANON EXPRESS

## Column: From the Mayor's Desk

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Firing an employee, asking them to resign or accepting a resignation are all very difficult issues and decisions one has to make as a manager or supervisor. Over the years I have had many times where I have had to deal with these type of issues and they are not fun for either side.

Last week the City Council accepted City Manager Dana Hlavac's resignation after an executive session discussing issues with Hlavac and what he has been able to bring to the table for the City.

The executive session was called because of concerns the councilors and myself had about his management style.

I am proud of the job that the council did in respect to these issues. The Councilors and myself had numerous issues brought to us and we had our own concerns from our observations.

Each person did their due diligence and checked into the issues. When all was said and done, it was obvious we could not continue further. The action the council took was the right one and it was at the right time.

What would have happened if these issues were left to themselves to get worse. Then we would be 9 months or a year down the road and the situation would have gotten much more difficult to deal with.

We looked into the issues, worked to make them better. Once we did not see things improving, we felt it was time to take action.

Dana is a very nice guy and he did some really good things while he was here. That is why the council felt it important to compensate him so he can get his family back to Arizona. It was not an easy decision for any of us to make.

I would like to address a couple of rumors I have come across. First of all Chief Stevenson's appointment to Chief of Police was scheduled for February and Dana was going to make his position permanent at that time. This action was not about that issue.

Also, I have heard that he probably uncovered something "big" and so they had to get him out. This is about as speculative as Big Foot being real. (sorry bigfoot believers)

The Democrat Herald Editorial from January 10th summed it up very well; "It's important to emphasize that there is no evidence of malfeasance or any kind of wrongdoing.

Rather, it looks as if what happened in Lebanon is a clash of styles and expectations."

Sometimes you can make all the right choices based on the information you have and it still does not work out in the end. This was one of those occasions.

As for the secrecy, there are laws to protect an employee. From the executive session contents discussing performance to the employees right to privacy. In this case and every other since I have been Mayor, we have released all documents as soon as possible and have not had to have any records requests from the media regarding these type of issues.

We are moving forward with our search for a new City Manager and I have been in contact with our search firm, the Prothman Company.

The council has decided to re-interview our other top candidate from the search we did with the Prothman Company last summer. We will be bringing in Gary Marks from Ketchum, Idaho to meet with the Council. Gary is still working as the City Manager for Ketchum.

Gary was a top contender for the job and he received a lot of positive comments during the community meet and greet. He has a great track record, experience and an excellent leadership style. The City Council is looking forward to meeting with Gary on January 24th.

Lastly I would like to give a big thanks to those who have been supportive of this action and have talked to me and the other councilors about it.

We don't get paid, but we take this job seriously as your elected officials. We work hard and try to do the best job we can, to make Lebanon the best place to live and work.

Mayor Paul