



MEMO

To: City Council

From: Pa Goldbeck, Assistant City Manager

Date: August 25, 2026

Subject: Appointing an Interim City Attorney

In early 2026, the City Attorney submitted his intent to retire in September 2026. The City Council supervises this position and has the responsibility for hiring a new City Attorney. This position serves as the chief legal advisor for the City of Ames.

Sec. 2.47 of the *Municipal Code* reads, "[The] City Attorney may be appointed by vote of a majority of the whole number of the city council and shall serve at the pleasure of the city council and be subject to removal by a vote the same as required for appointment." Section 2.48 outlines the City Attorney's powers and duties.

In March 2026, the Human Resources Director presented a recruitment plan and a hiring timeline to Council for consideration. The initial plan and timeline were approved by the City Council. On July 13, 2026, the Human Resources Director presented an update to City Council, requesting that the application period be extended an additional month to attract qualified applications.

With the extended time, the application period closed July 6, 2026, and after considerable staff effort to attract additional applicants, the selection pool remained quite small. As such, at the July 13 meeting, Council approved staff's recommendation to proceed with hiring an executive search firm that specializes in conducting nationwide searches to source candidates who meet or exceed the minimum requirements for the position.

As of August 20, 2026, a contract has been signed with [SGR](#) to assist with the hiring of the next City Attorney. The firm believes that they are able to present qualified candidates to the City five weeks from the execution of the contract, which would be the beginning of October. Once the candidates are presented to the City, the Human Resources Director will proceed with facilitating the completion of the hiring process (onsite interviews, reference checks, and

background checks).

Staff is estimating that an offer for the position could occur as early as mid-late October; however, additional time will be needed to allow the individual selected to transition into the role. **Given this updated timeline, there will be a time gap from when the current City Attorney retires to when the new one is selected and appointed.** Therefore, it is important that the City Council appoint an interim City Attorney. Additional information regarding the appointment of the interim City Attorney will be available on Monday, August 24 for Council consideration.