

**City Council
Closed Session Minutes
Aldermanic Library
Monday, May 7, 2007**

PRESENT: Aldermen Rainey, Hansen, Wollin, Jean-Baptiste, Wynne,
Bernstein, Holmes, Moran and Tisdahl.

STAFF: Julia Carroll

PRESIDING: Mayor Lorraine H. Morton

START: 6:07 p.m.

Personnel – City Manager Evaluation

Mayor Morton stated that it was proper to raise questions about the City Manager's duties in the City Code such as "to enforce the laws and ordinances within the city and to administer the implementation of the policies of the municipal government...the power to hire all employees subject to the applicable provisions of civil service laws, at such compensation as is authorized by the City Council and... may sign, on behalf of the City, any contract authorized by the City Council ...and to see that all terms of any contract to which the City is a party are fully performed by all parties." Alderman Jean-Baptiste suggested the duties in the code be made part of the evaluation process.

Aldermen Holmes and Wollin were thanked for putting the evaluation together. Mayor Morton noted there were 26 items that they could not evaluate; wanted everything on the form to be evaluated. Alderman Holmes recommended after they finish that they take out items that Council could not evaluate. Alderman Wynne suggested that they set a regular date for the manager evaluation; and look at what they might want to add/delete to the evaluation form so it is ready for next year.

Alderman Rainey read Ms. Carroll's proposals for changes in the contract and had grave concerns (5-year contract). Alderman Jean-Baptiste suggested that reports are needed in areas that Council ought to know about. Alderman Wynne suggested that Council prepare a list of items that they want updated monthly. Too many times she hears about things from others.

Alderman Hansen stated that many aldermen were at the Network for Evanston's Future Global Warning meeting where Ms. Carroll gave a report on what the City is doing for the environment. She was surprised and thought it would be nice to get updates and reports. Alderman Rainey commented that Council wants to know who the new employees are, be introduced and know what they do.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste stated it is important when they talk about accomplishments that they speak about the City government as opposed to one person doing them.

Mayor Morton noted on the numerical rating 3 items marked 2, 30 items marked 3, 10 items marked 4 and no 5s.

Alderman Tisdahl was bothered by a direct quote from Carroll at the environment meeting that she did not have to, but had them (Council) vote on the new environmental position in order to bring them on board; thought they were all on board and agreed with Alderman Jean-Baptiste that they need better PR.

They discussed when to have the next meeting. Mayor Morton could not be present on May 14.

Alderman Rainey commented in reading the manager's own evaluation that she either does not recognize or is in a state of denial that the atmosphere at the Civic Center is one of fear and dread. Because Carroll has hired some good people does not make the other issue non-existent. She has strong concerns about the Finance Director and does not feel confident about him. The morale issue is serious.

Alderman Tisdahl had brought the pension problem to Bill Stafford for two years and was assured everything was okay. She brought pensions to Matt Grady and he saw the problem. Tim Schoolmaster is a constituent. Grady said there was a problem before Moody's; agreed there is a staff morale problem that needs to be addressed.

Alderman Moran could not assess the morale of staff; noted that some people don't get back to him which is not acceptable. One of Carroll's best things is the development of accountability and responsibility. They are in a transition phase and now it is a little edgy.

Alderman Holmes hears that front line workers are pleased that top management is being made accountable because there were times when nobody listened to them.

Alderman Bernstein said that Council micromanaged which they had to with Mr. Crum. Now they have a manager who understands how to run the City. However, he was offended, when nobody's opinion was asked about hiring the new police chief. Ms. Carroll is doing what she has to do. He has talked to underlings, management, and those who have left and there are concerns about employee morale. They have to evaluate the circumstances that she came into. That is their context. He likes what is happening in the sanitation department. In talking to workers she has to soften up a little. He senses fear in this building and well before the budget cuts. .

Alderman Wynne recalled there had not been any evaluation of department heads for seven years. Even somebody doing an excellent job will begin to coast. As they interviewed candidates, she became aware that Evanston had a lot of dead wood. When they hired Julia Carroll they had a sense there would be a lot of pruning and churn. She has had to ask for things several times and expected better. Ms. Carroll is in a difficult position and came into an organization where nobody is fired. She is doing a lot of what they hired her to do.

Alderman Hansen said it was obvious when Carroll was hired that Council wanted to see some change; sees more accountability with department heads seated in the Council Chamber rather than in the Aldermanic Library.

Mayor Morton said the agreement pertaining to housing for staff has never been in writing. Ms. Carroll has written up a new contract for the police Chief. Mayor Morton thought it would be helpful to have an organizational chart.

Alderman Rainey wanted to know about going forward with reduction in staff. Over 20 people in her ward have had their garbage cans removed and no new ones delivered. Sanitation is picking up broken cans. Things like that keep happening. The fiasco with the security cameras is tremendous.

Alderman Rainey noted that Ms. Carroll is out of town a lot for various reasons. Who keeps track of her absences. Alderman Rainey said there must be some budgeting of time; wants the city manager to know what is going on. Alderman Rainey said she has a right to know her schedule when in and out of the City.

Alderman Bernstein said when the Friends of the Civic Center got their referenda on ballot, he had conversations about the referenda before they voted. They had worked with the \$20 million number. Carroll had a different and higher number and should have been held accountable.

Alderman Tisdahl said that Ms. Carroll goes into the community and is available to many groups in town which is great. Wynne thought she was creating a positive image Mayor Morton said it is good as long as it leaves her time to do what she must. Alderman Rainey thought it excellent to do at the outset to get to know the City. As time goes on it is not good to see the city manager's picture every place you look .Another problem is when shown with different groups, it could be assumed those groups are endorsed or supported by the City.

Alderman Rainey said during the interviews, she was Julia's most avid advocate. Since then has had serious issues with some of her behaviors, but whenever she asked for help she always got it. Alderman Moran said that, regardless of where Ms. Carroll is, she gets more done than he has seen in a long time. Ms. Carroll is an industrious hardworking person that demands a lot of herself.

Mayor Morton said that Julia Carroll came from a vastly different community and background. It's a learning process for her, but the fundamental good qualities she has outweigh her faults. In dealing with interpersonal relationships, it is a two way street. Some people who say derogatory things are those who haven't a days work for a day's pay. She thought that Ms. Carroll expected some hard knocks from staff and would take the comments in stride.

Concerns: Her relationship with employees
Make sure Council gets all the information they should

Have with weekly or monthly reports. (environment) example
Demeanor interpersonal skills in dealing with people
Plans for further staff reductions
Amount of time out of town
How she keeps track of absences
Success of delegation of different functions to assistants
Participation in community organizations
Set an annual date for evaluation in May
Complete this evaluation at the May 29th meeting.

At this time Julia Carroll was present

Mayor Morton confirmed that the date for the annual evaluation would occur the first week in May. Council is aware of what she wrote about her progress, what she would like to have (deal with at a later time) said a lot of nice things about her and were cognizant of her coming in and shaking up people that would not have happened if it remained the status quo. She asked Ms. Carroll how she thought employees feel about her? Ms. Carroll thought it depended on the level. She read comments that people are afraid of her which is not necessarily true at the senior level. Employees told her their department directors told them they cannot tell the manager everything. That is not the culture she wants. She wants all to pull together in the same direction. They are putting the leadership piece in place this year. People have been concerned about change and she has tried not to go too fast. The intent is to make employees be the best. Evanston pays well and should expect high performance. Middle managers have given good feedback. She meets periodically with frontline employees and is there for them. This year was tough. Going through the budget cuts was very damaging to morale. The Employee Advisory Committee wanted to know where the list for personnel cuts is for this year. There is none. The list last year was based on discussions with directors on how they could plug the gap and keep property tax increases low. There was a lot of misperception about the budget. There was a partnership between the department directors and herself. She does not know what the department directors are saying about that and needs to work with them. She has worked hard to get them to see that what one department does has an impact on others and some don't always see that. What has happened last year was that people grumbled about having to go through the budget policy workshops but after they got through it, they learned a lot. Now they have started to think about evaluating their programs. The budget process will start this month.

Alderman Rainey asked about the Employee Advisory Committee. It is 15-20 employees from every department. The purpose has been to work with management on issues and social events. This was the first time she met with them. Human Resources has handled the committee in the past. The message they got was one she never conveyed, such as a list of cuts. A couple of department directors are blocking that group. In other organizations she has been in, the city manager meets with employees once a month. She listened and tried to open up the lines of communication; has heard directors are not sharing information with employees. That is the reason she has brown bag lunches. She wants high morale. An employee said the morale problem was here since before she

came when senior staff did not speak in the halls. There is an “us” versus “them” mentality. Mayor Morton asked if she is being sabotaged by department directors. Ms. Carroll thought she could be by a couple of them.

She was sorry to see Bill Stafford leave but the City could not compete with the package he got at the high school. Her goal is to build a strong team. The people she has brought in such as Rolanda Russell and Chief Eddington are great. Matt Grady has good technical skills and needs to work on communication skills. She believes in investing in people and ultimately getting rid of people who don't want to come along. The message is that they need to get on the team.

Mayor Morton said she is not the only one who is being sabotaged. At a meeting someone heard a department head said the Mayor did not care for the Fire Department. It may be systemic. Ms. Carroll may have to hit that head on. Ms. Carroll thought some of it was a power struggle.

Mayor Morton asked how the new organization is working. Ms. Carroll thought it was working well; gets weekly reports from the assistant managers with a few areas that need tweaking. She is happy with the division of labor. Is she on top of issues? Ms. Carroll does not have as much contact with some directors as she once did. She has kept Law, Police and Fire. If she is missing something please tell her. Alderman Wollin asked that an organizational chart be sent to Council members. Judy Aiello has the Library, Public Works, Community Development and Health & Human Services. Rolanda Russell has Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources, Parks, Forestry & Recreation and Human Relations.

Mayor Morton asked if she can be sure that decisions are being made that she agrees with. Ms. Carroll said they have weekly meetings and no major decisions are made without her input. They discuss what is going on. She was not thrilled with the street cleaning change; did not review that plan and should have. There was poor communication and she got lots of condominium garbage calls. They tried to implement it without a more careful analysis.

Mayor Morton asked if she was giving direction to make sure that they don't make unwise decisions. Some people have not had experience of being in charge of divisions. Ms. Carroll said that Rolanda's style is similar to hers and they communicate well. Judy Aiello is learning to work better, but still feels put upon if given direction. They have talked about that at her evaluation; making sure she is clear about what is expected. Judy has never had any operational responsibilities; has done a good job in several areas.

Mayor Morton said that Council wants improved communication (reporting) from Ms. Carroll. Alderman Jean-Baptiste's example was when she gave a report on what the City is doing in the environmental area or whether it is new development, they need to have a systemic way of understanding what she is doing. When she presents information, it is a partnership between the manager and the city council. He noted she said she had to bring the Council on board, and did not need the Council for approval of the new position, but

Council felt they were on board. She did not mean criticism of Council. In interaction with the public, when she was recognized for her work, she thought the government was working to share the information and good PR. Bringing on board could mean these people weren't on board. Ms. Carroll said the award from the Environment Board was a complete surprise.

Alderman Wynne said there are things happening in the city government that they don't have to vote on, and would like reports on what the sustainability employee is working on, what has happened in Fleet Services. They want to share this with constituents. Training efforts would be another item. What is happening with Virchow Krause and Information Technology. Alderman Wollin wanted to know more about down town planning meetings and the main concepts that have been discussed and agreed upon. Alderman Rainey wondered if the problem in Fleet Services warranted the concerns that required a special auditor. Ms. Carroll thought an auditor was needed because the internal controls were weak. She also found that there was no budget check on. She knew that it wasn't criminal but they could have had employees colluding to collect money. Alderman Rainey thought a clear statement was needed that there was a bad practice. The City Manager said people need to be held accountable for doing their job and certain parts were not done in this instance.

Mayor Morton said that she has been out in the community a great deal and now that people know her, they were wondering if time spent out of the office was excessive. Who keeps track of her time. Ms. Carroll fills out a form like any other employee which is signed by Judy Aiello. Ms. Carroll said that last year was a terrible year. She explained there were two deaths in her family so nine days were taken for funeral leave. That won't recur. She took 138 hours of vacation; had two sick days in 2006 and in 2007 had medical procedures at the end of March which caused her to miss several days. In professional development she is on the International City Manager's Strategic Planning Committee and is participating because many manager's are in their fifties and sixties are retiring and the profession is not attracting new people. It is important that the professional organization deal with this problem. Last fall she went for a Friday and Saturday. This year it will be Thursday and Friday this week. She goes to one conference a year, the International City Manager's Conference which takes three days plus weekend. She was invited to be a speaker at a downstate city manager's conference because of the Strategic Plan. Normally she would not go to two conferences a year.

Mayor Morton asked about her being away from the Civic Center. Ms. Carroll indicated she is not away unless it is for city business. Alderman Rainey commented that Ms. Carroll attends many events in order that she gets acquainted, and wondered if it was necessary to keep up attending those events. Ms. Carroll attends events at night and on the weekends. Alderman Jean-Baptiste said the concern was by these appearances that city government does not endorse those groups. Ms. Carroll gets invited to everything and fund raisers; pays her own way. She thought it was a good thing. Alderman Hansen thought the concern was about taking her away from the office. Alderman Moran thought if she didn't go people would be displeased. Ms. Carroll goes to about three

events a year. Mayor Morton said when she goes to represent herself that is one thing. When she goes to represent the City that is the Mayor's job

Mayor Morton gets many calls and tries to transfer the calls to departments that never answer the telephone. From 8:30 a. m. to 5:00 p.m. the Civic Center is open and the phones should be answered. One day the Mayor transferred six calls to departments and got no answers. Alderman Rainey stated that 328-2100 number is back to not answering. Alderman Moran said he often gets voice mail.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste asked for some feedback from the manager. Alderman Holmes stated they have to work on goals for 2007-08. It was suggested they meet on Monday May 21 and finish.

There being no further business to come before Council Mayor Morton declared the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Mary P. Morris,
City Clerk