

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 26, 2019

Mayor Patricia Randall called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Councilmembers Chris Burns, Richard Ford, Lori Knapp, Claudette Reid, Terry Urban, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson and Mayor Patricia Randall. Councilmember Ford participated via a conference call and arrived in person at 5:58 p.m. Also present were City Attorney Randy Brown, Deputy City Manager Rob Boulis and City Clerk Adam Herringa.

Mayor Randall inquired as to the interview process and how questions would be asked. Mr. Boulis and Mr. Herringa shared their understanding that City Council would each take turns asking questions in a "round robin" fashion. Mr. Boulis shared that the last time such interviews were held Mr. Dave Krings of Slavin Management Consultants reviewed written questions from the public before submitting them to be asked by Mr. Robert Slavin.

Mayor Randall asked if there were any objections to taking action on amending the motion setting the interview schedules that was adopted at the August 20th Special Meeting. There being no objection, motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to amend the motion of August 20, 2019 which was to "invite candidates F and G to the City of Portage on Wednesday, August 28th to meet with Councilmembers individually one-on-one and that City Council meet for public interviews that evening at 5:00 and 6:30 p.m. to conduct two separate interviews" to "hold a Special Meeting on Wednesday, August 28th in Council Chambers for the purpose of holding interviews and deliberations on two candidates for the position of City Manager with the Special Meeting convening at 12:30 p.m. with interviews occurring at 1:00 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. followed by a recess until interviews resume at 5:00 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. with deliberations to follow." Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Mayor Randall stated that she is planning to welcome each candidate and set aside time in each session for questions from the public. Councilmember Reid suggested that the public be asked to submit written questions in the first half of the interview so that Mr. Krings will have time to review the questions before they are asked. Attorney Brown suggested that the public be asked to submit questions in the first 30 minutes of each interview but that any late arriving questions not be ignored.

With a sense of how the questions will be asked, Mayor Randall moved on and inquired as to any specific questions that City Council would like to ask. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson referenced a set of sample interview questions provided by Slavin Management Consultants and indicated that he found fourteen questions he likes and Councilmember Knapp indicated that she had reached a similar number. Councilmember Reid suggested that the candidates be permitted to give a complete answer to each question they are asked rather than having a specific time limit. Mr. Boulis stated that questions can be asked from the list provided by Mr. Slavin or Councilmembers may come up with their own. He concluded by recommending that the same questions be asked of each candidate. Councilmember Urban stated that the same questions did not have to be asked of each candidate and indicated he planned on asking questions of candidates based on information provided in application materials.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson suggested that City Council attempt to identify questions to ask the candidates. Mayor Randall suggested that City Council focus their questions on those topics most important to them as a Councilmember. Councilmember Urban questioned whether he would have enough information following the interviews to be able to make a decision. Mayor Randall asked that all Councilmembers keep an open mind.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson recommended a question from the list provided by Mr. Slavin

and indicated his intention to ask that particular question. Councilmember Knapp suggested a question as well and Councilmember Reid inquired as to how follow-up questions could be asked. Attorney Brown indicated that it would be appropriate for the follow-up to occur immediately after the original answer is given and Mr. Boulis emphasized that the follow-up should be specifically related to the answer that was given.

Councilmember Urban asked if the one-hour length of each interview session could be extended to afford City Council the opportunity to ask additional questions. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson concurred that additional time would be appreciated. Mayor Randall suggested an extension from one-hour to one-and-a-half hours. Councilmember Urban and Mayor Pro Tem Pearson were agreeable to the suggestion.

Mayor Randall indicated that she would start the interview process by asking the candidates to begin by sharing information about themselves and then proceed into asking questions.

City Councilmembers next reviewed questions they were each considering asking. Some Councilmembers stated they planned to utilize questions provided by Slavin Management Consultants, another planned to review and ask questions from the ICMA list of best questions to ask potential city managers and other Councilmembers crafted their own questions to ask. Mr. Herringa indicated that he would summarize and provide City Council with a long list of questions which could then be asked should time permit.

Councilmember Burns inquired as to the next steps after the interviews are concluded. Mr. Boulis shared that it will have been a very long day and he would recommend that City Council break and hold a discussion at the September 3rd Regular City Council Meeting. Councilmember Knapp indicated that she would likely need to call into this meeting. Mr. Boulis commented that the first step would be to select a candidate and the next step would be to negotiate a contract which would then need to be approved by City Council.

Mr. Herringa noted that the motion adopted earlier included one-hour interview times. Motion by Reid, seconded by Knapp, to amend the motion such that each interview session be one-and-a-half hours long with a 15-minute break in between interview sessions. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Mayor Randall and Councilmember Reid suggested that City Council be prepared with additional questions should time permit. Councilmember Ford suggested that City Council could use the time between the afternoon and evening sessions to review and revise interview questions.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Adam Herringa, City Clerk