

MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

February 13, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brown called the special meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. The meeting was held at the Montrose City Office located at 141 Parkway Drive, in Montrose.

ROLL CALL

Present Council Members were Debbie Gross, Ryan Heslop, Mark Richard, (entered the meeting at 6:25 p.m.), Christy Sanborn and Mayor Brown. Also present was City Manager Neil Rankin. Members Tom Bigelow and Robert Arnold were recorded as absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: Mayor Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

SPECIAL BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION CITY MANAGER CONTRACT: Brown said that at the last city council meeting it was voted on that we could sign the contract after council members Mark Richard and Tom Bigelow met with the attorney and agreed up on it, however, there were some changes that were made and then there were some changes that weren't made that surprised Mayor Brown so Mayor Brown said she reached out to council and asked if she should she sign as is or should we discuss and it came to a point we should discuss which is why we are here tonight. Brown asked Rankin if at the meeting the lawyer said we are essentially making you a full time employee correct and Rankin replied yes. Brown continued asking if that would make him under all the employee personnel policies and again Rankin replied right, he looked at the personnel policies and the only thing that would not be in the contract is that I could opt out of MERS and health care just like DPW does. Brown replied that the opt-out was included in the union contract but the employee handbook has not yet been updated but she is not opposed to it. Mayor Brown expressed her other concerns with a severance package, commenting that it shouldn't cost council 8, 10, up to 12 thousand dollars to decide they want to go a different route. Mayor Brown opened the meeting up to the rest of council. Gross expressed she has concerns with a severance package as well and asked what his current salary is. Rankin replied \$35,084. Gross continued by saying for 28 hours, what you are asking for breaks down to \$29.80 or \$1,192.00 per week which is substantially higher than adding on to your current 28 hour work week. Gross said she understands that these costs comparisons of other city managers were over a period of ten years and when she looked on line, city managers made an average of \$56,000 a year, some with benefits package and some without benefits seemed high. Heslop questioned when the city manager received his last evaluation and when he receives raises. Gross expressed concerns with having the opt-out option because at some time or another, he can opt in, therefore, the city would be responsible for those costs. Sanborn expressed concerns with doubling the current rate of pay but for only 12 hours more per week. Members started reading aloud portions of the employee handbook regarding sick leave, unused vacation pay, and personal time. Heslop commented that the full \$5 might be a little too much but maybe incorporate something into the contract that should the benefit situation change that would result in a large increase, then I can agree with picking something in between. Discussion ensued on the need for a full-time manager due to upcoming projects requiring attention.

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Members started discussing health insurance costs based on age and how much previous benefits packages in the past have cost the city. Rankin briefly mentioned a couple of short and long term accomplishments since October of 2015 when he became city manager that he has addressed as well as operational issues to make the city more efficient. Rankin added that unfortunately the one problem that he faces as a part-time employee of the city is that he is part-time. Brown commented to the members that there is one employee that has a severance package and has had a contract since 1990 something and we discussed it in the past; no severance package would be included in future contracts. Richard mentioned during negotiations, Rankin took the severance package down from 120 days to 90 days. Discussion ensued on previous issues with city managers...Gross recommended the we re-evaluate the starting pay to be \$52,000, remove the severance package and have the contract be dated and re-evaluated in one year's time. Gross also asked for the need of a written contract versus going along with the employee handbook. Brown replied because when you get into management level employees they generally want a contract that spells out their specifics although they still run with the personnel policy handbook as a permanent full-time employee. Sanborn started reading aloud the sick, vacation and personal leave in accordance with the personnel policy handbook. Heslop asked if there would be a compromise here since how we still have to have this conversation, can we take his current rate as a temporary measure that we can bring him on full time at his current hourly rate for 40 hours per week? Gross suggested removing the severance package start him out at \$52,000 a year and everything else stays the same as a full-time employee and to re-evaluate the contract in one year. Heslop commented that he hasn't had a raise in 2 years, even if we were to go a \$1 it's still less than \$55,000 and if we were going to take out severance then we should put something in place for an annual compensation evaluation so that he's not missing out on future raises.

- **MOTION** by Gross **SECOND** by Richard that we move forward with Neil's contract offering \$55,000, no severance package as presented and along with our employee handbook and his contract to coincide with each other and have it dated for a year's time to be re-evaluated in one year. Roll Call Vote: Richard – Aye, Sanborn – Aye, Heslop – Aye, Gross – Aye, and Mayor Brown – Aye. All Ayes. Motion Carried.
- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Heslop that if Neil's willing to work up to 40 hours a week at his present hourly rate while we go through negotiations. Roll Call Vote: Sanborn – Aye, Richard – Aye, Heslop – Aye, Gross – No, and Mayor Brown – Aye. Four (4) Ayes and One (1) Nay, (Gross). Motion Carried.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT

- **MOTION** by Richard **SECOND** by Sanborn to adjourn. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Mayor Brown adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Prepared by, Christina M. Rush, City Clerk