

Session 20-06 a Special Meeting of the Homer City Council was called to order on February 14, 2020 by Mayor Pro Tempore Lord at 4:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: ADERHOLD, HANSEN-CAVASOS, LORD (telephonic), SMITH, VENUTI

ABSENT: MAYOR CASTNER, COUNCILMEMBER EVENSEN (both excused)

STAFF: CITY MANAGER KOESTER
CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

AGENDA APPROVAL (Only those matters on the noticed agenda may be considered, pursuant to City Council's Operating Manual, pg. 6)

SMITH/VENUTI MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA (3 minute time limit)

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Telephonic Interviews with City Manager Applicants

4:00 p.m. Randy Robertson

5:00 p.m. Adam Hammatt

Telephonic interviews were held with Randy Robertson and Adam Hammatt.

Mayor Pro Tem Lord called for a break at 5:52 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 5:57 p.m.

- b. Selection of City Manager Applicants for in-person interviews

Mayor Pro Tem Lord recapped that on Tuesday they had interviews with Michael Bork and George Zoukee, and today with Randy Robertson and Adam Hammatt. She opened the floor to discussion on the applicants and suggested they could narrow down to two for in person interviews, or take it in another direction.

There was consensus of the Council to remove Mr. Zoukee from consideration, because he has limited experience related to the position.

Councilmembers held a round table consideration of the remaining three applicants.

Discussion points regarding Michael Bork were that he interviewed very well. He provided quality answers to the questions, he lives in Alaska, and he has lead a department with 100 employees. He has leadership skills, and is engaging. He has no City Manager experience, but has qualities that could justify giving him a chance.

Discussion points regarding Adam Hammatt included that his investigation raised a bit of a red flag for some regarding trying to implement changes that were not supported by department heads, but it seems he has grown and is well regarded in Whitefish. It was pointed out that they don't know the full context of the situation, some organizations have an entrenched culture that has no problem pushing back. It was also pointed out that he isn't working in Whitefish and his application said he could explain more about the reason behind that at the interview if requested, but it didn't come up. He also interviewed well and had strong answers, he seems to have a good approach to engaging with the community. He lacks experience living in Alaska and there's a lot going on with a lot of municipal impact and will take time to get up to speed, but he doesn't come off as incapable. He has experience in working with FEMA which is important.

Discussion points regarding Randy Robertson pointed out his experience, and his solid and lengthy answers to questions, he seems secure in his experience and skills. It was suggested he has a different perspective on management and leadership seemed more hierarchical and potentially less collaborative, but it was pointed out in his background check that the people interviewed all said they would welcome him back and enjoyed working with him, which suggests some ability to collaborate. He's the only one with coastal harbor experience and it's in Alaska. It was suggested he's looking for a place to retire, he said they've made enough and he's content. That was countered by explaining they know what he's currently making, it's an easy way for him to say he would probably be willing to take a pay cut to come here. It may be that they can't accommodate him salary wise, but it depends on perspective and it may open an avenue where it might become more of a possibility.

ADERHOLD/VENUTI MOVED TO INVITE THE FINAL THREE CANDIDATES FOR IN PERSON INTERVIEWS AND PAY TRAVEL FOR THE APPLICANT AND SPOUSE.

There was brief comment in support of the motion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

They confirmed the in person interviews would be held the February 25th and 26th.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Wayne Aderhold, city resident, noted Matt Clark’s comments from the last meeting and agrees it’s important to find a person who will fit. It’s important to consider whether they know and want to live in Alaska, in Homer, will they fit? If they don’t they can have all the qualifications in the world but it won’t work. People skills are the next important in the ability to work with Council, staff and citizens. Last, in thinking of our current City Manager, who didn’t have City Manager experience, but she knows Homer and has people skills, that’s why we’ve gotten where we are.

Larry Slone, city resident, thought any of the three will fit, two have experience in Alaska and the other has been involved in small towns throughout his career. He’s pleased they’re interviewing all three, however if they’d selected two, his preference would have been Randy Robertson and Adam Hammatt. They’re almost perfect examples of what he referred to in the two conceptual ways of approaching a City Manager job.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Mayor Pro Tempore Lord adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m. Next Regular Meeting is Monday, February 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., Committee of the Whole at 5:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

Melissa Jacobsen, MMC, City Clerk

Approved:_____