

# MINUTES

## COUNCIL FINANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES and CITIZEN APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 1, 2023 – 3:30 PM  
City Hall Planning Department Conference Room

Members Present: Aaron Baker, Chair, Council Member  
Mac Morrow, Vice Chair, Council Member  
Susan Miller, Citizen Member

Staff Present: Wilson Hooper, City Manager  
Dean Luebbe, Finance Director  
Kelley Craig, Human Resources Director  
Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator  
Alex Shepherd, Assistant to the City Manager

Media: Jon Rich, Transylvania Times

### A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

### B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Assistant to the City Manager Alex Shepherd.

### C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Morrow, seconded by Ms. Miller to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

### D. Approval of Minutes of June 26, 2023 Meeting

Motion by Ms. Miller, seconded by Mr. Morrow to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2023 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

### E. City Manager Evaluation Process

Mr. Hooper informed the Committee that his employment agreement with the City calls for a performance evaluation to be conducted around October and November. He

mentioned that this is one of the more challenging tasks that a City Council will undertake and expressed his desire to provide the Council with ample time to thoroughly conduct the City Manager's performance evaluation, given that it can be a time-consuming process.

Mr. Morrow inquired whether Mr. Hooper has performed self-evaluations in the past, and Mr. Hooper confirmed that he has.

Ms. Craig discussed the process of conducting a performance evaluation using examples from the ICMA Core Principles for Effective Management and Leadership, as well as instances from other local governments including Durham County, NC, City of Lexington, NC, City of Lakeland, and City of Steamboat Springs. She noted that these examples are listed on the ICMA website. Ms. Craig recommended that the Council identify key areas and competencies they are seeking, along with the criteria for rating them. She suggested that the manager undertake a self-evaluation and present it to the Council for review, along with their goals for the upcoming year. She also highlighted that there should be a format for the Council to review, and this coordination has been done through the City Attorney in the past.

Ms. Miller asked whether Mr. Hooper was provided with goals and objectives as part of his initial employment. Mr. Hooper explained that he considered the responsibilities listed in his employment agreement as goals that guided him when he first started. However, he further explained that after attending the priority-setting retreat in February, those priorities have continued to guide his goals ever since.

Ms. Craig recommended that it would be best to conduct an evaluation that includes a rating, followed by a written response from each Council member on what they liked or didn't like, or what changes they would like to see.

Mr. Hooper proposed that by the next meeting, Ms. Craig could gather information that incorporates the job description and a draft of the performance evaluation. He outlined a timeline, suggesting that this information could be presented to the Council in September, followed by discussions in October, with the aim of completing the evaluation process by November.

#### **F. Public Works Director Position Update**

Mr. Hooper explained that the City initiated recruitment for the Public Works Director position as it was originally posted in the latter part of the previous calendar year and early this year. The selection process began promisingly, yielding five strong candidates. However, before the interview phase, two of them accepted other positions, and one withdrew their application. Ultimately, we interviewed two candidates. Subsequently, one of them accepted another job, leaving us with only one candidate. Mr. Hooper conveyed that he had a vision for this position based on the organization's needs, and he was unsure if this particular candidate was the right fit.

Mr. Hooper proposed the transition of the Public Works Director position into a City Engineer role. This position would resemble an Assistant City Manager in terms of scope and responsibility, and its pay grade would align with level 31. The City Engineer would be equipped to provide expertise and knowledge as we embark on projects such as the Ecusta Trail, the wastewater plant project, and other capital improvement endeavors.

Mr. Baker inquired whether the City Engineer would oversee departments including public works, wastewater plant, and water treatment plant. Mr. Hooper responded that he would consult the search firm to determine if this arrangement would suffice while also supervising the capital improvement projects.

#### G. Additional Comments

Mr. Hooper commented that he has scheduled the comprehensive briefing of the Ecusta Trail Project to City Council for September 18th.

Ms. Miller asked if there were any updates from the County about the Employee Wellness Contract, given its impact on employees. Ms. Craig responded that she has not received any contract or proposed MOU from the County. Mr. Baker asked when this becomes a problem for the city. Ms. Craig responded that it will be an issue starting from September 1st, 2023, because employees would no longer have a Wellness Center if the contract is not signed.

#### H. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Finance & Human Resources Committee will be on Monday, August 28, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

#### I. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

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Aaron Baker  
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved: August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

X   
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Alex Shepherd  
Assistant to the City Manager