

**October 15, 2024
Jackson, Minnesota**

The Jackson City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers of City Hall and also by Teleconference and Zoom at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 15, 2024 with the meeting called to order by Mayor Marcus Polz. On the roll call, the following persons were present in-person, Mayor Marcus Polz and Aldermen Mark Titus, Chris Naumann, Nathan Peterson and Joe Pell. Also attending in-person were Interim City Administrator Rick Almich, City Attorney Brad Anderson, Public Works Director Tony Oxborough, Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo, Interim Assistant Ambulance Director Elijah Camarillo, John Weland of the Jackson County Animal Protection Society, Stephen Foster and City Clerk/Council Secretary Dave Maschoff. Joining the meeting via Zoom and Teleconference was Kent Bargfrede of the Jackson Economic Development Office and Pat Melvin of David Drown Associates. (Alderman Brandon Finck and Alderwoman Sara Mix were absent.) (A quorum of the City Council was present.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Polz announced the Pledge of Allegiance would be recited before the City Council meeting was called to order. All those attending in-person and by Zoom and Teleconference recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Polz called the regular meeting of the Jackson City Council to order. He said the roll call showed all Councilmembers were present except for Alderman Brandon Finck and Alderwoman Sara Mix.

There were no Public Hearings, Bid Lettings or Open Forum.

Unscheduled Guests:

Mayor Polz asked if there were any unscheduled guests in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Polz again asked if there were any unscheduled guests in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Polz asked for a third time if there were any unscheduled guests in the audience.

Seeing and hearing no unscheduled guests, Mayor Polz said the Council would move onto the Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

PELL/NAUMANN moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Council Discussion Items

CITY ADMINISTRATOR SEARCH PROFILE – PAT MELVIN OF DAVID DROWN ASSOCIATES

City Clerk Maschoff noted that Pat Melvin had not arrived via Zoom to the Council meeting yet.

Mayor Polz said the Council would move onto the next agenda item until Melvin joined the meeting.

BLUE EARTH ENVIRONMENTAL COMPANY PAY APPLICATION NO. 3 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$67,521.25

City Attorney Brad Anderson noted Pay Application No. 3 from Blue Earth Environmental pertains to the demolition of the former Prairie Winds Motel building.

Attorney Anderson said he has visited the property a couple of times in the last week. He said there's been a huge amount of activity at the site. Attorney Anderson said he thinks Blue Earth Environmental is getting close to the end of the demolition project. He said a lot of concrete is already being moved out and a lot of the things that needed to be done are nearing completion.

Peterson pointed out the back page of Pay Application No. 3 shows the percentage of completion of the items that need to be done. He noted Blue Earth Environmental is almost done with the demolition and removal process.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve Blue Earth Environmental Company Pay Application No. 3 in the amount of \$67,521.25.

TITUS/PETERSON moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Pay Application No. 3 in the amount of \$67,521.25 payable to Blue Earth Environmental Company.

RESOLUTION NO. 39-1024 CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE SALE OF A PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT BOND NEEDED TO SECURE A DEED DEMOLITION LOAN TO FINANCE THE DEMOLITION OF THE FORMER COAST TO COAST HARDWARE STORE BUILDING

Mayor Polz noted the information the City's Financial Consultant, Shannon Sweeney of David Drown Associates, had assembled for the Mayor and Councilmembers regarding Resolution No. 39-1024.

Mayor Polz entertained a motion to approve Resolution No. 39-1024.

PETERSON/PELL moved and it was unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 39-1024 calling for a public hearing to consider the sale of a Property Tax Abatement Bond needed to secure a DEED (Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development) Demolition Loan to finance the demolition of the former Coast to Coast Hardware Store building.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR SEARCH PROFILE – PAT MELVIN OF DAVID DROWN ASSOCIATES

Pat Melvin of David Drown Associates joined the City Council meeting via Zoom.

Melvin greeted Mayor Polz and Councilmembers. He thanked the Council for taking time to meet with him and allowing him to meet with them remotely.

Melvin said he had a couple of things that he wanted to review with the Mayor and Councilmembers. He said one of those items is to review the City Administrator Search Profile. Melvin pointed out the Profile was included in the City Council's Information packet. He said a few corrections were made to the Profile information to bring it up to date. Melvin said he certainly wanted to hear comments from Councilmembers and the Mayor on their thoughts regarding the Profile and anything that can be done further to improve or enhance the City's outreach. He said the Profile will be the primary tool that he'll be using to share with individuals who have a background that would be compatible with what the Mayor and City Council are looking for in their City Administrator position.

In addition to that, Melvin said there are a few other things that he wanted to review with the Mayor and Councilmembers. He noted one of those is securing a date of when they would actually do interviews with the final candidates for City Administrator.

Melvin said he certainly wanted to talk with the Mayor and Council about the next steps in the process and then answer any questions they may have.

Melvin said he wanted to hear feedback from the Mayor and Councilmembers on the City Administrator Search Profile.

Melvin said if they have any suggestions for further improvement, he would certainly be more than receptive to making those changes before the City Administrator's position to seek applicants is posted and doing outreach for the position.

Mayor Polz said he could tell it wasn't Melvin's first City Administrator Search Profile that's he's done. He said the Profile looked very professional.

Melvin said he was glad to hear that.

Interim City Administrator Rick Almich said he had also reviewed the City Administrator Search Profile and thought it was well done.

Melvin thanked Almich and credited his assistant, Liz, who helped with the design of the Profile.

Melvin said if everybody was in agreement with the City Administrator Search Profile that was presented, he would simply look for a motion to approve the Profile. He explained with the motion, David Drown Associates will plan on posting the City Administrator's position for a period of four weeks. Melvin said he would jump into doing outreach and post the position in a number of different places. In addition, he said he would also be reaching out with phone calls. Melvin said David Drown Associates also uses LinkedIn quite a bit to find individuals who have backgrounds in local government, not just in Minnesota, but neighboring States to make individuals aware of the opportunity.

Melvin said one of the questions that came up while the City Administrator Profile was being reviewed was the salary range. He noted the salary range for the City Administrator's position in Jackson is up to \$140,000. Melvin said he just wanted to share with the Mayor and City Council information based on some of the recruitment he did in 2023. He said for example, in the City of Morris which has a population of just over 5,000, their salary range was from \$110,000 to \$140,000, just like Jackson. Melvin said the City of Maple Plain, which is a smaller community located just west of the Twin Cities, had a salary range of \$90,000 to \$110,000. He said the City of Mound, which is located west of the Twin Cities, had a salary range of \$114,000 to \$142,000. Melvin said Mound has a population of about 9,000. He said he recently worked with the City of Maple Lake in recruiting a new City Administrator, which has a population of just over 2,000, which had a salary range of \$75,000 to \$116,000. Melvin noted Maple Lake is located just west of the Twin Cities.

Melvin said he thinks for the City of Jackson, the salary range being offered of \$120,000 to \$140,000 is very respectful, obviously. He thinks the City of Jackson will get a lot of candidates. Melvin said he knows there was some question about whether there would be some flexibility at the top. He said he thinks that is certainly something the City Council can discuss when they see the candidates and see their experience and qualifications for the job.

Melvin said he thinks where the City of Jackson is right now with that salary range, the City is very well positioned to get candidates with experience and with qualifications.

If there was nothing else to add, Mayor Polz said he would entertain a motion to approve the City Administrator Search Profile.

PETERSON/TITUS moved and it was unanimously carried to approve the City Administrator Search Profile as presented by Pat Melvin of David Drown Associates.

Mayor Polz noted applications would be accepted for four weeks. He asked Melvin when the City Administrator's position would be posted.

Melvin said the job opening for City Administrator in Jackson will be posted in the next day or two. He said he would send an email to Alderwoman Sara Mix that will list all the places that the job opening is posted. Melvin said he's certainly receptive if the Mayor or Councilmembers have any individuals in mind. He said he doesn't think there's anything better, no greater compliment, than hearing from a Councilmember or the Mayor telling someone that the City has a job opening and they think that person would be a well-qualified person for the position. But certainly, Melvin said if the Mayor or a Councilperson would prefer not to personally contact a person they know and would like him to make the contact, he would be more than happy to do so. Melvin said often times, people do need a little bit of a nudge to consider themselves for a high-level management position like this. He said he would encourage the Mayor and Councilmembers to do as much as they can to look at individuals who they work with that are in the community. Melvin said ideally, it would be best if we could find somebody who's already chosen Jackson or the area to live in. But certainly, he said the City is not limiting themselves to that. Melvin said David Drown Associates will be looking outstate, they'll be looking everywhere for somebody that would be suitable for what the City is looking for.

Melvin noted there have been some minor changes regarding the timeline in the hiring process for a new City Administrator. He said he wanted to check to see if it would work for the Councilmembers to have interviews with finalists on Monday, January 6th, 2025. Melvin asked if that date would work for the Mayor and Councilmembers or if there were any conflicts. He said now would be the time to identify if a different date for interviews is needed.

Mayor Polz and Councilmembers indicated January 6th would be fine as the date to conduct interviews with the City Administrator finalists.

Peterson asked Melvin to send out a calendar reminder to the Mayor and Councilmembers.

Melvin said he could do so.

Melvin said the City Administrator's position will be advertised for four weeks.

Melvin pointed out during that time, he will be reaching out to candidates with phone calls and electronically and encouraging people to apply.

During those four weeks, Melvin said he will be providing Alderwoman Sara Mix with weekly updates of where things are in terms of the number of applicants and a brief summary of the outreach efforts that have been made. He said the Mayor and Councilmembers will be informed about how things are progressing during week two, week three and week four.

Melvin said once week four rolls around, he will review all the candidates. He said obviously those candidates that do not meet minimum requirements will be excluded. Melvin said he will then select the top candidates. He said depending on the overall pool of the top candidates, maybe eight to ten candidates will be forwarded to the City Council. Melvin said those individuals will be asked to do a video interview as well as a personality assessment. He explained the personality assessment basically tells you how a person prefers to work. Melvin said the personality assessment shows, for example, does the person rely on input from staff to assist in making a decision or do they look at statutes or how do they make decisions. He said that information will then be provided to the Mayor and Councilmembers in order to narrow down those eight to ten candidates depending upon how many people have applied.

Melvin said the Mayor and Council will be able to look at that group of candidates and decide which individuals they would like to invite for an interview.

Melvin said candidates do not become public information until they've been invited to the interview. He said a lot of the information that he'll be providing to the Mayor and Councilmembers will be considered private and confidential up until that point. Melvin said he would be sure to let the Mayor and Council know how that all works so there's no problems.

Melvin said they will be working towards the Monday, January 6th date for interviews. He said he would be putting together sample questions. Melvin said the Mayor and Council will have an opportunity to review all that. He said David Drown Associates will be doing background checks of the finalists and checking work references. Melvin said there will be a lot of information coming to the Mayor and Councilmembers in the future on the candidates as they narrow them down into a smaller group that they want to interview.

Titus asked Melvin how many interviews of finalists he would anticipate.

Melvin said David Drown Associates typically recommends three to four interviews because there's a gap of time between when the Council decides who they want to invite for an interview and when the interview actually happens. He explained, often times, these individuals have other job applications out there or have things happen in their life that maybe cause them to withdraw from consideration. Melvin said conducting three to four interviews is kind of a recommendation.

Melvin said he encourages the Mayor and Councilmembers to be engaged and involved as much as they would like in the hiring process. He said he will certainly keep Alderwoman Mix informed as to where we are in the process and that can be shared if she would like with the Council.

Naumann said he appreciates the process, and the information and timelines Melvin is providing to the Mayor and Council. He said he appreciates the level of openness and the whole process.

Almich asked Melvin if he anticipates some type of community reception or open house with the final candidates.

Melvin said that was a great question. He said when it comes down to interview day, David Drown Associates can basically set up whatever it is the Council would like. Melvin said the Council can certainly have a reception. He said it's been a while, but there have been some communities that have actually had the candidates board a small bus and travel around to see the community and the City's facilities. Melvin said David Drown Associates are very flexible and they would be more than happy to work with the Council to coordinate that.

Almich noted it's been his experience that's well appreciated by the citizens, many thanks for having an opportunity to meet the candidates. He said the citizens will also provide their opinions to various Councilmembers one way or the other.

Almich also said he has always taken the position that it's important for staff, especially Department Managers, to be involved in some capacity. He said not that they have a vote or that they have veto authority, but they feel they're part of the process. Almich said he thinks that pays dividends once the selection is made.

Melvin said certainly as we get into that final interview process, there's an opportunity, if the Council would like, to have a management team or staff team conduct an interview in addition to the interview that the Council does. He said the key thing is when the staff conducts their interview, what they are actually doing is providing feedback to the Council because it's the City Council that makes the decision. Melvin said David Drown Associates have special forms that City staff can complete and that information is relayed to the Council so they have additional information to help make a good decision.

Melvin said once the process gets to the point where finalists are selected for interviews, that will be the point in time where he'll be asking the Mayor and Council how they would like to have the interview day, what format such as if the Council would like a meet and greet, would they like a City tour for the candidates, do you want the City staff do an interview in addition to the Council interview. Melvin said he will narrow down all those details at that point.

Mayor Polz asked Councilmembers if they had any further questions for Melvin.

Peterson told Melvin to keep up the good work.

Melvin thanked Mayor Polz and Councilmembers for their time. He told the Council to feel free to contact him with any questions or any candidates.

Mayor Polz told Melvin he suspects he will hear from some of the Councilmembers. He thanked Melvin for his time.

Melvin said that would be wonderful and wished the Mayor and Council a great evening.

Other:

Alderman Nathan Peterson

Alderman Nathan Peterson noted he's been having problems opening email attachments on his Council I-pad.

Mayor Polz said it may be time to refresh or update equipment.

John Weland, who was in the audience, said he would take a look at Peterson's I-pad.

Alderman Chris Naumann

Alderman Chris Naumann thanked Jackson Ambulance Director Grant Landbo for update information he provided regarding the Ambulance Department. He said keep up the good work.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Pell/Peterson moved and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the regular Jackson City Council meeting at 6:22 p.m.

David A. Maschoff, Council Secretary

Marcus Polz, Mayor

