

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Special Meeting

Meeting

www.pjpettibone.com FORM NO. 10148

Held July 28, 2015

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The Council of the City of Milford met in Special Session in Council Chambers at 745 Center Street at 7:00 p.m. on July 28, 2015. Mayor Howland called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Howland, Vice Mayor Lykins, Mr. Brady, Ms. Brewer, Ms. Evans, Ms. Hinnners, Mr. Pittman.

Council Discussion:

Mayor Howland began the meeting by inviting City Manager Jeff Wright to briefly discuss the four proposals he had collected from outside agencies regarding the search for a replacement City Manager.

Mr. Wright indicated that the direction he was given previously by Council was to obtain four proposals from executive search firms and he has done so. Three of the four firms are in Ohio; he has done his best to find those firms who have experience in this and local surrounding areas. He indicated that he has also submitted a tentative timeline to Council to aid in their decisions.

Ms. Hinnners stated that in reviewing these proposals, they all seem very knowledgeable. She said she'd heard the name Duckworth and wondered if Mr. Wright might have had any experience with him.

Mr. Wright replied that he'd worked with him at Miami Township as the Assistant City Manager.

Ms. Hinnners asked if he knew anything about how he works now.

Mr. Wright indicated that Mr. Duckworth had emailed this information to him. He stated that he believed he was a consultant for about a year and he worked for a time with Management Partners. He did not believe Mr. Duckworth has a lot of experience in this area. His firm has the least amount of experience in placing an executive administrator of the four proposals he had submitted to Council. SCP is a new company and he would not recommend that the City of Milford be their first client to hire a City Manager.

Mr. Lykins asked if Mr. Wright had any experience with the Slavin Group.

Mr. Wright stated that he did not have any experience or personal knowledge regarding the Slavin Management Consultants; however, he did have knowledge regarding David Krings, the Midwest Regional Manager. Several years ago Mr. Krings was a Hamilton County Administrator; and was the longest serving administrator Hamilton County has had in the last couple of generations. He stated that he knew him in his capacity of a part-time village administrator for the City of Lockland and as consultant to the Village of Newtown.

Mr. Lykins stated that when he read through their information, he found that they had hired three village administrators or City Managers in areas like Milford; and they were the only ones with a 'cap'.

Ms. Evans asked if they were the ones who recently worked with Loveland to hire an administrator.

Mr. Wright said they are and that was in the summer/fall of 2014.

Ms. Evans asked if Mr. Wright knew where that person had come from and he responded that the candidate had come from the Village of New Richmond.

Mr. Brady asked Mr. Wright if he knew the name of the national firm Miami Township had used and if that firm was one of the four proposals on hand.

Mr. Wright indicated that Miami Township had completed their search for an executive administrator in house.

Mr. Brady reminded Council that the majority of the proposal firms were headquartered out of the area and asked if Council was thinking in terms of looking regionally or nationally to fill this position in that Loveland filled their position with a person from New Richmond and Miami Township filled their position with an administrator from Sharonville. He stated that if Council knew we were considering local executives, it could give us an idea of who we might be going after.

Ms. Hinnners suggested that we should be focusing regionally.

Mr. Lykins stated that he thinks the City should 'cast their net as far as we can' in attracting the best candidate and that is why we need to look to a search firm for guidance.

Mr. Pittman asked Mr. Minniear if the City should look within Ohio so that the candidate would have more familiarity with the Ohio Revised Codes.

Mr. Minniear responded that that reasoning would not be within his top five points in credentials.

Mr. Brady then asked if Council chose a group not located regionally, if it would limit their access to those people and if a local firm would be better suited and more applicable to the City's needs. For instance, part of Slavin's proposal includes \$7,000 for travel. Is that for a candidate to come for interviews or for part of

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Slavin's team to come here? He asked if Council would have to pay travel expenses every time they came to meet with us or would it involve a telephone call or skype? He indicated that this is a concern for him. If we had someone local, at least we could see them whenever we wanted to or had questions.

Mr. Lykins indicated that the 'lead' guy, the one who would be in charge of our account lives in Cincinnati.

Mr. Pittman stated that his thought is that travel expenses would cover the candidates themselves, although all proposals included some travel expenses.

Mr. Lykins said that although he has never been part of a search for this type of management, he has been involved in several searches for upper level management and his experience is that a local person is always assigned to the customer.

Ms. Hinnners stated that moving across the country or even state to state can mean a huge expense.

Mr. Brady agreed saying that the cost of moving a candidate across the country would be a huge undertaking vs hiring someone within the region.

Ms. Howland stated that Slavin's cap on travel is not to exceed \$8,000.

Mr. Pittman stated that the \$8,000 is included in their \$22,000 proposal. He stated that it would be important to ascertain who would be the 'lead' guy and if he is local whether or not that would affect the travel expense.

Mr. Brady read from the proposal that Mr. Slavin would be the lead in handling our account.

Mr. Lykins indicated that all proposed firms have a person in Cincinnati and that he would be very concerned if a proposal did not have a cap on travel expenses.

Ms. Hinnners stated that another of her concerns regarding Slavin is that they have only served large metropolitan areas with Venice, Florida being the smallest at 21,000 residents.

Mr. Lykins said there were three smaller communities on Slavin's resume including Branson, Missouri.

Discussion ensued regarding travel expenses for candidates vs. one flat travel expense fee with Ms. Howland expressing her concern that a recruitment firm could be bringing candidates from all over.

Mr. Lykins stated that the City would have the opportunity to question the firm if they were only bringing candidates from across the country.

Ms. Brewer asked if the City has ever used a consulting firm to locate and hire administrative personnel.

Mr. Wright stated that he has searched back through the records to Dave Spinney in 1988 and has not found that one has been employed for a City Manager search. We did not use a consulting firm for the Finance Director; he came to us from other channels. He indicated that when Mark Machan was hired as Police Chief in 2005 the City went through a free or almost free service provided by the Ohio Assoc. of Chiefs of Police for assistance. Mr. Wright stated that he has checked with the Ohio City Manager's Association and there is not a similar resource available.

Ms. Brewer said the City's protocol has been to post the position and see who we draw in which would simply entail the cost of the advertising.

Ms. Hinnners warned that there had been problems in the past with simply depending on candidates to be honest in their experience and she felt that there needed to be someone over the endeavor.

Ms. Brewer disagreed in that she felt Council could find a viable candidate on their own.

Mr. Lykins asked who would be conducting the vetting and background checks.

Ms. Brewer insisted that the City could conduct the search as they have in the past.

Mr. Lykins stated that with the current budget, they could well afford to hire a consultant to conduct the City Manager search. He suggested that finding the best candidate to run the City is their job. With just posting the position you then have to figure out Step 2 and Step 3 - who will do the vetting and the background checks.

Ms. Brewer indicated that when they hired Jeff Wright, they didn't require a background check.

Mr. Lykins said that when they hired Jeff Wright, they went after him as soon as the position became available.

There was further discussion regarding the pros and cons of posting the position themselves or hiring a search firm to seek the best candidate.

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Ms. Brewer suggested that they postpone the hiring of a search firm and post the position themselves and see where they are in 30 days.

Mr. Lykins disagreed saying that that would put them 30 days behind in the endeavor and asked if she thought the City should go leaderless.

Ms. Brewer said the City has staff in place who could manage the City until a City Manager could be found. She indicated that Assistant City Manager Pam Holbrook who already covers for Jeff when he is absent from the office and ran the City in between Loretta Rokey's resignation and the hiring of Jeff is more than qualified to manage the City during this time. She stated that she feels strongly that the City 'would remain afloat' if the decision to hire a search firm is put back 30 days.

Mr. Lykins stated that he has no issue with Pam Holbrook or doubt that the City would remain afloat. He indicated that his issue is with not taking the opportunity to use someone whose only job is to locate and hire government entities.

Ms. Hanners stated that we do need to hire someone, but do we need someone this big or this expensive.

Ms Howland stated that she sees everyone's point. Her feeling is that we are not downtown Cincinnati to spend this kind of money and then the additional expense of having to relocate somebody if necessary. She wondered what it would hurt to spread the net regionally and advertise and see what we got. She indicated that if we advertised ourselves we could have Mr. Wright with his expertise assist in the vetting and background check process. She stated that her main concern is with the cost. If in the next 30 days we don't find that perfect candidate, we could then turn to a search firm.

Ms. Brewer stated that the City has capable staff on hand who could run the City for a year if necessary.

Mr. Pittman indicated that if they would check the timeline Mr. Wright had put together, there is no way that Council can find a viable candidate in 30 days by putting out a net. There is no way that the process can be completed within that time frame. He indicated that to him it is fulfilling their responsibility to the citizens of Milford the best way they can. In terms of what a City Manager can affect and what a City Manager can mean as far as revenue and cost saving, as far as long term vision for the City; frankly the things that Mr. Wright has done since he got here. He stated that he has no hesitancy in using a search firm to find the best candidate.

There was discussion regarding whether or not 30 days is enough time to find a viable candidate is or whether a search firm should be hired at this time.

Mr. Lykins insisted that the City Manager is the most important job in the City – that it is the CEO of the City. He asked if the plan was for Council to make Mr. Wright responsible to find three candidates in the 60 days before he leaves.

Ms. Howland stated that that is not the plan. She said she would like to approach this search as other searches for administrative personnel have been completed in the past. She stated that she had a conversation with Chief Cooper regarding how they found his replacement and the steps they took. How did Miami Township find their administrator if they didn't used a search firm?

Ms. Brewer stated that to think they couldn't find a candidate on their own is ludicrous because we have had excellent City Managers without ever spending \$20,000 to get them; it is possible.

Mr. Lykins stated that Ms. Brewer still has not indicated who will be responsible for finding the candidate, vetting the candidate and then running the background check.

Ms. Brewer stated that Council will be responsible.

Mr. Lykins stated what you're saying is that the group of seven here, will within 60 days, before Mr. Wright leaves, we're going to advertise, vet, interview and decide.

Ms. Howland stated that that would be the process. She then asked Mr. Brady what he believes is the best avenue to take.

Mr. Brady stated that if this was 30 days since Mr. Wright's resignation we ~~(the bank)~~ would go directly to a search firm or begin the search process ourselves. But since Council is 30 days further down the road with the clock ticking, at work we'd say "we're running out of time". There's an institutional transfer of knowledge if you can get someone onboard before Mr. Wright leaves. The more time is spent, the less likely that is going to happen. He continued on to say that although the cost of a search firm might seem like a lot of money, it is but a fraction. The bank would pay 25-30% of the person's total compensation in a job search of this type and that when he saw \$18,500, he was thrilled because he had been sure it would be \$25,000-\$30,000. Mr. Brady went on to say that Mr. Wright leaves at the end of October, and he will be busy transferring his job to another; whereas we need someone who will be dedicated only to the search.

*if I were working at the Bank
if a search was being done for the Bank,*

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It will take a lot of time. Mr. Brady stated that we could almost hire someone part-time (15-20 hrs. weekly) just to fill that role. That person would have to work on advertising and networking; it isn't as easy as simply taking an administrator from another municipality.

Ms. Brewer suggested that the time-line suggested by Mr. Wright isn't set in stone. If Pam Holbrook has to run the City that would be fine.

Mr. Brady stated that if we wanted to do this on our own, it would push the time-line back further.

Mr. Pittman indicated that Council should cease with any sort of speculation as to whether or not Pam Holbrook is able to fill the position of City Manager in the interim. He stated that Ms. Holbrook is well qualified and that if she were to decide to 'put in' for the job, she is perfectly eligible for the position and he would support that move. The question for him is whether we are going to find that needle-in-the-haystack person that everyone loves or are we going to find ourselves 60-75 or even 80 days out and having to turn to a search firm in the middle of budget meetings. Another question is how we will handle budget meetings and that transition this year if we are still 30-60 days down the road. Mr. Pittman stated that to him it didn't make any sense to put it off.

Ms. Hanners asked Mr. Wright if he hadn't reached out to individuals he knew who might be interested in the position.

Mr. Wright indicated he has not vetted anyone for this position waiting until he had clear direction from all seven Council members.

Mr. Pittman stated that in the course of hiring Mr. Burke as Finance Director, they had interviewed for more than 30 days and found candidates that were likeable and fully credentialed individuals, and there was a clear front runner who could have filled the position but none overwhelmed him. Mr. Vilardo had the premonition to just sit and wait, and that was when Mr. Burke talked to someone who suggested the City's position to him. Mr. Pittman said we found that right person, but that process took longer than 60 days. He stated that if we had just offered the job to one of the others whom they had vetted; they might have found themselves with a Finance Director who was the wrong person for the job.

Mr. Lykins stated that Mr. Wright's timeline was just a suggestion and that Slavin's timeline had replacing the City Manager, including vetting, interviews and hiring within 60days.

Ms. Brewer stated that budget meetings were not a problem with Pam Holbrook and Dan Burke present.

Mr. Pittman stated that budget meetings were a problem when they discussed the issue 30 days ago.

Ms. Hanners stated that Council should just get on with it as they were wasting precious time by not doing anything; that the decision should have been made already.

Mr. Lykins made a Motion to enter into an agreement with Slavin Management Consultants for the search for a City Manager.

There was discussion regarding Slavin vs. Management Partners, 'cap' expenses and other issues.

Mr. Lykins made a Motion to enter into an agreement with Slavin Management Consultants for the search for a City Manager a second time.

There was discussion regarding the cost of Slavin vs. the other vendors.

Mr. Lykins made a Motion to enter into an agreement with Slavin Management Consultants for the search for a City Manager as laid out in their proposal a third time; Mr. Pittman seconded. All Council members voted no except for Mr. Lykins who voted yes.

Ms. Evans made a motion that they enter into an agreement with Management Partners; seconded by Ms. Hanners.

Ms. Lykins indicated that he would like to open the floor to discussion regarding this motion before the formal polling of Council members. He stated that he would like Council to request that the City Manager approach Management Partners regarding getting a 'cap' like the one on the proposal from Slavin so that there is a 'high' point because there is no written guarantee what the expenses will be.

There was discussion regarding what the 'cap' would entail.

Mr. Minniear verified that the Motion on the table is that the City Manager be directed to enter into an agreement with Management Partners after seeking a 'cap' on expenses. The Motion had previously been seconded by Ms. Hanners. Ms. Brewer voted no. All others voted yes at this time.

Mr. Wright stated that the first step Management Partners had indicated was the creation of a Community Profile. He said in his experience, the company will run a small ad just to get people's attention. He asked if Management Partners would be working solely with him or would Council prefer to be included in all

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steps. He clarified his question by asking that if he signed the agreement and then in 6-7 days Management Partners had a draft of Expectations of Candidate and Community Profile should he bring the documents to Council for review.

Mr. Lykins asked Mr. Minniear if Mr. Wright were to bring these documents to them, would it need to be at a Council meeting or could they simply be e-mailed or contacted by telephone.

Mr. Minniear stated that it would need to be discussed in a Council meeting. Mr. Minniear then asked how the decision as to what the position would pay would come about; would it be based on experience? He indicated that when this group meets with Mr. Wright, the first question they would ask will be about the salary. Would the salary be commensurate with experience, education? This decision is not one that Mr. Wright should have to consider or make on his own.

Mr. Pittman suggested that the search firm consult with Council as they develop the Community Profile. He said that after that interview, it may not be necessary for Council to meet with Management Partners until they are conducting interviews.

Mr. Minniear stated that he thought that would violate the 'Open Meeting' directives and that a Special Meeting of Council would need to be scheduled and Management Partners invited to attend.

Mr. Lykins read from the proposal that a meeting would be held with the City Manager, Mayor, members of Council and other 'stake holders'.

Mr. Pittman reopened the subject of proposed salary. Various salary ranges were discussed at this time. Mr. Brady suggested that Management Partners might be able to suggest a figure but possibly in the range of \$93,000 to \$103,000 including benefits and a car allowance.

Mr. Wright stated that he would schedule a Special Council Meeting to include Management Partners to discuss the work plan and asked if Council would like to include the Leadership Team.

It was decided that the Special Council Meeting would be held before August 18th.

Mr. Lykins suggested that the search firm speak with department heads as they begin the Community Profile.

Mr. Wright stated that he would ask Management Partners for a couple dates for a Special Meeting and then get back to Council to establish a firm meeting date and time before the August 18th meeting.

Mr. Pittman said he hoped to have an Administrative Services meeting to discuss a survey. Mr. Wright said he would send out a couple dates.

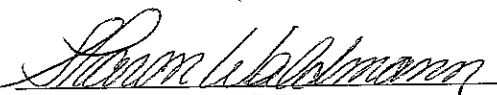
Ms. Evans said to let Ms. Holbrook know that Council appreciates her work.

Ms. Howland asked if anyone from the public would like to speak.

Mr. Aufdenkamp came forward at this time. He congratulated Council on their turning to a 'head hunter' to assist in the search for a City Manager. He warned Council not to 'go cheap' and to simply select the best person for the job. He then voiced his dismay that honeysuckle plants are growing in the cemetery.

Adjourn:

There being no further business to come before the City Council; the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. with a Motion from Mr. Pittman; seconded by Mr. Lykins. All voted yes.


Sharon Waldmann, C.P.T.


Laurie Howland, Mayor