

MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
October 5, 2022
Special Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Rusty Moore, Mayor, at 1:00 p.m.

Commissioners present

Rusty Moore, Mayor Louise Bryan Bob Weigel
Haley Dale, Vice-Mayor James Hunt

City staff members present

Beth Reardon, City Manager

1. Consideration of Semi-Finalist Candidates for the City Manager Position

Patty Heminover, Director, Baker Tilly, was present at the meeting to facilitate the selection of up to six candidates from the list of seventeen semi-finalists that would qualify for an interview with the Commissioners. Each commissioner and the city manager received a binder containing the same information from all seventeen candidates: cover letter, resume, and a Baker Tilly candidate questionnaire and due diligence form. She advised the Commissioners to refer to the candidates by their number, not by name. Once they are chosen as a finalist, she will call them and ask if they want to be brought forward for an interview. At that point, if anyone asks for candidate information, she will provide a copy of the resume and cover letter, as the information is considered public. Also, she reminded everyone that the position is open until filled, so if a qualified candidate applies before the final hiring decision is made, she will notify the Commissioners. Mrs. Heminover stated there is one candidate from Tennessee in this situation now, and she is waiting on further information from this person before bringing it to us.

Commissioner Hunt asked when the time expires for any additional applicants. Mrs. Heminover replied it does not expire until the City has someone chosen, approved and on board.

Mrs. Heminover reviewed the candidate questionnaire and Due Diligence form that the applicants completed, which provides some important preliminary information that can be verified, especially social media content. This is a quick step to determine if the candidate is being honest about themselves. It also identifies anyone who has issues with the salary range. Unfortunately, there is one candidate on this list that was not totally honest and if chosen as a finalist, she will recommend they not move forward.

To make the process quicker, Mrs. Heminover distributed a summary scoresheet to record everyone's top choices and stated from this, it will be easy to see which candidates accumulated the most votes to move on to the finalist position. Votes were recorded by candidate number as follows:

Haley Dale	1,2,3,8,9,15
Louise Bryan	3,8,9,15
James Hunt	1,2,3,5,7
Rusty Moore	1,3,8,9,12,15
Bob Weigel	6,8,14
Beth Reardon	1,5,8,9,12,16

Candidate number eight received five votes; candidates number one, three, and nine received four votes each. Candidate number fifteen received three votes. All other candidates received less than three votes. Discussion followed about the top five finalists. Everyone, including Mrs. Heminover, felt they were solid choices to move forward. Mrs. Heminover will call these five, let them know of their status and verify they still want to be considered. She suggests in order to narrow the selection down, the first round of interviewing be done via zoom, then the final interviews would be in person.

Rusty Moore wanted to make sure no one had a candidate they felt so strongly about that did not make finalist, but they wanted them to be considered along with these top five. Bob Weigel inquired why number fourteen, a Tennessee candidate, only got his one vote. Mrs. Heminover stated this was the one that was not candid on the questionnaire, and several commissioners stated there is a lot of information on social media that would explain the issue. Other candidates had extensive or exclusive experience in another discipline, such as law enforcement, and several commissioners were unsure of how well that would work in our small organization. Haley Dale said she and other commissioners often call the city manager unannounced to discuss issues or ideas and she wants to be sure the final candidate is comfortable working this way. Mrs. Heminover stated this was a good point - a good city manager should work with each one of you and accommodate your style. Everyone agreed the candidate videos were an incredible benefit to this process.

Motion to move forward with the review of candidates 1,3,8,9,and 15: Moore
Second: Dale Vote: All aye

Mrs. Heminover stated the next step is to find dates for the zoom interviews, preferably over two days. Each interview typically lasts 45 minutes with a small break in between. Questions will be scripted, and draft questions will be sent shortly for the commissioners to review or modify. Mrs. Heminover usually provides more questions than needed, in different areas of leadership, management or situational examples. Louise Bryan stated the finalists either have a military or public administration background, both of which are excellent. We need to be sure the next manager understands the softer skills, community engagement, developing consensus, recognizing the big picture of what's important to the residents here. The candidate needs to know how to transition from a bureaucratic background to a "softer" environment where emails and other communications are extremely important. Haley Dale stated the candidate also may have to transition from a large city with unions and departments numbering hundreds of employees to managing a small, intimate staff here and handling more mundane issues. She noted that candidate number nine, in his interview, stated he had to change to "Mr. Everything" when he left a position in a larger city to take his current manager position in a small city. She stated that is what we are looking for and what Mrs. Reardon does now as city manager.

Mrs. Heminover stated she will also be starting the formal Nexis background search and personality assessment on these top candidates and will distribute the information to the commissioners. Then, once the in person interview candidates have been selected, she will conduct criminal background searches and check references on those individuals. Haley Dale asked if the commissioners could also call the references? Mrs. Heminover replied that both she and the commissioners could do this and if a commissioner or Beth wants to call someone they know to inquire about one of these candidates, that is fine, but just let her know about it.

Haley Dale asked if the department heads here will have any opportunity to speak with the candidates. Mrs. Heminover stated, yes, they would have time to meet the final candidates in person and she will provide scripted questions to staff asking their opinion on the strength/weakness of each candidate, would this person be a good fit at Belle Meade, yes or no, and reasons why. Their answers and opinions would be compiled and given to the commissioners, with no staff names attached, to allow for honest and fair input. The plan would be to give the finalists a tour of the City and City Hall, meet with staff and then with commissioners.

Dates for the zoom interviews were discussed, with one hour reserved for each of the five candidates. Wednesday, Oct. 19th from 6pm - 8pm for two candidates and Thursday, Oct. 20th from 9am to noon for three candidates. Mrs. Heminover will send us the scheduled time for each candidate.

Meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.

Mayor Rusty Moore

Beth Reardon, City Manager