

## **THE OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GERING CITY COUNCIL, JUNE 22, 2020**

A special meeting of the City Council of Gering, Nebraska was held on June 22, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. Due to on-going COVID19 precautions and pursuant to a Limited Waiver Executive Order by Governor Ricketts, the Gering City Council held this meeting at City Hall Council Chambers and by video/teleconference. Present were Mayor Kaufman and Councilmembers Smith, Gillen, Abel, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison and Cowan. Also present were City Administrator Lane Danielzuk and City Clerk Kathy Welfl. Absent was Councilmember Backus. Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Star-Herald, the designated method of giving notice. All proceedings hereafter were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public except as otherwise indicated.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Kaufman called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. The Mayor stated that there was a quorum of the Council present and City business could be conducted.

1. Roll Call

### **OPEN MEETINGS ACT - NEB.REV.STAT. CHAPTER 84, ARTICLE 14**

Mayor Kaufman stated: As required by State Law, public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room. Agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Mayor. As required by State Law, additions may not be made to this agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under this section of the agenda and Council determines that the matter requires emergency action.

### **CURRENT BUSINESS:**

#### **1. City Administrator Process Selection Review – Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel, Associate Professor & Extension Specialist - Entrepreneurship/Business Development, UNL**

Cheryl Burkhart Kriesel addressed the Council. She presented a Power Point presentation to address priorities, a timeline, and the interview process "do's and don'ts" related to the City Administrator position. She recapped what has been done so far related to receiving senior staff and Council input as well as expectations and desired skills. Ms. Burkhart-Kriesel recapped an earlier presentation where she outlined what an interview day would look like including an interview, lunch, community tour, meet and greet and dinner with the Council. She also reviewed some of the priority areas and desired characteristics that came out of the staff/Council session in the fall of 2019, noting that there was a lot of overlap between what the department heads and Council were looking for. She thinks that is a great sign and shows cohesion in the organization and culture within the City.

#### **Personal Leadership:**

Honest, reliable, consistent, shows compassion, approachable

#### **Organization Leadership:**

Experience, realistic visionary, can be both detail-oriented and big picture, deals with conflict productively

#### **Personal Organization/Communication:**

Communicates regularly with the public, transparently accessible

#### **Content Expertise:**

Budget and Finance, someone who has knowledge of aging infrastructure (landfill, water, etc.), policy, codes and ordinances

Mayor Kaufman added comments about how important this process is and how important it is for everyone to be on the same page.

#### **2. City Administrator Application Selection Review**

Council will hold a special meeting on June 25, 2020 to review applications and select candidates to interview.

### 3. City Administrator Interview Process Review

Ms. Burkhart-Kriesel stated that it's probably more important to highlight the "don'ts" more than the "do's" of the interview process. The questions need to be the same for each candidate; each candidate needs to be treated the same. Everyone needs the same opportunity to respond to the same questions; that's a ground rule that needs to be applied to everything.

Don't ask about marital or family status or age; just focus on the things that are the impact of productivity of the individual. Citizenship, disabilities, ancestry and national origin are not part of the interview process or discussion. Anything that might link a religious or racial affiliation to a school should be avoided. Questions about experience should be related to past work experience only. Regarding convictions, arrests and court record - you can ask about actual convictions but there are stipulations with that as well. Councilmember Wiedeman asked if that wouldn't be vetted during the background check; Ms. Burkhart-Kriesel replied it very well could be; she added that actually having a conviction does not eliminate anybody.

You cannot ask if there is a relative already employed or their address or duration of residence. Birthplace and military questions should not be asked. Council needs to be cognizant of what kinds of topics are off the table; even if the applicant brings it up.

The next step is devising questions so you can get good information about their work experience and strengths. Also, create a formal schedule for the interview day; a two-hour interview would be plenty long. With all the activities of the day, you'll get a good feel for the candidates.

Mayor Kaufman stated that the plan at this time is that the Council are the only ones who would have a specific set of questions (not department heads). There will be an opportunity for senior staff to interact with the candidates in an informal setting however. While we want the senior staff to meet the candidates and have appropriate interactions, they should not be in the hiring position for their future boss.

**CLOSED SESSION:** (Council reserves the right to enter into closed session if deemed necessary.) None

#### ADJOURN:

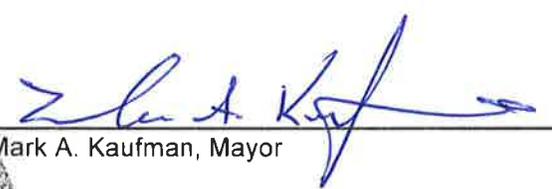
**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to adjourn. Second by Councilmember Smith. There was no discussion. The Clerk called the roll. "AYES": Smith, Gillen, Abel, Wiedeman, O'Neal, Morrison and Cowan. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: Backus. Motion Carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
Kathleen J. Welf, City Clerk



  
Mark A. Kaufman, Mayor