

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORTAGE CITY COUNCIL
OF MAY 22, 2019**

Mayor Patricia Randall called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The following Councilmembers were present at the meeting: Councilmembers Chris Burns, Richard Ford, Lori Knapp, Claudette Reid and Terry Urban, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson and Mayor Patricia Randall. Also present were City Clerk Adam Herringa and Mr. Robert Slavin and Mr. David Krings of Slavin Management Consultants.

CITY MANAGER SEARCH AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS: Mayor Randall shared that the purpose of the meeting was to review the City Manager recruitment process, ideal characteristics of the next City Manager and issues the next City Manager will need to address. She then asked the management recruitment consultants who have been retained to assist in the recruitment process to introduce themselves. Mr. Robert Slavin and Mr. David Krings of Slavin Management Consultants offered introductions and shared their qualifications and experience in the field of public executive recruitment.

Mr. Slavin shared that he would like to begin by asking City Council for their thoughts and ideas surrounding what should be in the City Manager Profile as this is a critical recruiting tool. City Council offered their thoughts and suggestions and there was consensus that the City Manager Profile used last time needed dramatic revisions and updating. With regard to degree and experience requirements, Mr. Slavin was asked to verify that the experience requirements of the City Manager Profile match those requirements included in the City Manager job description.

City Council next reviewed ideal characteristics of the next City Manager such as being dynamic, an aspirational leader, positive energy and someone who is excited to be a member of the Portage community. City Council also discussed challenges that will need to be addressed and the hope that the next City Manager will have relevant experience. Examples discussed include a declining commercial corridor and a person who has experience in redevelopment efforts. Other qualities raised include someone who is environmentally savvy, understands economic development and is willing to work with other municipal entities.

Councilmember Ford stated that the city has a competent staff and confirmed with Mr. Slavin that it's appropriate to include such a sentiment in the Profile document. Councilmember Reid emphasized the importance of customer service and strides made by the city in this regard. Mr. David Krings confirmed that a potential City Manager will evaluate the community as a place to live. Mr. Krings shared that the City Manager Profile should include information on the quality of the city along with Portage Public Schools.

Councilmember Urban then commented on the structure and staffing in the Office of the City Manager and City Council reviewed potential construction projects, such as a new Community Senior Center, that are on the horizon. Mayor Randall commented that she felt financing and budgeting are in good hands but would like the next City Manager to be excited about taking on challenges and coming up with innovative solutions. Mayor Randall, Councilmember Burns and others emphasized the importance of including the non-partisan nature of the City Council in the City Manager Profile. Other positive aspects of the community that were mentioned include low crime rate, excellent parks and trails, solid tax base, good quality of life, thriving arts community, proximity to educational institutions, etc.

With regard to communication, Mr. Slavin asked about preferred methods of communicating and sharing information with and between the City Manager and City Council.

There was discussion with a consensus being that communication be continuous, consistent and uniform amongst each Councilmember. City Council then discussed the different communication styles of the current and most recent City Managers. Mayor Randall expressed hope that the next City Manager would be a leader in the community. Related, Councilmember Reid stated that she would like City Council to review and revise the job description. Mr. Krings stated that, while job duties are important, it's the "soft skills" that have the greatest impact on City Manager tenure.

Next, City Council discussed whether the next City Manager should live in the community and that, while residency cannot be mandated, the hope is for the City Manager to be active in the community.

Mr. Slavin asked questions related to the organizational structure of the City of Portage and discussed potential salary ranges/compensation packages. In response to an inquiry, Mr. Slavin reviewed the ideal timeline for the search. Mayor Randall expressed her goal that the search be completed and a new manager selected prior to the election in November. Following a review of the timeline, Mr. Slavin inquired if City Council knew of any potential candidates. Mr. Slavin and City Council then reviewed the screening, interview procedure, value of in-person interviews, and how many candidates should be on the list of finalists. Councilmember Urban expressed regret as he had to leave the meeting (3:08 p.m.).

Mayor Randall inquired as to next steps and Mr. Slavin commented that the City Manager Profile document should be completed. Mr. Slavin stated that a formal job announcement will be posted around the time the City Manager Profile is complete. Mr. Slavin then reviewed how long the position will be posted and the approximate time when candidate interviews would occur.

Councilmember Knapp confirmed that the contract with Slavin Management Consultants has a contingency in case the hire does not work out. Mr. Slavin responded in the affirmative. Mayor Randall and Councilmember Knapp inquired as to the current demographics in the field of city management. Mr. Slavin responded and indicated that the demographics have been changing.

Mayor Randall and Mr. Slavin then reviewed the discussion and highlighted the next immediate steps which include completing the City Manager Profile, getting an announcement ready to go and City Council writing down and sharing their thoughts on issues and opportunities facing the community

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Adam Herringa, City Clerk