

Session 15-05 a Special Meeting of the Homer City Council was called to order on February 2, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Mary E. Wythe at the Homer City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: LEWIS, REYNOLDS, ROBERTS, VAN DYKE, ZAK

ABSENT: BURGESS

STAFF: CITY MANAGER YODER
CITY CLERK JOHNSON
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COORDINATOR KOESTER
FINANCE DIRECTOR LI
PERSONNEL DIRECTOR BROWNING
IT MANAGER POOLOS
LIBRARY DIRECTOR DIXON
POLICE CHIEF ROBL
PORT AND HARBOR DIRECTOR HAWKINS

AGENDA APPROVAL (Only those matters on the noticed agenda may be considered, pursuant to City Council's Operating Manual, pg. 5)

Mayor Wythe called for a motion for the approval of the agenda.

LEWIS/REYNOLDS – SO MOVED.

ROBERTS/LEWIS - MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO HEAR COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE BEFORE MEMORANDUM 15-015.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: (amendment) YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VOTE: (main motion as amended) YES. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

TELEPHONIC INTERVIEWS FOR CITY MANAGER CANDIDATES

Jeffrey Trinker
Chris S. Johnson

Mayor Wythe called for a recess at 6:23 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Douglas Isaacson
Carey S. Meyer

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Ken Castner, city resident, commented the risk management question was not addressed. He joined Lori Evans and cautioned the Council on their burden of proof of going into Executive Session; they have a poor record of what they have done so far.

Councilmember Van Dyke told Mr. Castner the question of risk management will be asked in the face-to-face interviews.

Larry Slone, city resident, believes the top candidates for the position are Carey Meyer and Chris Johnson. Carey will do a fine job, but he gave a slight edge to Chris Johnson who speaks well and is succinct.

Kathy Hill, city resident, commented we are looking for a professional, a listener, and a juggler between staff, the City Council and the community. We need someone who will take risks and push; we need someone who cares for us.

Ginny Espenshade, city resident, said the only red flag was when a candidate was asked to address economic development with quality of life and did not address quality of life despite a lengthy answer. Former City Manager Walt Wrede navigated that balance.

Katherine George, city resident, thanked the Council for allowing the public to hear what was said and to take public comments. It is a fine line between confidentiality of the applicants.

Michael Armstrong, Homer News reporter speaking for Lori Evans, encouraged Council not to go behind closed doors to discuss applicants. In no case should a decision be made in Executive Session, other than to discuss the personal character of the applicants. If it can't be said in public is it worth saying at all?

Memorandum 15-015, from City Clerk, Re: Request for Executive Session Pursuant to AS 44.62.310 (A-C)(2) Subjects That Tend to Prejudice the Reputation and Character of Any

Person, Provided the Person May Request a Public Discussion (Merits of City Manager Candidates).

Mayor Wythe called for a motion for the approval of the recommendations of Memorandum 15-015 to meet in Executive Session to discuss the merits of City Manager candidates.

LEWIS/ROBERTS - SO MOVED.

Councilmember Reynolds advocated for a public discussion since training at AML for newly elected officials encouraged us to keep discussion of city manager applicants in the public view. If anyone is applying for a city manager position they go into the application process knowing it is a public process. Although there is some value to having some discussion in Executive Session, most of it should be done in public.

Councilmember Roberts prefers to have the discussion in Executive Session. The City Manager Selection Committee members thought long and hard of how to balance the public input and keep the public apprised of things. There is a certain amount of privacy the applicants deserve. She has given much thought to keeping the public involved in the discussion; it is a long hard process of how to balance it.

VOTE: YES. LEWIS, ROBERTS

VOTE: NO. REYNOLDS, ZAK, VAN DYKE

Motion failed.

Mayor Wythe called for a recess at 8:10 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

REYNOLDS/VAN DYKE - MOVED FOR RECONSIDERATION OF THE LAST VOTE.

Councilmember Reynolds noted there were written public comments made with the assurance they would not be read in public.

Councilmember Zak suggested that the Council not look in the envelope containing the written comments by the public.

VOTE: YES. ROBERTS, REYNOLDS, LEWIS

VOTE: NO. ZAK, VAN DYKE

Motion failed.

Mayor Wythe commented the objective of public input is to give the Council input for their decision process. If we choose not to review the comments we would be defeating the intent of having written public comments. There were a lot of people that did not come forward to share their views publicly. Council needs time to prepare their rubrics to evaluate the applicants.

The Council discussed what to do with the written public comments. City Clerk Johnson told the Council a few employees were told the comments would not be read in a public forum, but the Council would view them in Executive Session. The committee recommended the discussion and deliberation in Executive Session.

If someone writes a critical comment we are not protecting the applicants from things being said about them. The written comments should not be read into the public record.

Mayor Wythe suggested adjourning to allow the Council to do the rubric while the applicants' responses are still fresh in their mind.

The Council suggested postponement to hear from the attorney.

Mayor Wythe asked the Clerk to call Attorney Klinkner to get his advice.

Mayor Wythe called for a recess at 8:30 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Mayor Wythe advised the Council we talked with the attorney and will need a new memorandum for Executive Session for the February 9th meeting. The Executive Session will be narrowed to review the documentation provided. The session will be part of the regular meeting.

Personnel Director Browning will contact applicants and let them know of the delay.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Wythe adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Monday, February 9, 2015 at 6:00 p.m., Committee of the Whole 5:00 p.m., and Worksession 4:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be

held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

JO JOHNSON, MMC, CITY CLERK

Approved: _____