

CALLED MEETING

COMMISSION CHAMBER

February 13, 2024

Augusta Richmond County Commission convened at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 13, 2024, the Honorable Garnett Johnson, Mayor, presiding.

PRESENT: Hons. Johnson, Williams (participates by telephone), Mason, Frantom, Garrett, Scott, McKnight, Pulliam, Lewis and Guilfoyle, members of Augusta Richmond County Commission.

Mr. Mayor: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Madam Clerk, I call this meeting to order. Attorney Brown.

1. LEGAL MEETING

A. Pending and potential litigation

B. Real estate

C. Personnel

Mr. Brown: Good morning, Mayor and Commissioners. We would request a motion to go into executive session for the discussion of pending or potential litigation, real estate and personnel.

Mr. Mason: So move.

Ms. McKnight: Second.

Mr. Mayor: I have a motion and a second. Madam Clerk, we're voting.

Mr. Lewis and Mr. Frantom out.

Motion carries 8-0.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Madam Clerk. With that, we are excused to executive session.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION]

Mr. Mayor: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Thank ya'll for being here. Again, I apologize for the delay. Madam Clerk, I call this meeting back to order. Attorney Brown.

2. Motion to approve execution by the Mayor of the affidavit of compliance with Georgia's Open Meeting Act.

Mr. Brown: Thank you, sir. We would request a motion to execute the closed meeting affidavit.

Mr. Mason: So move.

Ms. McKnight: Second.

Mr. Mayor: That's a proper motion and second. Madam Clerk, we're voting.

Motion carries 10-0.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you. Just for the record Commissioner Bobby Williams is not here. He has joined us by phone. Attorney Brown, are there any motions as a result of our executive session?

Mr. Brown: Yes, sir. Our first motion is a motion to adopt a Resolution authorizing the settlement of all claims by Lula Mae Heath and the Estate of Brian Z. Heath in the amount of \$425,000 payable as follows: the Estate of Brian Z. Heath and the Doumar Rainsford and further authorizing the Administrator to distribute this amount of \$425,000 waiving Augusta Code of Ordinances sections in conflict for this instance only and for other purposes.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Attorney Brown.

Mr. Garrett: Motion to approve.

Ms. Scott: Second.

Mr. Mayor: There's a proper motion and a second from the commissioner from the 9th. We're voting.

Motion carries 10-0.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Attorney Brown.

Mr. Brown: Our next motion, sir, is a motion to approve and to execute a settlement agreement with Square One Medical in the amount of \$34,650.

Mr. Frantom : So move.

Mr. Garrett: Second.

Mr. Mayor: A motion and a second. Madam Clerk, we're voting.

Motion carries 10-0.

Mr. Mayor: All right, Attorney Brown.

Mr. Brown: The next motion will be read by the Administrator, Mayor Johnson.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, sir.

Ms. Douse: Mayor Johnson, Augusta Commissioners, I would like for you to make a motion to task the Administrator to procure professional services to dispose of property located at 2163 Central Avenue.

Ms. McKnight: So move.

Mr. Mason: Second.

Mr. Johnson: Second.

Mr. Mayor: I don't know who chimed in first, commissioner from --

The Clerk: Ms. McKnight and Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mayor: Mr. Johnson says he'll take it. It doesn't matter. Mr. Johnson, commissioner from the 1st.

The Clerk: He's making the motion?

Mr. Mayor: No, she made it. Commissioner from the 1st seconded it.

The Clerk: Oh, that was Mr. Johnson, okay.

Mr. Mayor: All right, Madam Clerk, we're voting.

Motion carries 10-0.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Attorney Brown.

Mr. Brown: Our final motion today, sir, is a motion to accept the resignation of Director Maurice McDowell and to approve payment of severance in the amount of three months via salary continuation as provided for in the Augusta Georgia PPPM and upon release or claims and execution of a severance agreement and release of claim as provided for by in the Augusta, Georgia PPPM.

Ms. McKnight: So move.

Mr. Mason: Second.

Mr. Mayor: We have a motion and a second from the commissioner from the 3rd and Commissioner Mason from the 4th. Madam Clerk, we're voting.

Mr. Williams votes No.

Motion carries 9-1.

Mr. Mayor: Ladies and gentlemen, I just want to take a few moments of personal privilege to thank Mr. McDowell for his years of service to Augusta Richmond County. We certainly want to wish him well in his endeavors and we appreciate his effort while he has been employed here. All right, Attorney Brown.

Mr. Brown: There are no further motions, sir.

Mr. Mayor: All right. Is there another matter as it relates to our legal agenda? So does that conclude –

Mr. Brown: There's no more motion by, I do believe we have a matter, Administrator's recruitment.

Mr. Mayor: Yes, that is it. The Chair recognizes the commissioner from the 1st.

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

The Clerk: Hold on just a moment.

Mr. Mayor: The Chair from the 1st, you have the floor, sir.

Mr. Johnson: I'd like to make a motion to hire Takiyah Douse as Administrator for the City of Augusta.

Mr. Lewis: Second.

Mr. Guilfoyle: Point of privilege, Mr. Mayor.

Mr. Mayor: All right, so I have a motion and a second.

The Clerk: We have a nomination.

Mr. Mayor: We have a nomination so no second needed. So there is a nomination, no second needed. The commissioner from the 10th has asked for a moment of personal privilege. The floor recognizes you, Commissioner Wayne Guilfoyle.

Mr. Guilfoyle: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. This question is for the attorney. Attorney Brown, as far as our rules, do we follow the Robert's Rules of Order?

Mr. Brown: No, we follow the Rules of Procedure by Augusta, Georgia Commission which is an ordinance on our behalf.

Mr. Guilfoyle: Can you define the, I know that we could vote yes, no, abstain as well as pass. Is that correct?

Mr. Brown: You could indicate your agreement with the motion, disagreement with the motion or a willingness not to register your opinion about a motion.

Mr. Guilfoyle: Okay, all right, thank you.

Mr. Mayor: Commissioner Mason from the 4th, you're in the queue, sir.

Mr. Mason: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. The nominations are still open, aren't they? All right, I 'd like to take this opportunity to nominate Tameka Allen as the City Administrator.

Ms. McKnight: Second.

Mr. Mayor: There's no second. There's just a n nomination. So we have two nominees; we're going to address the first nominee first and I would assume as protocol, as in the previous vote, this is going to be a roll call vote?

Mr. Mason: Request a roll call.

Mr. Frantom: I'd like to close the nominations is the first thing you have to do so I'd like to close the nominations.

Mr. Mayor: Nominations closed. Any objection to that? I see no objections. Nominations are closed. Roll call vote. First nominee is Interim Director Takiyah Douse. Madam Clerk.

Mr. Williams: So we're doing Takiyah Douse?

The Clerk: Yes, sir. We're going to do a roll call vote.

Mr. Williams: Is this for Takiyah Douse?

The Clerk: Yes, we have two nominees. Ms. Takiyah Douse is our first nomination with Ms. Tameka Allen as our second nominee. So we're voting on the first nominee, Ms. Takiyah Douse. Are we ready?

Mr. Mayor: We're ready, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Frantom.

Mr. Frantom: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Garrett.

Mr. Garrett: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Guilfoyle.

Mr. Guilfoyle: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mason: Not at this time, Madam Clerk.

The Clerk: I beg your pardon, sir.

Mr. Mason: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. McKnight.

Ms. McKnight: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Pulliam.

Ms. Pulliam: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Scott.

Ms. Scott: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Bobby Williams.

Mr. Williams: Yes, ma'am.

Mr. Mayor: You've got to call me.

The Clerk: It's tied.

Mr. Williams: That's five/five.

The Clerk: Yes, sir.

Mr. Williams: Then the Mayor's got to vote.

Mr. Mayor: My vote is no.

Motion ties 5-5.

Mayor Johnson votes No.

Motion fails 5-6.

The Clerk: Next nominee, Ms. Tameka Allen. We're ready to vote, sir?

Mr. Mayor: Yes, ma'am, we're ready.

The Clerk: Okay, Mr. Frantom.

Mr. Frantom: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Garrett.

Mr. Garrett: Yes.

The Clerk: Mr. Guilfoyle.

Mr. Guilfoyle: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mason: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. McKnight.

Ms. McKnight: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Pulliam.

Ms. Pulliam: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Scott.

Ms. Scott: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Bobby Williams.

Mr. Williams: Abstain.

Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Pulliam and Ms. Scott vote No.

Mr. Williams abstains.

Motion fails 5-4-1.

Mr. Mayor: All right.

Mr. Williams: Ms. Bonner.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Mayor.

Mr. Mayor: Yes, sir, I'm coming to you. We're going to give Commissioner Bobby Williams a courtesy seeing how he's on the phone. Let's see what he has to say, Madam Clerk.

The Clerk: The Mayor has recognized you, Commissioner Williams.

Mr. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I want a vote for reconsideration for Takiyah Douse. Can I get a second?

Mr. Johnson: I'll second a vote of reconsideration.

Mr. Mayor: We're going to let our Parliamentarian, Attorney Brown.

Mr. Brown: Let me correct this so that it can be understood. When an action fails, no action is taken so there's nothing to reconsider. You could simply nominate a person again until the Commission decides its process otherwise.

Mr. Williams: Well, I want to nominate Takiyah Douse for the Administrator's position.

Mr. Mayor: The Chair recognizes, there's a lot of folks in the queue. Commissioner Scott, you're in the queue first. Do you have anything? Commissioner Frantom, you have the floor, sir.

Mr. Frantom: This is for the attorney.

Mr. Williams: Did I get a second, Ms. Bonner?

The Clerk: You don't need one, sir. These are nominations.

Mr. Frantom: Attorney.

Mr. Brown: Yes, sir.

Mr. Frantom: You said when no action is taken. Six votes is an action, is it not?

Mr. Williams: I want a moment of –

The Clerk: Hold on just a moment, Commissioner Williams. Commissioner Frantom has been recognized to speak.

Mr. Williams: Go ahead.

Mr. Brown: Yes, sir, go ahead.

Mr. Frantom: Is six votes not an action?

Mr. Brown: It was not six votes, it's no action because the motion did not receive six votes to create an action.

Mr. Frantom: The first person up got six votes for a no.

Mr. Brown: The first person up, the motion was no to the motion. It was not, the action being sought was to appoint Takiyah Douse as the Administrator. That did not get six votes. Just as last week the other gentleman had two/eight. If you look at the approval letters is that no action was taken.

Mr. Frantom: So you're saying last week, two weeks that we could have renominated the guy that got two out of eight.

Mr. Brown: Yes, you could.

Mr. Frantom: Okay, that's interesting. Okay, thank you.

Mr. Brown: There must be six affirmative votes for a Commission to take any action as a body as a whole.

Mr. Mayor: Okay, thank you, Attorney Brown. Commissioner Lewis, I see you in the queue, sir.

Mr. Lewis: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. My colleague, I thank my colleague Bobby Williams for reconsidering Ms. Douse. Ms. Douse has served in this capacity for approximately two years. Two years she's served in this capacity and for the record, Augusta hired a recruitment firm and there were many applicants that applied for this position and in this process that they use, and I want everybody to know this, in the process that they use Ms. Douse scored the highest score of all the candidates based on the process that this company used which told me that clearly to them Ms. Douse was the best person for this job based on their analysis and the process that they use. And to me, Mr. Mayor, when Ms. Douse was not on the initial list of the three people that you brought before this body, I think that it was a disservice to that young lady that has been serving this city in that capacity for the past two years and here we are voting on her for this position and I feel like we're doing Ms. Douse a disservice by not electing her to this position of City Administrator for Augusta Richmond County. Everybody has their own opinion and I respect everybody's vote but in good conscience and in fairness there's no way that I can see that my

colleagues could not vote Ms. Douse in as our City Administrator. It really is a disservice, it really is a disservice and I really want to reiterate that, Mr. Mayor. It's a disservice. You had an opportunity to cast the dissenting vote. You're asking the citizens of Augusta Richmond County to give you a vote in a referendum. You've always had a vote, Mr. Mayor. And you just exercised that vote on today and you chose to go a different way, but that's your prerogative but then again on the other side you're asking for a vote in a referendum and you've had a vote today so I don't understand that process.

Mr. Mayor: No, no, no outbursts from the community, please. Thank you so much.

Mr. Lewis: So I don't understand that process, Mr. Mayor. You've had an opportunity and again you've failed this community. Thank you.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, commissioner. Ladies and gentlemen, there will be no outbursts from the public. I want to address Commissioner Lewis. Commissioner Williams, we'll come to you, sir. We'll get you in the queue. Commissioner Lewis, for you to sit here and put this at the feet of the Mayor is disheartening in that under our Charter that was created, it gives the Mayor the authority to nominate up to three based on his recommendations. I made it public that I made my recommendations based on experience and qualifications. I put up three names. Those three individuals had the most experience and the highest qualifications deemed by me and you're right. I do in a few occasions –

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Mayor, you say the best qualifications –

Mr. Mayor: Wait, wait, wait a second, sir, I have the floor now. I've let you speak, and I didn't interrupt you so it's now my turn. It's my turn. Now for you to sit here and put this, there's, wait a minute, no outbursts. There's ten other colleagues besides myself that sit on this dias. For you to take this personal aim at me is certainly disheartening. I only have one vote –

Mr. Lewis: Yes –

Mr. Mayor: -- and I asked for an equal vote to that of my colleagues. Now if you believe in our great democracy, we shouldn't have to deal with the extensions of moving forward with the people's business, with the people's business and it's time to move on. You won a vote you move on. You lose a vote you move on. But it's time to move on. It's time to move on. I only have one vote, sir.

Mr. Lewis: You're absolutely right –

Mr. Mayor: So at that point –

Mr. Lewis: You're absolutely right, Mr. Mayor, and you did exercise that vote.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you so much. The Chair recognizes the commissioner from the 7th, Commissioner Sean Frantom.

Mr. Frantom: Thank you, colleagues. I appreciate Commissioner Lewis bringing it up because I'm going to bring up my side and why I'm where I'm at. He is correct that she scored subjectively on the assessments higher but she didn't score higher on the emotional intelligence side so she did not score higher on both sides, let's first clarify that. She has 31 years of experience, 11 months of interim administrator experience. Both have an MBA, nine and a half year's deputy administrator experience and frankly, I wasn't here but she should have been probably sitting there many years ago and I think that's the reason that I am where I am on this is that it's time that someone who has been so dedicated, done the right thing, had zero issues out of her department, made a transformation on the IT side for the radio system. I think she deserves the opportunity. I think that some people in this government held her up many years ago because they didn't like her and they know that they couldn't control her but now it's time that we give her an opportunity.

Mr. Mayor: No outbursts from the crowd, please.

Mr. Frantom: And that's why I am where I am. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Commissioner. All right, Commissioner Johnson, before I go to you, I have to allow Commissioner Bobby Williams who has asked for a point of personal privilege if you would just give a minute.

Mr. Williams: I want to pick up (inaudible). When we hired a company for thirty thousand, forty thousand dollars whatever it is that we hired a company for, we asked them to find an administrator of our dreams and they gave a number of interviews what have you, six, seven, eight (inaudible) and Takiyah Douse came out number one (inaudible) category. Takiyah Douse not only had a final score that was greater than anybody else, she had a score that was at least 19 points higher than anybody that was close to her. Commissioner Frantom said something about the other young lady and she's been there 31 years and so forth and so on and I take my hat off to her but you should have hired her when you had the opportunity to hire her. Now it's been about ten years since she's been in the Administrator's office and we need somebody who is new, somebody who understands, somebody who can get it going and somebody who has the intelligence to lead people. She is fair, she is above board and she works with everybody. We had somebody who interviewed for the Administrator's position and said you guys don't need me. You've got somebody doing the job. Ya'll just need to hire her. That's because even that person could find somebody who was already doing the job and somebody who was superior. I don't think that the Mayor, he said he made his decision based on experience and what have you. Sometimes experience is the best thing and sometimes you just can't teach an old dog new tricks and sometimes we need a dog that we can teach different tricks to but sometimes you just can't do it. So I said all that to say this. When it looks right, when it smells right, when we look for somebody who can be an administrator, Takiyah Douse is as close to the best that we can get. We said we were going out to get the best. We had about 20, 30, 40 people in the pool and Takiyah Douse blew every one away in every category and final score there was nobody at least 19 points anywhere near her in any way, shape, form or fashion. The girl showed out, she showed up, she showed them what she was about and I don't understand, you know it's good to like people, I love people. I love a lot of people but when I was principal at a high school I wouldn't hire my mama if she couldn't do the job. I hired somebody who could. Let's hire Takiyah Douse; let's keep it moving. Thank you.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Commissioner Williams. The Chair recognizes commissioner from the 1st, Commissioner Jordan Johnson.

Mr. Johnson. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I want to submit this and I'm going to leave it alone. I think that the most disheartening part about this process, I could label a few disheartening parts about this process. Yes, we paid \$38,000 to a search firm to find us a candidate and they did that. Yes, one of the interviewees said that he thought Takiyah should have the job and he was recommended above Takiyah and he said he didn't even want the job. That's disheartening but the biggest that really frustrates me here is that we're sitting here publicly dividing two amazing highly qualified black women. Now there's no secret that I support Ms. Douse. I've had the conversation with Ms. Douse and with Ms. Allen. I'm looking Ms. Allen right in the face. This has gotten so nasty because of the politics that this city has adopted and I always come out and talk about the politics and how it has just gotten so volatile and how it has gotten so divisive and we're seeing it right here right now to the point to where the city has an IRS claim that we're having to work through, we have a Boathouse that we have to rebuild, we have all kinds of items that we're having to deal with but yet we're going back and forth on who to hire and drawing comparisons between two highly qualified black women. Well, you say, Jordan, why won't you vote for Ms. Allen? Well, we paid \$38,000 to have a search firm to tell us who to vote for and we always talk about the Commission doing things and never taking the recommendations of the people who tell us to do things. It's a politics that I think that if we're not careful, we're not going to be able to recoup. We're not going to be able to come back off this road. We talked about winning votes and losing votes. Well, that's why the issue of the vote is on the ballot May 21. We're trying to change the rules so here's my heart and I'm going to leave it alone because I have AKAs that I love dearly. I have Deltas, my godmama raised me, was a Delta, AKAs Ms. Fields, sister Jean, I love all of ya'll. Put the city above the terrible politics that we've been playing for the last year and a quarter so far. It started out with Gold Cross, now the Mayor's vote is on the ballot, that divided us. The Administrator is dividing us, everything is starting to divide the city but yet and still roads aren't paved and we just can't seem to get behind a candidate that has been doing the job that the search firm told us was doing the job and someone said that wasn't our scores. Well, why pay \$38,000? Why pay \$38,000 and if you remember when it came down to this commission voting to start the process to hire the Administrator, I voted against that. And people said you're trying to muddy the waters. No. We were not ready to go down that road and you clearly see that we're still not ready to go down that road because of politics. I don't care if Fred Russell is on the table or Steven Kendrick is on a table, let's just call an ace an ace and a spade a spade. The City has to continue to move forward and we're making ourselves look pretty bad up here so I stand by my vote. I'm sure my colleagues have things that they want to say as well but I'm going to stand by my vote but I want to publicly apologize to these two fabulous highly qualified black women who are putting their name in the hat to run a city that historically you know probably would have never seen black women even have the opportunity to be in that position other than you know of course our past city administrator was a black woman. So let's try to move forward. Let's try to bring some unity about this.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Commissioner Johnson, and for the record the search firm was hired to bring us finalist candidates. They were never tasked with bringing us a finalist. That is the job of this elected body to determine a finalist candidate so just for the record. The Chair recognizes the commissioner from the 4th, Commissioner Alvin Mason.

Mr. Mason: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. There's been a lot of good comments and everything that's going on. People have their thought processes, and they are certainly entitled to that. This is America. There is no reason to be upset about someone that doesn't feel the same way as you do. That is the American way. I don't see the same things as my next colleague to my right or my next colleague to my left necessarily and there's nothing wrong with that. In my opinion having been up here almost 10, 11 years now, I don't need a search firm to tell me who to hire. And number one, we didn't hire a search firm to tell us who to hire. It's a piece of information, a piece of the puzzle of information and if you recall when we were back there, they said that that this is one piece of information that you can use in your information gathering process while you're making your decision. I used that information. I on the other hand have the opportunity to see with my eyes and see the action from both candidates and so from there that's where my decision came from. I saw both candidates in action. I saw a candidate in action that held down two areas of the city at the same time and did very, very excellent in doing so and so it's not about this one is no good or that one is no good. It's not about that. Let's get away from that. Get out of your feelings. If you're a commissioner, this is what you're going to deal with. If you're not up for the task, get out of the way and let somebody else come up here who is. At the same time we've got to make tough decisions and we've got to give that opportunity to those that have qualified. Yes, those numbers were great on this one side but that's one side. When I see in action versus what I see on paper, I'm going to put more weight to what I see in action than I am in a piece of paper or test. That's what I'm going to do and that's what I did do. Nobody should be upset about that. You don't hear me being upset about someone not agreeing with my candidate. I haven't tried to convince anybody of anything. Period. They might be trying to convince me but I'm not trying to convince nobody because my opinion is not going to change simply because you have the will for it to change. My opinion is going to remain what it is based on my interpretation and my feelings and what I see as a professional, as an executive at Fort Gordon doing hiring positions for executive positions. So I know exactly what I'm looking for but I'm not downing anybody else or saying we shouldn't do this or we shouldn't do that or blaming the Mayor or anybody else. At the end of the day you're responsible for your vote. If you can stand on what you believe, then why would you leave where you stand if that's what you believe. Stay where you are if that's the case. And eventually it will all work itself out. But I'm not here to beg anyone to change their vote. I support Tameka Allen because I've worked with Tameka Allen for a number of years and I saw what she was capable of doing and what she did do out in the community, networking with our contracting partners, actually being visible everywhere and anywhere and so this is a part of it too but also how do you treat your directors. What type of relationship do you have there that will help facilitate a better Augusta Georgia. That type of relationship is extremely important to be able to facilitate that, give professional development or whatever is required at that particular time. You have to look at skill sets. You can't find that on a piece of paper. You can tell me anything but show me and so that's where I am today. I would certainly hope that it does not get, well, I was hoping it didn't get like this. We were in a nomination process and that's why I called the lawyer over because I thought we were only supposed to nominate and not have these types of dissertations that I'm giving you so long story short, I've made a short story long but the bottom line is is that we have no business getting upset with each other because at the end of the day we all have differences and that's okay. Some of us may be here to work with her or whoever it is through our term. Some of you may not. And so we may not feel how you feel. You may not be here to work with this person. I know I will whoever it is going to be. But we need to take that

into consideration and if you say why I was one person seeing it one way and one person seeing it another. There's many different ways. All I'm saying is let's not argue like you say, accuse each other, get nasty about any of this because at the end of the day this is really small fish in this big pond but think about life and glad that we're in it and living it. This we'll deal with. We'll get through it. Let's stop all the back and forth. Either it's going to happen or it's not, we've got a process for that, we'll determine what's happening next or if not, we'll continue on until we can get whatever votes we need, whatever that may be and it will be what it is. But if we don't get that today, we know how it's going to go. People remain where they are and we'll continue on until we can do something different if we need to. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Commissioner. The Chair recognizes Commissioner Brandon Garrett from the 8th.

Mr. Garrett: Thank you, Mayor. Since we're all going down this route of why we're supporting who we're supporting, I'm going to put my two cents out there. Looking through all the test scores and the things that the search firm that was hired which by the way also employs a previous administrator, that scoring was very subjective. One of the finalists that the Mayor put forth when he withdrew his name in a letter that he sent to the recruiting firm and to our HR Department stated that the process was set up for the current administrator. True, he did say that we already had somebody in place that was doing a great job from what he could tell but he also stated in his letter that the process was clearly set up for her. And so to me when we're talking about scoring and we're looking at things like that, yes, they are a useful tool but as some of my colleagues have said some of the action that we have seen has led us to make the decisions that we've made. I think that Ms. Douse has done a fantastic job. I've worked with Ms. Allen on numerous occasions and she's done a fantastic job and I also saw the job that she did when she was the Interim Administrator the same as Ms. Douse currently is and I tried to lead the charge when we were without an administrator to hire her and the forces up on this dias would not allow it. And I'll state from a previous commissioner he told me we can't have somebody that strong as an administrator. I'm just stating the obvious up here and this is one of the reasons why I've been supporting Ms. Allen but let it be said that whoever ends up with this job I will support them. Thank you.

Mr. Mayor: Thank you, Commissioner. All right, Madam Clerk, no other colleagues, I'm sorry, Commissioner Francine Scott, you have the floor, madam.

Ms. Scott: Thank you, sir. Just piggyback on what Commissioner Garrett said, you know it's real funny when we get on the dias we hear that there's letters and recommendation and some of the commissioners have privy of them and some of them don't. I think both of them, I think what we need to do is we have two outstanding candidates and may the best person win. We have as Commissioner Mason said that there is processes that we need to go through and I think we should just move on forward.

Mr. Mayor: All right, Madam Clerk, I think there's been another nomination. It's time to go through these. There's a second nomination according to Commissioner Bobby Williams. Didn't he renominate, somebody did –

The Clerk: He asked for reconsideration of Takiyah Douse.

Mr. Mayor: I'm sorry, reconsideration of Takiyah Douse.

Mr. Frantom: That would be reconsideration period, not reconsideration of one candidate, correct?

Mr. Brown: Reconsideration is unnecessary and appropriate if Mr. Williams means he wishes to nominate, to renominate Ms. Douse, he should do so.

Mr. Mayor: Right.

The Clerk: Commissioner Williams, would you like to –

Mr. Williams: I would like to renominate Ms. Douse.

The Clerk: Okay.

Mr. Mayor: All right, there's a renomination for Ms. Douse. All right, colleagues.

Mr. Frantom: Reconsideration for Ms. Allen as well, please.

Mr. Brown: Just the nomination would be appropriate, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Point of clarity, please.

Mr. Mayor: Yes, sir, commissioner from the 1st.

Mr. Johnson: I hate to be a downer over here, but we just heard from everybody. I don't think a vote for reconsideration or renomination makes much sense, so we have a binder to go through today of committee items. I don't know about you all, but I don't want to be here all night. I don't think anybody's mind is going to change today so can we just move on?

Mr. Mayor: I think we owe it to both these women to go through this vote one last time.

Mr. Johnson: So we hope to embarrass them publicly again.

Mr. Mayor: That's not embarrassing. It's our democracy at work. It is. It's our democracy at work.

Mr. Johnson: Okay.

Mr. Mayor: And we're doing what we were elected to do and that's to vote. All right, Madam Clerk, first person up for nomination is Interim Administrator Takiyah Douse.

Mr. Frantom: Nominations are closed.

Mr. Mayor: Yes, nominations are now closed.

The Clerk: Mr. Frantom, did you nominate Ms. Allen?

Mr. Frantom: Ms. Allen.

Mr. Mayor: Yes so we have two nominees, Takiyah Douse, Tameka Allen. First nominee Ms. Takiyah Douse, roll call vote.

The Clerk: All right, we're ready to vote. Mr. Frantom.

Mr. Frantom: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Garrett.

Mr. Garrett: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Guilfoyle.

Mr. Guilfoyle: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: This is for Ms. Douse?

The Clerk: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mason: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. McKnight.

Ms. McKnight: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Pulliam.

Ms. Pulliam: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Scott.

Ms. Scott: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Bobby Williams.

Mr. Williams: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Mayor, there is a tie.

Mr. Mayor: Madam Clerk, my vote is no.

The Clerk: Okay.

Motion ties 5-5.

Mayor Johnson votes No.

Motion fails 5-6.

Mr. Mayor: All right, Madam Clerk, second nominee is for Tameka Allen. Yes, sir, Commissioner Guilfoyle.

Mr. Guilfoyle: This is for the attorney. Attorney Brown, can we do a reverse roll call vote by, it was done back in the early 90's with Chief Few.

Mr. Brown: Your next appropriate action you must take is to vote on the nomination that's on the floor --

Mr. Mayor: Yeah.

Mr. Brown: -- which would be Ms. Allen.

Mr. Mayor: Ms. Allen. So, Madam Clerk, are you prepared roll call vote? Commissioner from the 7th, I see you in the queue.

Mr. Frantom: She's about to call me.

Mr. Mayor: All right.

The Clerk: Mr. Frantom.

Mr. Frantom: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Garrett.

Mr. Garrett: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Guilfoyle.

Mr. Guilfoyle: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Mayor: This is for Tameka Allen.

Mr. Johnson: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mason: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. McKnight.

Ms. McKnight: Yes, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Pulliam.

Ms. Pulliam: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Ms. Scott.

Ms. Scott: No, ma'am.

The Clerk: Mr. Bobby Williams.

Mr. Williams: Abstain.

Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lewis, Ms. Pulliam and Ms. Scott vote No.

Mr. Williams abstains.

Motion fails 5-4-1.

Mr. Mayor: Ladies and gentlemen, unfortunately we do not have action to take today on a City Administrator. We're going to move forward. That's the end of that. I just want to take a point of personal privilege to thank as a donation from the American Legion Women's Auxiliary Post 63 has donated a 6 by 10 flag that I'm handing over to the City of Augusta and Central Services Director. This is for the replacement of some worn and torn flags. We've been contacted by a lot of folks that said they want to help out so American Legion Women's Auxiliary Post 63 thank you so much for this donation. All right, a couple more here. We've got some acknowledgements to Mr. Jaylen Watson who is a Lucy Laney High School graduate that's won his second Super Bowl with the Kansas City Chiefs. Congratulations to Mr. Watson. And we had

some, the Coliseum Authority Director Cedric Johnson was in the crowd but he's gone. Want to acknowledge some former commissioners, they're gone. So I see, Commissioner Marion Williams, I see you and I think that's it. Madam Clerk, I close out this meeting but before I do there's a group here for Newman Tennis Center. Madam Clerk, with that, this meeting is adjourned. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for being here and I'll turn it over to Public Services.

[MEETING ADJOURNED]

Lena J. Bonner
Clerk of Commission

CERTIFICATION:

I, Lena J. Bonner, Clerk of Commission, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Called Meeting of the Augusta Richmond County Commission held on February 13, 2024.

Clerk of Commission

