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## City attorney resigns

### Crisp cites time commitment, financial sacrifice

By Barbara Tetreault  
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BERLIN — City Attorney Jack Crisp has resigned as general counsel to the city.

City manager Mitchell Berkowitz made Crisp's resignation public yesterday, 17 days after his letter of resignation was received. In a press release, Berkowitz said the city council voted to seal news of

Crisp's resignation to allow the city time to address certain pending legal issues that would be affected by his resignation.

see CRISP page 6

## Crisp's tenure began in mid 80's

CRISP from page one

In his letter of resignation, Berkowitz said Crisp cited the time commitment involved in handling all of the city's legal affairs, his obligation as President of the N. H. Bar Association, and the financial sacrifice he incurred by charging the city reduced rates. Crisp's resignation was received the same day he met with the city council to review pending litigation. At that time, the council indicated its support for Crisp, despite Mayor Yvonne Coulombe's opposition to him. Coulombe said she did not feel the city could afford Crisp and disapproved of the fact that he no longer lived in Berlin.

Crisp's tenure as city attorney, which began in the mid 80's, has been controversial at times. Berkowitz referred to the controversy surrounding the city attorney in his statement, noting that "the role of the city attorney is not an easy one since the city tends

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to be involved in many complex issues, some of which ultimately end up as lawsuits."

Berkowitz said he was accepting Crisp's resignation reluctantly and praised his work on behalf of the city. He noted Crisp was initially hired "when the city faced several sewer project lawsuits, all of which have now been settled as a result of his involvement."

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The manager said he may split day-to-day operational legal requirements from the more complex legal issues, leaving the complex cases for special counsel as appointed by the city council.

"Attorney Crisp has indicated a willingness to handle specific cases on behalf of the city if requested to do so by the city council," Berkowitz said.

Berkowitz said the transition to a new city attorney is expected to be orderly and smooth and said Crisp has offered his assistance in the transition. Crisp will continue to work on pending cases until they are concluded and handle routine legal matters for the city until a new city attorney is appointed.

The authority to appoint and fire the city attorney rests with the city manager.