

**Evanston City Council
Closed Session Minutes
Room 2204
Monday, April 20, 2009**

PRESENT: Alderman Moran, Wynne, Wollin, Hansen, Rainey, Holmes, Jean-Baptiste, Tisdahl: Alderman Elect Wilson, Tendam, Burrus, Fiske, Grover

GUEST: Heidi Voorhees, President, The PAR Group, LLC

PRESIDING: Mayor Morton

ROLL CALL: A QUORUM WAS MET.

Absent: Alderman Bernstein

At 6:08 p.m. Alderman Rainey motioned for the Council to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel issues. Seconded by Alderman Holmes.

Mayor Morton called for a roll call to go into Executive Session.

ROLL CALL: A quorum was met

START: 6:10 p.m.

Mayor Lorraine Morton thanked the newly elected members for being there, and then proceeded to explain the process of the Executive Sessions of the Council. The duty of the Council is to legislate and the duty of the City Manager to administer and they are two distinct responsibilities and one area should not cross another. The Council will be listening for people with qualities that they feel would be a good fit to manage this City. She explained that it was up to the new Council to choose the new City Manager from the list of five to six top candidates presented.

Alderman Rainey interjected that maybe the Mayor should inform the new members the importance of confidentiality during these sessions.

She also informed them of the strict confidentiality of what is discussed during closed sessions. It becomes public in six months unless there are sections that were judged as remaining sensitive issues. She explained that an Executive Session means just that we are supposed to keep it to ourselves.

Alderman Moran stated that the process is very sensitive. We don't want to inform their employers in case they do not acquire the position. Mayor Morton responded that we do not want to do any damage to the people who have been kind enough to give us their credentials that would cause them to have a problem on the job they have. People will know they are applying to move which may cause a negative impact. We don't want to be a part of that. Morally we are responsible for keeping all of this confidential.

Personnel

Ms. Heidi Voorhees stated she would give a little background of where we are and how we got here. She also will tell us a few things that are not on the sheets. She then passed a log of all who applied and the descriptions of the initials beside the names: SI – asked for some additional information, CO Interest means “candidate of interest” and not conflict of interest. At the back of the book are resumes of those who didn't quite make the list. She stated she was able to meet with the candidates and interview them in the conferences she had attended. She stated that these were all people who are interested in the position and are willing to relocate. She mentioned they have done an “Lexis-Nexis” on each candidate. They goggled and had reference checks on them. She would like to come away from this meeting with five or six candidates that the Council felt strongly about. That will keep us on schedule, because we need to begin interviewing in May so that the one you choose can arrange for their relocation to arrive here by early August when Rolanda is leaving. She then asked if anyone questions about process.

Mayor Morton then asked what her suggestion would be as an answer if one these persons call and say they are applying for the job. Ms. Voorhees responded to send them to her because that's what we are paying her to do in running interference. She also stated a number of Evanston residents had applied but did not have the experience of being a manager.

Walter J. Bobkiewicz was her strongest pick and she began to tell what she was looking for in an applicant. She looked for someone who was:

- Involved in communities who were culturally, economically, ethnically and may not have been their current job or may be their most recent one
- Those who had been working in urban, suburban environments with a citizenry actively engaged as Evanston
- Has a diversity as of backgrounds as in Evanston
- To find as much demographics as Evanston as possible
- Also experience with Economic Development
- Financial Management in these economic times
- Bargaining experience
- Their Management style (how they interacted with their Department heads)

All came from what was important to the Council.

Alderman Tisdahl interjected her concern about Department heads and how in the past the candidates met and talked to the Department heads, toured the buildings and then gave feedback to the Council. She was hoping this would be done this time.

Ms. Voorhees responded she would follow that suggestion, because sometimes Department heads look for different things than the Council when looking for a Manager. Ms. Voorhees continued with her choices of Mr. Bobkiewicz who was her strong choice for City Manager. He worked in a community that was 90% Latino, so she felt he had a background working in a diversity environment.

Alderman Rainey wanted a copy of the Sanford/Tallbert budget. She was also concerned with the moving from a small community to a large one as Evanston.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste asked why she thought he was fitted for the position coming from a small community in coming here. Ms. Voorhees felt that he was ready to move forward because he has been in larger communities like Santa Barbara, and this is typical of career moves similar to his. He also has worked mostly in the schools and gang situations. Alderman Jean-Baptiste wanted more details concerning the reason why Ms. Voorhees felt so strongly for this candidate, and he wanted to leave tonight with a good understanding of the candidates they would agree on.

Alderman Wynne wanted to know what to do when evaluating the experiences when some are more sophisticated than others. When she sees a small city, she also wonders how the candidate will handle us. Ms. Voorhees says you have to look at the totality of the candidate and not just a limited section of their experience.

Alderman Holmes asked was this a typical path for someone who had worked in a large community and then moves to a smaller one and then finally looks to a larger one. She asked if this was a typical path for their career, and Ms. Voorhees answered that is correct.

Mayor Morton stated she noticed he was a Management Assistant in a community with a population of 461,000 for nine years, and then for four years he was an Assistant City Manager, and then moved up to the City Manager. She also asked was he in the same type of city management as we have in Evanston, and the answer was yes in all three.

Michael J. Cassady was the next candidate and he has been attending some of your meetings. His experience was in Palatine and he left on good terms. He has been on the town side and the Developer side so he has a very unique perspective on the position. He stated he understands construction, and he has walked in the shoes of both the town and the developer. He is a strong believer in performance measurements. Alderman Rainey announced the Council Chamber was named after him when he retired from Palatine. He was also a Project Manager.

Judy Fiske stated that before he left his job description changed from day-to-day operations to Economic Development and it came out of the planner not from the candidates list. Ms. Voorhees stated that not everything that comes out of the newspapers

is true. Ms. Fiske replied that's why she asked the question. After Ms. Voorhees stated there was no legislative actions done towards him Ms. Fiske asked her to check on it for her, because she thinks that was an action by the City Council to change his job description.

M.A. ("Art") Chaudry he has a varied background with his recent position as the CO of Jackson County, Kansas City. He has a large organizational services and private sector experience. He did a lot in Strategic Planning, he is strong in technology and finance. He has not done anything in the form of City Manager as what you are looking for, but I thought that he would be someone you may want to talk to.

Michael E. Feeny works in a very diverse community in Bridgeport which is largely a blue-collar community that sounds somewhat like Evanston. He also has good background with the Police Department, and he works with thirteen unions with good success. As the Town Manager in Stratford he had the responsibilities of hiring and firing. She thought he was a great candidate for the position and she has not called him yet. He had a Council of twelve while in Stratford. Judy Fiske wanted Ms. Voorhees to speak about his lack of years of experience because he has the least of any, and she answered he was one of her choices because he was energetic and young and on his way up and that we need someone like him for this job.

Alderman Moran asked if anyone knew that Ms. Voorhees was the Village Manager in Wilmette, and also a distinguished member of the SWANC board with me.

Mayor Morton stated all of the candidates are academically capable. It would be good if we could get someone here who respects the Evanston community and has a burning desire to be here, and also has good basic skills of dealing with staff and Council with integrity. She also stated she thinks most people are intellectually equipped to take this job but it takes a little extra something to be successful here. She gives them the credit they are qualified.

Ms. Fiske was concerned about rebuilding the senior staff and bringing in someone so young and he'll probably be much younger than the senior staff. Ms. Voorhees said if he has been doing it in the places where he has worked, then we can ask him when we bring him in for an interview. He has been very successful in the places he has been in building relationships.

Ms. Grover stated she does a lot of hiring and we should be very cognizant about talking about people's age. She knows it doesn't go out this room, but legally we can't do it and we need to be careful.

Tom Hoover is a great candidate in her opinion, a quiet person, well liked, but her only concern is that he has always come in second, never the number one. His energy level is very low and he has an engineering background which would help a lot with what you are doing now. Alderman Rainey said she was reading and he said he is looking to come to a warmer climate but he has a lot of experience.

Craig T. Malin is currently in Davenport, and his brain child was the Davenport Promise which would pay for your college education if you went through their public school system from kindergarten through High School and attended one of their state institutions. It didn't get passed, but Kalamazoo and some other states are using his idea. Judy Fiske remarked that she thought that Kalamazoo is based on how many years you spent in public schools there. Alderman Rainey commented that he drove from Davenport to Evanston every Monday night for six to eight weeks to be at the Council meetings. He is high energy and come off as a little naive. Alderman Moran stated he was very upbeat. Alderman Wynne stated he was first to work and the last to leave. He was able to reduce labor by 15% with collective bargaining. Judy Fiske wanted to know the racial makeup, Ms. Voorhees said she had not looked up Davenport and she thought she had, but she knew they had economic diversity. She met him in person.

Mayor Morton asked was he still there. The answer was yes and that the letter was part of his evaluation.

Judy Fiske commented that out of all of the candidates he had everything on paper just on paper, but her concern by the experience decorum. The majority of the Aldermen agreed he was worth talking to again.

Cara Pavlicek was the village Manager of Downers Grove who was fired, and Downers Grove has a reputation of terminating officials. She also has a suite against Downers Grove. Ms. Voorhees stated she got a raw deal in her opinion. Her references are very high.

Alderman Hansen asked if there are any other reservations or red flags, and the answer was that she has not had the position before to show what she can handle.

Christian M. Sigman was the person she met in Ohio, and he is the Assistant County Administrator for Hamilton County which surrounds Cincinnati. His wife is from Evanston. They have a three member council, he is fair to the Department heads, and has done a lot of Economical Development.

Mayor Morton asked how germane is having a position in County Government as it is to City government. The answer was it is a different animal but a lot of the things they do are similar. She felt he was a strong candidate.

Judy Fiske mentioned page three of attachment "A" mentions four examples of communications and it looks like there is one missing. Ms. Voorhees stated she thought it was just bad typing and nothing to worry about. Mr. Tendam said it mentioned four examples and it is only three. Ms. Voorhees also mentioned a misdemeanor charge in Washington, DC. Fifteen years ago.

John Szerleg he is back in Troy as an Interim City Manager until August while they search for their new City Manager. Troy has all kind of turmoil going on and he doesn't want to stay there. Troy is not as diversified as Evanston, they do not have downtown

area, but do have a lot of citizen involvement. He would be up to the task for the position here.

Alderman Rainey was concerned with his previous pay and what he would get here.

Alderman Hansen wanted to know why he took the temporary job offer, and the answer was he is looking for a permanent job and he took that one to help them out because even if he got this one it would take a few months to get here in August. It's not unusual for someone to take an interim job while looking for another.

James M. Twombly work in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma City, is not a significantly diverse community. He likes older historic communities. He has had a lot of collective bargaining experience. The government created community events to mark the acceptance of their Master Plan, and TIF district. Her only concern about him is that he is not as articulate, and the words don't flow as easily as the other candidates.

Mayor Morton stated he is the only one experienced in community development. Ms. Voorhees answered that is right.

Alderman Rainey stated she thought he was a definite plus for an interview, and asked Heidi what she thought. Her response was yes, he would be someone you would want to talk to even though he was nervous with her he may not be with the Council.

Mark Grant worked for the City for five years before he left. Judy Fiske commented he left right when Julie came. Alderman Rainey suggested we talk to him for the next one. Alderman Moran commented he liked Mark and that he is a great man. Alderman Rainey said he was a great Assistant City Manager.

He had a lot of baggage with him from Wichita when he left. News reports were very negative, described as being heavy-handed and deceptive with City Council. He also is very dogmatic about the Council Manager form.

John Lock, assistant in Skokie, has a lot of responsibilities in Skokie, but she feels he is not quiet ready for the upward move. He would be a good one for the next set of search. Judy Fiske stated she would like to wish Mark and John well and apply the next time. She really wanted to make that clear to them.

After all the discussions surrounding the candidates that were presented the final six to bring in for an interview are:

- Bobkiewicz
- Cassidy
- Feeney
- Malin
- Sigman
- Twombly

Ms. Voorhees stated she will call them and ask them to come in for interviews, and she suggested we not interview everyone on the same day but to do half on a Friday and the others on a Saturday.

Mayor Morton then wanted to get an understanding that the old Council would pick the finalist and then turn the names over to the next Council and they would make the final decision.

The Mayor suggested that the Aldermanic secretary would get dates and times for the interviews. Alderman Rainey wanted to know how expensive this will be. It was suggested to also bring in the spouses to make sure they were on board as well.

Mr. Tendam suggested to go over the list again to bring the number down to five, but Ms. Voorhees said to keep the six because when one falls out you still have enough to work with. So the expense will not be that much more to bring in six instead of five.

Judy Fiske then asked when the phone calls are made are the ones we are interested in called first to see if they are still interested. If three say no do we have time to look at the list again. Ms. Voorhees answered yes to both questions. Fiske then asked should we give dates now, and the answer was it would help. Alderman Rainey commented we need to give the candidates dates too. Ms. Voorhees said we make the dates we want and the candidates will have to adjust, and those who can't come will miss the first round.

Mayor Morton suggested everyone give the dates they will be out of town, and we will not make appointments on those days. Alderman Jean-Baptiste suggested we give dates to the Aldermanic secretary Ms. Francellno.

Ms. Voorhees suggested the interviews be an hour to an hour and a half, with a fifteen minute break between. She will also draft up some questions of what to ask and not to ask.

Alderman Tisdahl wanted to know what the candidates are looking for from us. Ms. Voorhees said they are looking for direction and honesty in what is expected of the City Manager and the weaknesses and strengths of the City.

Alderman Rainey then asked the perception of candidates that see vacant or newly filled positions. I would rather have a vacant position and fill it myself.

Mayor Morton then interjected about this Council/Manager form of government. The Alderman do not hire or fire staff, that is not the responsibility of the Council. Alderman Rainey said that's not what she said, Mayor Morton said you mentioned fulfilling high profile jobs which is an administrative function. Alderman Rainey stated she was wondering would a City Manager coming into a situation where vacancies are or newly filled ones would want to fill them when they got here.

Ms. Voorhees said they don't have a problem with that and she had explained to the candidates that some positions would be filled and others would not be when they get here. It was also suggested that all the expectations of the City Manager should be included in the contract so they will know exactly what is expected of them in the position with the City. Everyone agreed the wording must be precise and to the point.

Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rodney Greene / City Clerk

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