

**Evanston City Council
Closed Session Minutes
Aldermanic Library
Friday, June 5, 2009**

PRESENT: Aldermen Jean- Baptiste, Wynne, Holmes, Tendam, Grover, Rainey, Burrus, Fiske

NOT PRESENT

AT ROLL CALL: Alderman Wilson

STAFF: Martin Lyons, Assistant City Manager; Evonda Thomas, Health & Human Services Director and Douglas Gaynor, Parks/Forestry/Recreation & Facilities Management Director

GUESTS: Heidi Voorhees, president, The PAR Group; Craig Malin, Walter Bobkiewicz and Christian Sigman, candidates for Evanston City Manager

PRESIDING: Mayor Elizabeth B. Tisdahl

START: 2:03 p.m.

At 2:03 p.m. Alderman Holmes moved to convene into Executive Session to discuss matters related to personnel, litigation and Closed Session minutes pursuant to 5 Illinois Compiled Statutes 120/2 (c) (1), (11) and (21) as follows:

- 2. All meetings of public bodies shall be public meetings except for the following:
 - (1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.

Seconded by Alderman Rainey.

Roll call. Voting aye – Jean-Baptiste, Wynne, Holmes, Tendam, Rainey, Burrus, Fiske. Voting nay – none. Motion carried (8-0)

Personnel

Alderman Rainey asked for a review of the process the candidates went through with the department heads. Heidi Voorhees, president of The PAR Group, explained that Thursday afternoon each candidate had a tour of Evanston with Marty Lyons, Rolanda Russell and Joe McRae. Friday morning each candidate had a separate interview with department heads drawing from a list of 20 questions they had prepared. She stated that City Council would interview the three finalists for the City Manager position that afternoon with the first one coming in at 3 p.m. First they would hear the report from the department heads. They also need to leave time for Council’s site visit reports.

Senior Staff Input

Marty Lyons stated that the directors were pleased with the group of candidates and that Council had a tough decision to make. They tried to reach a consensus on a number one and discuss the good qualities of the other candidates and the challenges they had. They kept it to a strengths and challenges format.

Mr. Lyons stated that Wally Bobkiewicz was their number one because he presented himself the best. Focusing on his strengths: exhibited necessary leadership, strong communication skills, answered all questions fully with examples (clear/concise); has been a city manager, has a good elected official perspective and keeps the council's priorities and community goals in mind. Evonda Thomas added that he had a good perspective on Evanston now and had researched where the City is today.

He stated that Mr. Bobkiewicz valued the division of labor and would let department heads do their jobs and not micro-manage.

Alderman Grover asked if they felt he could be a leader among leaders. Mr. Lyons responded yes and noted he would be the coordinator and take advantage of their skills. He felt that Mr. Bobkiewicz's management style would be a good fit for their team. He pointed out that the candidate placed importance on community engagement and cited community, residents and the council. His example of a creative idea was bringing a hospital back to the community despite the financial limitations of the State of California, which had been a community goal.

Doug Gaynor noted in California taxes can't raise without a referendum. He related that Mr. Bobkiewicz showed how he was creative in balancing budgets without raising taxes. Mr. Gaynor reported that, like Evanston, is very process oriented and he did not think the population difference (30,000 vs. 75,000) would be a problem.

Mr. Lyons spoke of Craig Malin and noted his impressive resume with all of his accomplishments. He noted a goal to "modernize operations and build community." Mr. Lyons stated that Mr. Malin had endured several community challenges, specifically with the flooding of the Mississippi River and the state of the economy in the Quad Cities area. The candidate's main challenge was that he did not interview well.

Mr. Lyons moved on to Christian Sigman and cited his very good presence as a strength. He enunciated himself well and has a strong financial background. Mr. Sigman had made the point that budgets need to be technical (is it correct), strategic (is it doing what we're supposed to be doing) and political (is it meeting the Council and community goals). The candidate's main challenge was that he had not held the top job anywhere. Additionally, Mr. Sigman lacked experience in dealing with a crisis situation.

Mr. Gaynor pointed out that Mr. Bobkiewicz had dealt with wildfires and Mr. Malin with floods.

Council Reconnaissance Reports

Aldermen Wynne, Jean-Baptiste and Grover visited Davenport, Iowa to speak with people about Craig Malin. Alderman Wynne gave an overview of their visit.

Aldermen Rainey and Tendam visited Santa Paula, California to speak with people about Wally Bobkiewicz. Alderman Rainey gave an overview of their visit.

Candidate Interviews

Ms. Voorhees called in the first candidate, **Craig Malin**.

Since there was no A/V equipment, Mr. Malin handed out PowerPoint sheets to Council members with instructions to share the packets and turn pages only when instructed. The basic theme was managing under pressure and emphasized the terms "prospect and refuge."

Following his presentation, Council members asked Mr. Malin a set of 15 questions.

Ms. Voorhees called in the second candidate, **Walter Bobkiewicz**.

Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that his topic would focus on engagement with four main points: (1) how Evanston engages with the community, (2) how the City engages with regional, state and national governments, (3) how Evanston engages with staff and (4) how the City Manager engages with the City Council.

Following his presentation, Council members asked Mr. Bobkiewicz a set of 15 questions.

Ms. Voorhees called in the third candidate, **Christian Sigman**.

Mr. Sigman handed everyone a wire-bound booklet titled, "Leadership Team Building & Economic Development through Brand Management." He discussed the 14-page booklet and noted that "...elements of brand management could be an effective platform for developing a strong management team."

Following his presentation, Council members asked Mr. Sigman a set of 15 questions.

Council Reconnaissance Reports continued

Mayor Tisdahl and Alderman Burrus visited Hamilton County (Cincinnati) to speak with people about Christian Sigman and gave an overview of their visit.

Council Discussion

Each City Council member spoke about the candidate they favored and they reached consensus that Wally Bobkiewicz was the best candidate to be Evanston's next City Manager.

Ms. Voorhees said that since they have consensus, the next step would be to craft an offer and authorize the Mayor to negotiate an agreement with the selected candidate. She suggested that they start with a salary of \$180,000 and deferred compensation of \$7,500. She noted that temporary housing will not be needed as his father has a condo here in Evanston and it will be available August 1. Mr. Bobkiewicz will need to give one month's notice. Ms. Voorhees continued going through the compensation list and pointed out that most items are according to City executive policy.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste moved that Council reconvene into Open Session. Seconded by Alderman Rainey.

Roll call. Voting aye – Jean-Baptiste, Wynne, Wilson, Holmes, Tendam, Rainey, Burrus, Fiske. Voting nay – none. Motion carried (9-0)

The door to the Aldermanic Library was opened.

Alderman Jean-Baptiste moved to authorize the Mayor to negotiate an agreement with the next city manager candidate. Seconded by Alderman Fiske.

Roll call. Voting aye – Jean-Baptiste, Wynne, Wilson, Holmes, Tendam, Grover, Rainey, Burrus, Fiske, Tisdahl. Voting nay – none. Motion carried (10-0)

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m. by Mayor Tisdahl.

Respectfully submitted,
Mayre Press,
Deputy City Clerk