



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

Council Session

Item G1

Approving Minutes of July 7, 2007 City Council Special Meeting

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

July 7, 2007

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska was conducted in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 100 East First Street, on July 7, 2007. Notice of the meeting was given in the Grand Island Independent on June 30, 2007.

Mayor Margaret Hornady called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Meyer, Haase, Whitesides, Gilbert, Brown, Gericke, Nickerson, Zapata, and Carney. The following City Officials were present: City Clerk RaNae Edwards, City Attorney Dale Shotkoski, and Human Resources Director Brenda Sutherland. Also present was Oscar Erives, Judy Sandstrom and Bob Niemann of the Mayor's Citizens Committee.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was said.

PUBLIC INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD OLSON: Human Resources Director Brenda Sutherland, Councilmember's, and the Citizens Committee asked questions to better understand the candidate for the position of City Administrator. Introduced was Richard Olson from Elisabeth City, North Carolina. Mr. Olson answered questions concerning his desire to come to Grand Island, his experience in City Government and wanting to get back to the mid-west region. He stated he was a person to get things done with integrity, sincerity, and a good work ethic.

Mr. Olson commented on his background in City government and his qualifications. His strongest skills were he was goal oriented and had a strong finance background. Skills needing worked on were communication and patience. Mr. Olson stated he has worked with communities that were very ethnic diverse.

Mr. Olson commented on his management style. He tries to empower his employees. To have strong organizations you need to support your employees. Communication was important between council and department directors. His reasons for changing jobs were to be closer to his and his wife's aging parents and to get back to mid-western values.

Mr. Olson stated he loves being in the public sector and plans on continuing in this profession for a long time. He believes he would be in the mid-west in the next 5 – 10 years. Questions as to whether Grand Island was a stepping stone and the number of jobs Mr. Olson had had over the last 19 years were discussed. Mr. Olson explained circumstances of his termination as City Manager in Liberal, Kansas.

Mr. Olson stated the three words that describe him best were a doer, a leader, and an individual that has a lot of self-confidence which some people may take as "cocky". He commented on his

economic development in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. Mr. Olson stated one major accomplishment in his current position was in getting grants to help with infrastructure. Establishing early credibility was to be honest and support actions of the city council. He stated two traits of being an effective leader were to have the ability to adjust to circumstances and good analytical skills. Techniques to create an atmosphere of trust were to have the support of staff and spend a lot of time with council to see what is important to them.

Mr. Olson stated his greatest frustration in his current position was the city council not working together. He stated there were a lot of positive things going on in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Mr. Olson stated Grand Island should hire him because of his background and strong management skills. He would do the best job physically possible. He stated his hobbies were: golfing, working out, walking with his family, he does not require much sleep, and is not a pleasure reader but likes to read to learn.

Mr. Olson stated Grand Island's greatest asset was its diversity, closeness to the interstate, its economic development, infrastructure, and a very clean city. Grand Island's greatest challenges were the downtown area, railroads running through town, tight budget, and housing in the downtown area.

RECESS: Council recessed from 9:30 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.

PUBLIC INTERVIEW WITH MIKE NOLAN: Human Resources Director Brenda Sutherland, Councilmember's, and the Citizens Committee asked questions to better understand the candidate for the position of City Administrator. Introduced was Mike Nolan from Norfolk, Nebraska. Mr. Nolan stated he would like to move to Grand Island because it would be a step up for his career and was excited about the city and what it had to offer. He explained his 27 years of experience in government, budget issues, personnel issues, code enforcement, police, and fire.

Mr. Nolan stated he is a problem solver and has had experience in negotiations. One skill he was seeking improvement in was marketing municipalities. He commented on his knowledge of the negotiation process with the Commission on Industrial Relations (CIR) and has followed the cases from Grand Island. He stated he has had some experience working with diverse ethnic groups and has had experience in working with water, sewer, and wastewater.

Mr. Nolan stated his management style was "what you see is what you get". He emphasized working with staff. He learned over time the citizen is not always right but needs to be treated with courtesy. He stated he wanted to move to Grand Island because it would be a good fit and a step up for him. He sees himself here in Grand Island in the next 5 – 10 years if the mayor and council see fit to hire him.

Mr. Nolan stated the following three words would describe him: intense, committed to resolving problems effectively, and honest. Some criticize him as being too aggressive. His major accomplishment was the ability to build functional teams. He would establish early creditability and confidence with council, staff, community leaders and the general public by creating a lot of dialogue. Communication was very important.

Mr. Nolan stated integrity was important to being an effective leader. Techniques he would use to create an atmosphere of trust and unity within the organization was to find out what the norms of the organization were. His leadership and vision to help guide staff and elected officials toward the common good of the community was stewardship. He stated he was goal oriented.

Mr. Nolan stated his greatest frustration in his current position was trying to be a good steward and do the right thing and the citizen(s) accuses you of wrong doing.

Mr. Nolan stated Grand Island should hire him because of what they had seen during the interview along with his honesty, integrity, and fundamental principles.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk