

**FRUITA CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
OCTOBER 28, 2024
6:30 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The workshop of the Fruita City Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Matthew Breman. City Council members present were Aaron Hancey, Jeannine Purser, James Williams, Rich Parrish and Amy Miller. Councilor Andrea Downs was excused absent.

City Staff present were Communications and Engagement Specialist Ciara Amann, City Clerk Deb Woods and Human Resources Director Odette Brach. City Attorney Mary Elizabeth Geiger was present at the meeting virtually.

Also in attendance (virtually) was Recruitment Firm Columbia Ltd.'s Drew Gorgey.

2. AGENDA ITEMS

Councilor Hancey requested to add a discussion to the agenda about the flooding at the Salt Wash. Mayor Breman noted that if approved, a "Council Reports and Actions" section for could be added to the agenda by the City Council prior to adjournment to discuss the flooding.

- **COUNCILOR HANCEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED WITH THE ADDITION OF AN AGENDA ITEM FOR "COUNCIL REPORTS AND ACTIONS." COUNCILOR MILLER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE YES VOTES.**

A. DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT FIRM REGARDING CITY MANAGER SEARCH

Mayor Breman explained that the Council members should have received a Word document from him that included the combined notes from staff and Council members to be used as a beginning point for discussion about the brochure that will used for recruitment of the City Manager position by Columbia, Ltd. subsequent to the resignation of Mike Bennett, who took a position with the City of Grand Junction as City Manager.

Mr. Drew Gorgey with recruitment firm Columbia, Ltd. stated that the Council packet included a draft brochure that includes photos and art graphics in addition to text. He added that his goal was to have the brochure ready for publication the following day.

The Council reviewed the draft brochure's text, photos, graphics in conjunction with the previously noted comments/changes one section at a time with Mr. Gorgey and provided additional changes to finalize the document. Mr. Gorgey also contributed advice and suggestions as a recruiter with several years of experience.

Mr. Gorgey also explained that the people that he screens will have to fill out a questionnaire and if the Council wanted to ask specific questions during the finalist process, the City could have presentations with a lot of other details about Fruita that would not fit in the recruitment brochure.

Communications and Engagement Manager Ciara Amann stated that she views Fruita's Community Values that are listed in the Strategic Plan (as well as Fruita's internal values) as very important. Councilor Purser suggested that the values be referenced in the brochure under "City Organization." Mr. Gorgey recommended the statement, "Community and employee values drive the organization" as a bridge sentence between "One key to the City's success" and "seeking to be the Employer of Choice."

There was lengthy discussion about the salary range for the City Manager position, but the Council was able to reach a consensus on \$170,000 to \$200,000/year plus relocation assistance, which will be determined at a later date.

Mr. Gorgey outlined the next steps after publication of the recruitment brochure as follows:

- If the Council is contacted by any potential candidates, they need to be directed to Mr. Gorgey at Columbia, Ltd.
- The applicants' filing deadline is Sunday, December 1, 2024.
- Mr. Gorgey will review the resumes received and will sort and narrow them down to a more manageable number (approximately 18).
- Mr. Gorgey will invite those (approximately 18) candidates to screening interviews, which are made up of two parts: 1) questionnaire, and 2) Zoom interview with Mr. Gorgey.
- Some candidates will drop out because they don't want to do the questionnaire or for other reasons.
- After the questionnaires are received by Columbia, Ltd. and the interviews have been completed, Mr. Gorgey said it will be really clear that some people either don't fit or are not qualified, at which time, he will recommend candidates to the Fruita City Council.
- The City Council has scheduled a Special 90-minute Meeting on December 17, 2024 to decide which of the recommended candidates will advance to the finals.
- The Council members will receive a physical book containing the recommended candidates' information in it (Mr. Gorgey asked Council members to read the book to come prepared at the December 17th meeting).
- The Council will also receive a list of *everyone* who applied and whose cover letters and resumes will also be available on December 17, 2024 so that the ultimate decisions and judgment are the City Council's.
- The Council will narrow down their top three to five (approximately) candidates at the December 17th meeting.
- There will be a public reception/meet and greet of the top finalists so they can be observed and spoken with in an informal setting.
- A stakeholder or leadership panel interviews will take place on January 9, 2025 (any tours would be scheduled on this date as well)
- On January 10, 2025, the Council will interview the finalists and receive feedback from the earlier process steps to help with deliberation and decision making.
- Background and reference checking will be completed by Columbia, Ltd. as people move through the process.

Mr. Gorgey recommended that the Council focus on staying adaptive because there are typically all kinds of unforeseen outcomes with candidates' various situations and changes in direction.

Mayor Breman asked what the process will be for the interviews to be held on January 9th. Mr. Gorgey responded that normally, there is time for the Council on December 17th to finalize what they want

December 9th and 10th to look like. The Council requested that Mr. Gorgey help with an agenda for that meeting.

Mayor Breman asked City Attorney Mary Elizabeth Geiger if she had any concerns about candidates wanting to talk to members of City Council one-on-one. Ms. Geiger explained that since the Council needs to make an ultimate decision together, if one Council member has a one-on-one conversation with a candidate, that Council member then has information and likely a perception that not everybody else has. Therefore, she cautioned against it. Mr. Gorgey agreed that that was sound legal advice.

Councilor Purser asked if the Council would get to see the questionnaire before it goes out. Mr. Gorgey stated that he normally doesn't do that and would ask the Council to trust him on that part of the process. He further explained that Council would see the questions that the candidates answer in the book that will be prepared for them for the December 17th meeting.

Mr. Gorgey said he was beyond grateful and impressed by how the Council members worked together to get through the brochure in one night as well as their enthusiastic approach and engagement in general, as those were things he typically doesn't see with other clients.

Communications and Engagement Specialist Ciara Amann asked Mr. Gorgey to incorporate the Fruita logo on the cover of the brochure. Mr. Gorgey said he would do his best. She also said that the image on Page 2 looked a little blurry, so she would work with Kathy at Columbia, Ltd. on both the logo and image.

3. COUNCIL REPORTS AND ACTIONS (ADDED TO THE AGENDA)

Concerning the flooding at the Salt Wash, Councilor (Amy) Williams explained that she received a voicemail in the morning from John Walker, who said "he needed help with a disaster he was currently dealing with in Fruita," so she called him back and he said that for some reason, there was a crazy surge of water down the Salt Wash and he and his neighbor are experiencing a huge amount of washout that took down two trees, one on each side of the Wash. The location is where the new parking lot for Family Health West is and directly west of there. Amy said she received video and photos of the situation and when she drove past it, she became very concerned. She said she would like to know where the water came from.

Amy said Mr. Walker is very concerned that the water could potentially undermine a section of his property. Councilor (Aaron) Hancey said it was thought to be about six feet of water and that Mr. Walker's fence is only one foot away from falling off into the Wash. Amy said she wanted to make sure the City is doing what it can to help.

Rich said that when Andrea talked to Dan, he (Dan) thought it was the Army Corp of Engineers who had released the water from one of the Reservoirs, but Rich didn't know if she and Dan had actually gone to visit the site.

Matthew noted that at 4:52 p.m., Assistant City Manager Shannon Vassen stated the following in an email:

"As many of you know, there are private property owners experiencing issues in the Little Salt Wash west of the Community Center. Our Public Works Director and Neighborhood Services Officer have been working with the private property owners on these issues and have been

communicating with them often. Public Works Director Kimberly Bullen will be sending over a summary of those discussions and issues and we will forward that to you as we receive that information. We have found that the private property line goes straight to the middle of the Wash. Once we receive more information, we will forward that over to you, probably tonight or tomorrow."

Rich said there was concern about several people with Family Health West who were down there with a chainsaw to see if they could get the tree out of the ditch, which they accomplished.

Amy said they also got a backhoe and were pulling massive debris from the cottonwood trees and were directing the water further downstream.

Aaron noted that Mr. Walker is a National Mechanical Engineer for the Railroad system and his safety precautions were much more strict than what the Family Health West people were doing. He added that it would be nice to get more information sooner rather than later as Mr. Walker feels that there needs to be a urgent community effort between the homeowners and the City. Aaron said he wanted to know who the responsible party was for putting all the water in the Salt Wash because he would think that they would need to be involved after dropping six feet of water into the Wash, which is about double the amount of what is normally put in. He wondered if there were also any issues that extend further down south or north of Ottley along the Wash.

Matthew said at this point, there wasn't any action that the Council could take and that the Council needed more information.

Rich added that Mr. Walker seemed to be happy that people were responded to his calls and that Andrea had shown up to look at it. Aaron said he also spoke to him and they had a great conversation. He added that staff will have no issues working with him. Amy said Mr. Walker did hint something about legal action.

Aaron announced that the Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP) is having their 40th Anniversary celebration the following evening, but he would be unable to attend. Amy said she would be there.

Communications and Engagement Manager Ciara Amann provided an update on City Manager Mike Bennett's going-away party. A flyer with all the information will be sent to the Council, Boards and Commissions members (past and present) and partners with which Mike has worked. Ciara encouraged the Council members to share the information with any other colleagues and community members that may reach out or want to attend. Aaron asked that the Council receive a list of all those that will be receiving the flyer from staff.

4. ADJOURN

With no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Woods
Deputy City Clerk