

**CITY OF ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO
CITY COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
6:30 P.M., COMMISSION CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

**RICHARD BOSS, MAYOR
JASON BALDWIN, COMMISSIONER
NADIA SIKES, COMMISSIONER
JENNY TURNBULL, COMMISSIONER
SUSAN PAYNE, COMMISSIONER**

**AL HERNANDEZ, MAYOR PRO-TEM
ERICA MARTIN, COMMISSIONER
MAGGIE PALUCH, ACTING CITY MANAGER
CANON STEVENS, INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY
NANCY JACOBS, CITY CLERK**

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Boss called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll Call was taken by the City Clerk. Clerk Jacobs announced there was a quorum present. The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Commissioner Payne.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro-Tem Hernandez moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Baldwin seconded the motion. Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0.

Before moving to the first item, Mayor Boss allowed up to 21 minutes of comments from the public.

Jim French commented on the following:

Mr. French told the Commission he was in support of hiring Robert Stockwell and asked them to reconsider their previous decision. He understood Mr. Stockwell had given the City another offer to afford him one year to prove himself. He noted Mr. Stockwell was an excellent leader and had in the past disagreed with Mr. French at times, but did so in a respectful manner.

Virginia Darnold commented on the following:

Ms. Darnold had worked with Mr. Stockwell in the past and she said he was a professional and a mentor to a young man who is now city manager in Oakley, California. Mr. Stockwell was a teacher and very honest; he pulled together various departments that had been at odds with each other.

Ken Eaton commented on the following:

Mr. Eaton mentioned he had spoken with all the Commissioners since the last meeting and they knew how he felt. He said the common denominator seems to be we want a fresh start, and he thought Mr. Stockwell would be a fresh start because of his qualifications. Mr. Eaton was concerned it would be too costly to go back out for new applications, and thought Mr. Stockwell had come up with a good solution.

Michael Shyne commented on the following:

Mr. Shyne thought that to evaluate resumes was very difficult and most people were not qualified to do so; he urged the Commission to get assistance. He remarked this decision was the most important in their entire tenure. He said that for a manager to be most effective, they needed an excellent engineer and attorney, and he felt we should wait to hire either of these until a city manager was in place to participate in the hiring process.

Paul Sanchez commented on the following:

Mr. Sanchez said many of the top city business owners were in the audience tonight, and they were all very community oriented; he felt their support of Robert Stockwell should be considered. He said his Face Book page had many 'likes' and was viewed and responded to by many area people. The majority of these people were not in favor of Mr. Stockwell and the biggest reason seemed to be that people wanted a new start and not someone who had been here before. Again, he said the views of people in tonight's audience should be carefully considered.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1) Consider, and act upon, how to proceed with the hiring of a City Manager. (Katie Josselyn, Human Resources Director)

Assistant City Manager Paluch addressed this item noting the City Staff was seeking direction in the search for a city manager.

Commissioner Sikes asked Human Resource Manager Josselyn how much money had been expended to date in this city manager search, and wondered if it would be more economical to use a search firm. Ms. Josselyn said the out-of-pocket costs for advertising, travel, and meet-and-greet events was about \$8,000. She could not give an estimate of the many hours put in by staff since the process began about one year ago.

Assistant City Manager Paluch said in order to hire a search firm, an RFP would need to be done. The cost for a search firm would be anywhere from \$20,000 to \$30,000. A minus is the cost, a plus would be the ability for a search firm to market, to a greater degree, Alamogordo to people already employed.

Mayor Boss liked the idea of a search firm because our limited staff was stretched at this point. Commissioner Payne agreed and liked a search firm's marketing expertise.

Mayor Pro-Tem Hernandez felt they should hire Mr. Stockwell, but he would go with the will of the Commission. This would save the City a lot of money and he felt Acting City Manager Paluch was getting burned-out with the work load. Mr. Hernandez worked with Mr. Stockwell and felt he would do a good job.

Commissioner Sikes asked where the money would come from for a recruiting company. Acting City Manager Paluch told her they would transfer funds from Salaries and Benefits for the City Manager to the Contingency Fund for the City Manager.

Commissioner Baldwin said we have three options from the last meeting – to move forward with Assistant City Manager Paluch, to move forward with Robert Stockwell's suggestion (one year contract), or to start the process from scratch. He thought Mr. Stockwell had offered the Commission an option which showed character on his part, and disproved how much he wants/does not want this position. He noted during his five year tenure as commissioner, there had been eight interim/acting/city managers. It is hard to find the right person, and Mr. Stockwell is willing to come here and work under the contract we have provided, and to proceed under a one year contract to prove himself. Mr. Baldwin was leaning in this direction.

Commissioner Payne felt a vote had been taken at the last meeting, and now we needed to move forward in a new direction. She said the Commission was divided over this and remarked they could not make everyone happy, and it would be unfair to reverse that decision.

Commissioner Sikes said the Commission had originally formed a consensus to offer Mr. Stockwell a contract, and then changed that decision at the next meeting. She felt they had put themselves in an embarrassing position. Mayor Boss stated the response to that contract was outrageous and that changed much of the thinking.

Commissioner Sikes said she was impressed at the number of folks in the audience tonight in support of Robert Stockwell, and noted they were some of the prominent business people of the community. She was in support of hiring Robert Stockwell, saying it would be to our advantage.

Acting City Manager Paluch asked Assistant City Attorney Lauren Truitt what the process would be to change a past vote. Commissioner Payne was not comfortable speaking about anything spoken of in Executive Session. Commissioner Sikes said we talked at the last commission meeting about reaching

a consensus in an Executive Session. Assistant City Attorney Truitt thought this discussion was fine, but cautioned them in that respect.

Commissioner Payne and Sikes discussed the consensus and presenting a united front.

Commissioner Turnbull reminded everyone that Mr. Stockwell's contract stated it was contingent on the vote of the Commission, and she thought the Commission should stand behind the vote taken at the last meeting. She thought the goal tonight was to decide whether to hire a firm or to continue with the City going out for applications for city manager. She was in favor of hiring a firm to take on the responsibility.

Mayor Pro-Tem Hernandez said we need to move forward and decide whether a firm will handle this hiring process or we should let City Staff do so. Commissioner Martin was in favor of hiring a firm.

Mayor Pro-Tem Hernandez asked if there was a way to keep the applicant names from the media, because in the past we have lost applicants when they realized their names would become public. This was because they had jobs and did not wish for anyone to know they were looking for another position. He asked the media to respect this. Commissioner Sikes said that as long as the names were under the umbrella of the recruiting firm and had not been given to the commission, those names were protected and not subject to a public records request. Mayor Pro-Tem Hernandez said he was not opposed to the media obtaining these names, but it made the hiring process so difficult.

Human Resource Director Josselyn said last time the newspaper held off until we had the final applicants before they asked for their information, and we still lost a couple of candidates when we called them to let them know their names would be released to the media. The mayor pro-tem agreed.

Mayor Boss and Ms. Josselyn discussed the advantage of using a search firm; they would not have to release any applicant information until they turned the information over to the city.

Commissioner Baldwin wanted to see more information about cost, processes, track records and retention rates of recruiting agencies before proceeding. Human Resource Director Josselyn said that if we do use a research firm, it would be contingent on us doing some checking on the candidates, as well.

Acting City Manager Paluch told them those questions would be answered in the RFP – retention rate, cost, plan for process, and any other wishes the Commission would like.

Commissioner Martin asked how long this process took last time with the recruitment firm. Ms. Josselyn said that was in 2008 and she couldn't remember exactly, but thought the city manager left in about August of 2008 and we hired the next city manager in October 2009.

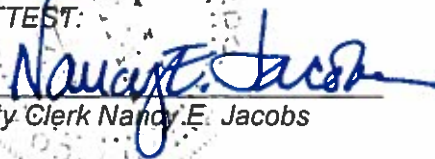
The Commission discussed directing City Staff to go with an RFP for search firms to begin the city manager search. Acting City Manager Paluch said the RFP process would take about four weeks to get it out and receive responses.

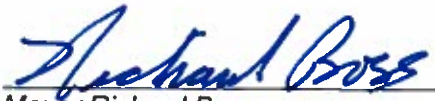
The Commission directed City Staff to go out with an RFP for recruitment firms. After that they would review the results of the responses and decide whether to go with a firm or keep the process in-house.

Mike Hamberlin asked from the audience if he could address the Commission, and the mayor allowed him to do so. Mr. Hamberlin started to speak about Mr. Stockwell and Mayor Boss interrupted him to say the decision had already been made, and asked him to sit down. Mr. Hamberlin said there was a man ready to work and the Commission was going to spend more tax payer money on looking for someone else. Mayor Boss interrupted again and said the Commissioners had been elected to make these decisions, and again asked him to sit down.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Hernandez moved to adjourn at 7:21 p.m. Commissioner Turnbull seconded the motion. Motion carried with a vote of 7-0-0.

 ATTEST:

City Clerk Nancy E. Jacobs


Mayor Richard Boss

(Prepared by Nancy Jacobs, City Clerk)

Approved at the Regular Meeting held on September 27, 2016.