

"A Historic Past"



"A Bright Future"

CITY OF DELAWARE CITY

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**CITY OF DELAWARE CITY
CITY MANAGER SEARCH COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 9, 2017
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the City Manager Search Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Parets. Those present included Committee Members Morrill, Haugh, Price, Harrison and Parets. Also in attendance were City Solicitor Walton and City Manager Cathcart.

ACTION UPON MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Committee Member Harrison made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken, all ayes, motion carried.

MEET WITH CURRENT CITY MANAGER RICHARD CATHCART

City Manager Cathcart said he thought it was important that he have a chance to address the committee before they started looking at and discussing resumes. He said he has been here six years and even though the job is basically the same as it was when Committee Member Morrill was City Manager, the emphasis has changed on many things. He said he would also be happy to answer any questions.

He said two critical pieces of the job are the day to day management and operation of the City, which is basically the same as it was under Committee Member Morrill, and ability to find and write grants. He said grants have become scarcer over the last ten years. He said they should spend some specific time discussing grants during the interview process. He said a relationship with the Delaware General Assembly is critically important. He said that has become

more critical because of the lack of grants available, causing the City to look to the General Assembly for funding.

He pointed out that the funding that was received for the Dragon Run Flood Mitigation Project was all state funds, as a result of having a relationship with the general assembly as well as the cabinet. Colin O'Mara, who was an absolute friend to Delaware City, and he helped the City tremendously. The Washington Street Flood Mitigation Project was funded by a \$945,000 grant for which the City had to provide a 25% match. DNREC stepped up and found \$200,000+ for the match. Neither project cost the City a dime which was due primarily to relationships rather than anyone's particular skill. The committee would be well served to really talk with the candidates about their relationships with the Delaware Legislature and cabinet and their ability to find grants.

He said it is critical that the new City Manager keep the momentum going on the Fort DuPont Project. That is a discussion that should be broached with the candidates to see what prior experience they may have. This could probably best be done by having the committee explain the project.

City Manager Cathcart said he thinks it is going to be very difficult to find a City Manager willing to work for \$80,000 annually. He said there are five other municipalities throughout the state looking for a new City Manager. The average salary being offered is \$110,000 annually. He said if the committee recommends a higher salary to the mayor, it may carry some weight. Discussion followed relating to a salary that would be acceptable to everyone and how to get to that point. Also discussed were the bridge between this committee and Council, and how best to present salary requirements to Council. Chairperson Parets said for the record that Council Members Barrett and Malinowski were present. Discussion occurred with the two council members participating. City Manager Cathcart said the committee should first choose a candidate and then negotiate a salary. They would then recommend candidates and give the acceptable salary ranges to the Mayor and the Council would take it from there.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS RESUMES

City Solicitor Walton said several of the resumes that were received had a "confidential" designation on them. Therefore, it was his recommendation that the committee should vote to go into executive session to review the resumes, names and competencies of individuals to do the job. This committee is deemed to keep those names confidential until such time as a candidate comes out publically from this process. He said they would need a motion, a second and a vote to go into executive session. No decisions can be made during the executive sessions, as that is public information and needs to be done in public. Votes would only be allowed only in public. He said there is a little more freedom because they will be discussing personnel issues. The City Solicitor asked the attendees to leave when the committee goes into executive session. Discussion

followed regarding the steps to be taken when presenting the committee recommendation(s) to the Mayor. City Solicitor Walton said the committee will recommend a candidate to the Mayor and list two alternate recommendations. The Council will be given the resumes in a memo from the City Solicitor. It is ultimately the Mayor's decision; however he said previously that he would accept the committee's recommendation. City Solicitor Walton said it is very important that these candidates remain confidential, as many of the applicants wouldn't want their employers knowing they are applying. The committee's goal is to have this task completed so that the Mayor can make his recommendation at the March Mayor and Council meeting.

Committee Member Morrill made a motion that the committee go into executive session for the reasons set forth in the agenda and return to public session following. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken, all ayes, motion carried.

RECONVENE COMMITTEE MEETING

Chairperson Parets announced that they have selected five potential candidates to be interviewed, preferably face to face, or by some electronic means if necessary. *Committee Member Morrill made a motion to authorize the City Solicitor to contact the five candidates to schedule interviews. Committee Member Price seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all ayes, motion carried.* It was decided that they would meet again for interviews on February 23rd, March 2nd and March 9th at 6:30 pm. City Solicitor Walton said he would notice these meetings for interviews. Discussion followed regarding logistics. City Solicitor Walton informed the committee of the law as it pertains to interviews and questions that can and cannot be asked. He said he would be glad to give the committee some baseline questions and would send the minutes from tonight's executive session by the following week. He also said he would not notify the candidates that were not selected at this point. Discussion followed.

Chairperson Parets said he couldn't tell the committee what a great honor and pleasure it is to serve with them. He said it is remarkable, and in his long career of over his 47 years he has never sat with five people who do a better job of focusing and problem solving.

ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member Haugh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Committee Member Morrill seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all ayes, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn K. Gwynn

City Secretary