

March 14, 2018

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hickory was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., with the following members present:

Brad Lail	Hank Guess	David L. Williams
Vacant	Aldermen	David P. Zagaroli
Danny Seaver		Jill Patton

A quorum was present.

Also present were: City Manager Warren Wood, Assistant City Manager Rick Beasley, City Attorney John Crone, Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula, Assistant to the City Manager Yaidee Fox, Communications and Marketing Manager Dana Kaminske, Communications Specialist Sarah Killian, Executive Assistant Deisy Zavala, and City Clerk Debbie D. Miller

Also present were the applicants: S. Ryan Edwards and Charlotte C. Williams

- I. Mayor Guess called the meeting to order. All Council members were present.
- II. Invocation by Retired Minister Cliff Moone
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Interview the Two Finalist for the Ward 2 Alderman Vacancy

Mayor Guess thanked everyone for being present. He thanked the two candidates and expressed Council's appreciation for them being present. He turned the meeting over to City Attorney John Crone to outline the procedures for the meeting.

City Attorney John Crone advised that Council was in their ongoing process of selecting an individual to take the place of Alderman Tarlton. A memorandum was sent to the Mayor, City Council, Staff, and the candidates, recommending what the process would be. He explained what the process would be. City Council would consider a vote to approve, an assessment process. The candidate with the highest cumulative vote will be named as the successor of Mr. Tarlton. There was a series of six questions that Staff had come up with and nobody had seen those questions except for Staff. Councilmembers would sequentially ask the questions to each of the candidates. The candidates had agreed to be sequestered during the interview of the other candidate. The Clerk will randomly draw the name of the candidate to go first. The candidate that was not chosen would be lead out into the closed session area. There was no time limit on this. Council would ask those six questions. There was an evaluation form that Councilmembers would receive. He reiterated there would be no time limit on the interviews. Each Councilmember will rate or rank the answer to the questions on the appropriate form. Staff advised Mr. Crone that the Clerk would be tallying the scores and then hand them to him to disclose the results. The candidate with the highest cumulative score during the process would be named the successor of Mr. Tarlton. He advised that Council should have had an opportunity to look at the memorandum that he had sent. He asked Council to vote to approve that process. If that process was acceptable they would begin the process with the Clerk handing out the appropriate documents to Councilmembers.

Alderman Zagaroli moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton to accept the process.

Mayor Guess advised there was a motion and a second. He asked for all those in favor.

Alderman Lail interjected for purposes of discussion, he asked City Attorney John Crone to review Council's evaluation form and what it means to score "one" and what it means to score "nine".

City Attorney John Crone advised there was an evaluation form which applied to each question. This would be disclosed to the public and any of the scores are open to the public and they would be made accessible to everybody. They would be rated from 1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - moderately disagree, 4 - slightly disagree, 5 - undecided/no opinion, 6 - slightly agree, 7 - moderately agree, 8 - agree, and 9 - strongly agree. He advised those were the rankings that would be given to the answers of the six questions that Council would be given. There was a score sheet for Council to record their points.

Alderman Lail asked if Council would vote after the first candidate.

City Attorney John Crone replied, no, there would be no deliberation on either of the candidates. Council would fill out their score cards and those score cards would be collected by either Mr. Crone or the Clerk. He reiterated there would be no deliberation among Councilmembers after any of the interviews. Strictly a scoring process.

Alderman Lail asked if both ballots would be turned in together.

City Attorney John Crone commented that is correct, there would be no discussion or deliberation after.

City Manager Warren Wood clarified the question was would Council hold on to both forms after the first scoring. Would they take the ballots up after the first scoring, after the first candidate was interviewed?

March 14, 2018

City Attorney John Crone responded yes.

City Manager Warren Wood confirmed they would take the ballots up after the interview.

City Attorney John Crone advised he would select those from Council after the first interview and submit those to the Clerk.

City Manager Warren Wood asked that Council vote in whole numbers.

City Attorney John Crone commented that is a good point, whole numbers, please. He asked Council if they had any questions.

Mayor Guess asked if there were any further questions from Council for discussion on the procedure which had been described. He advised there was a motion and a second. He took the vote. The motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney John Crone asked the Clerk to randomly select a candidate.

City Clerk Debbie Miller drew Ryan Edwards.

City Attorney John Crone asked Mr. Edwards to the podium.

City Clerk Debbie Miller handed out the evaluation forms to City Council.

City Attorney John Crone advised Council may like to take a few moments to familiarize themselves with the questions and the process because they hadn't seen the questions in advance.

City Manager Warren Wood advised that the questions related back to the categories they were evaluating on.

Alderman Lail asked if they could read the categories they were evaluating on to the audience.

City Manager Warren Wood explained there were six categories and there would be questions which relate back to these six categories. The first category was role comprehension. Understanding the role as a member of City Council. Decision making, there were two questions which would be for decision making. There were two questions relating to inclusion and engagement of stakeholders. There was also a question related to strategic thinking and then an overall broad category related to oral communication which related to all the questions.

Mayor Guess asked if there were any questions from Council on how to score. He asked if everyone understood the method.

Council understood. Candidate Charlotte Williams was lead out of Council Chambers.

Alderman Lail directed the first question to Mr. Edwards. What is the role of a City Councilmember in the Council-Manager form of government?

Mr. Ryan Edwards commented his view was a Councilmember needs to make sure they are portraying the view that is set forth in terms of the vision of the City. Which provides from the Council standpoint, a system to assist in setting the overall direction of the City. That includes long term, strategic and financial plans. Assisting in setting forth that vision and make sure that it is achieved. He thought that was at its core carrying out the vision of the City. That is what the Councilmember does. That has a lot of different facets to it but its core to him was the vision and role of the Councilmembers.

Mayor Guess asked concerning decision making, what are your two top goals if you become a City Councilmember.

Mr. Edwards wanted to make sure he was being clear. He advised it was centered around questions they were first asked. He thought that was communication of progress of the Bond referendum and the implementation of that. That would be a big goal. The promotion of our City. The good things that we have going on. That would be a big goal of his making sure, just as Council does on a daily basis, is carrying out and being a part of the team to make sure that our citizens are made aware of those good things. Also that we are communicating in the way they feel like they can be communicated with. That is not necessarily always the way that we think they need to be communicated with. Taking those two things, he thought was very important. Clearly make sure in those two things that we are taking into account all the citizens of our community. Those were his two biggest things.

Alderman Seaver asked in creating City policy, please give an example of an issue that you would find difficult to compromise on.

Mr. Edwards thought that anytime you sit on a Council you have to think on a daily basis in your core of beliefs, but then also as a Councilmember you have to think of terms of extracting your personal views away from what individuals in your Ward, or the citizens, and making sure that it promotes the vision. He thought that went back to the first question, the role of a City Councilmember. In terms of a particularly issue, he thought one that he would find to be difficult to compromise on was anything that would have a great impact on the quality of life with

March 14, 2018

individuals in his Ward. That was the reason he would sit in that seat. He asked what that could be. He just was asked the question of how long until we move some dirt in that park. That might not be a major issue in terms for one person to another, but he thought at its core it was the concern of a Ward member and that is as important to them as another member. What he wouldn't compromise in just a situation like that, is not saying, "Well, I believe", he would say "let me find out that exact date." He knew they presented, but he didn't remember the exact date from the previous meeting that they had with the Commission presenting, but there was some movement in terms of getting some plans associated with just that example of the park. What he wouldn't compromise on was his integrity and the fact of finding out the right answer for that citizen. He didn't know if that was as detailed as Council would like, but he would be glad to expand on it if they had something in particular.

Alderwoman Williams asked how important it is to you that the entire City Council works well together and gets along.

Mr. Edwards thought it was very important that they work well together. That serves the City better. That certainly takes precedents over getting along. He thought that it was best that they would all get along. If you have got different Wards and different individual opinions, it is going to be hard to sometimes come to an agreement. In his past, in his role of working with the President of the Piedmont Educational Foundation, that was a situation where he was a younger individual taking over the role of Presidency and it was a longstanding foundation. A lot of people had blood, sweat and tears in that organization. They were able to take it in a direction for the betterment of the foundation and got the board together even with their different views. The way he facilitated that was through multiple conversations. He thought that sometimes communication was the key in a situation where individuals don't necessarily get along or just don't have the same opinion on something. They may be thinking about voting a little bit different, but listen to their side and see their concerns is the way you get through that. He thought that was integral the communication of that. Working well together, communication solves a lot of that.

Alderman Zagaroli asked Mr. Edwards to give an example of how he would advocate for diverse viewpoints to be considered and how the City should seek them out when they appear to be missing.

Mr. Edwards responded the first thing that comes to his mind when seeing that, he didn't think that it was the view of anybody on Council by any means, was not to make knee jerk reactions. You can get yourself in a situation where maybe you don't take everyone into consideration if you make very quick decisions. He thought it was important to make sure that they consider the whole City as part of the vision of the City. The different viewpoints. There are going to be numerous viewpoints. As many citizens as we have we probably have just as many viewpoints. If you make quick decisions and don't seek out communication with your Ward members or those amongst the entire community, he thought that is where you get yourself into a situation where you are not seen from the public or our constituents as being inclusive of a number of different viewpoints. Having conversations, and having communications and being a part of forums. Attending forums that maybe put on in different areas of the City. He would see his self in this role as attending those forums but also advocating to have them if they are not in place, so that we are seeking out those different viewpoints. The City is rather large just not within our own street that we live on. It is important to get outside of that.

Alderwoman Patton asked how he would apply strategic thinking to developing policy for City Council.

Mr. Edwards responded on a daily basis, when he hears the word strategic, it is putting forth a plan and looking at the plan over a long period of time. In his every day profession that is what he does for individual clients. In terms of being a member of City Council and applying that level of thinking in this role, it would be centered around the vision and how we can set up avenues to take into account, gather and communicate with the numerous viewpoints and diverse individuals that we have in this community. Making sure that we take into consideration everyone's viewpoint and then developing a plan and a process for our way of thinking. Much like the economic development program that is being put forth. The next step is putting forth a planned process. By this point we will have this part of the plan completed or we will have these different measurables in place so people can see our improvements and our progress. At the core of that is knowing the vision of the City and making sure we are inclusive of everything and having a process for that and working together on it.

Mayor Guess thanked Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Edwards asked if there were any further questions.

Mayor Guess advised Council would stick with the list so everyone got the same questions.

Councilmembers filled out their evaluation forms.

Staff brought Ms. Williams back into Council Chambers and lead Mr. Edwards out of Council Chambers.

City Attorney John Crone collected the evaluation forms and handed them to the Clerk.

City Clerk Debbie Miller handed out the evaluation forms for Ms. Williams to City Council.

March 14, 2018

Alderman Lail asked Ms. Williams what the role of City Councilmembers were in the Council-Manager form of government.

Ms. Charlotte Williams mentioned that City Manager Warren Wood comes to her class every semester and he explains it to his students. She commented that Hickory was one of the first cities that adopted the Council-Manager form which was to eradicate the political part of governing. Big cities like Chicago, where she used to work, had the Mayor-Council form of government and the Mayor actually had a lot of power. The Council-Manager form of government basically relinquishes that political part. City Council hires the Manager to take care of the day to day. The City Council being the policy making part of that partnership and then the Manager doing the day to day hiring and management of the City departments and services.

Mayor Guess asked what her top two goals were if she became a City Councilmember.

Ms. Williams replied that was an interesting question because she thought a lot of what would shape, her personal goals, would relate to the learning curve of finding out what is happening with the City. She had been very, very involved in following the Bond Commission programs and the process and where we are going. She referenced the last Council meeting was interesting because we are close in terms of bids. She knew that City processes, governmental process can be slow. She thought her goal being on the Council would be to be someone that could actually give a different perspective, perhaps, to the Council relating to different communities as well as different issues that she has seen in her over almost 25 years here that she feels that we really need to address. Some of them are just "nuts and bolts" issues, in terms of infrastructure that we need to deal with, but also in terms of what they talked about, how do we really get that message out about Hickory. She just heard something on the radio about what Charlotte is doing. They have their top ten reasons to move to Charlotte. She could easily think of the top ten reasons to move to Hickory. We really need to market that more. She said last time we are our own best kept secret. She really wanted to see Hickory go beyond. She had heard about the Main Street program in Waxhaw. She knew that had been talked about a little bit. We can do some things to really promote Hickory to make it a place to stay. She also has the goal, because of her connection with Lenoir-Rhyne, and the work she does to really look at ways. She knew there was this effort and the population and demographic we really need are working young adults. She would like to see Hickory really connect with Lenoir-Rhyne and really retain those college students. A lot of companies are looking for trained and trainable skilled workers. She thought that was an area that we could really develop to attract more companies to settle here as well.

Alderman Seaver advised question number three was on decision making. He asked in creating City policy, please give an example of an issue that she would find difficult to compromise on.

Ms. Williams thought that was a difficult question for her because she actually prides herself in being a compromiser. She knew she has her issues that she feels strongly about, but when you are dealing with five other people, including other staff people, and different recommendations and the community that they you are representing, it is sometimes very difficult to compromise, but she felt that it was important that they really listen to each other. They listen to everyone's point of view. Everything is a give and take. There would probably some issues that she would find difficult to compromise on where there would be issues of social justice or fairness in terms of different sectors that may not be included in discussions. What she sees in how Council is operating, including this process, she feels good about the transparency that is occurring within City Council right now, and to be honest she wants to be a part of that decision making process. She assured Council that she really enjoys the process of making decisions. Whether they all agree at one time or another, coming to that agreement at the end is something that she had been involved in all her life, on the School Board, and other policy making boards as well.

Alderman Williams asked how important it was to her that the entire City Council gets along and works well together.

Ms. Williams thought very. When she joined the School Board everybody was fairly congenial and she thought they got along, but there were some strong opinions. One of the things that they worked towards, at that point that she joined, was that even though they may disagree with one another about certain things, they really wanted to try to come to a place, as a public entity, where they could come together in a single voice. That did not always work, but for the most part it did. The School Board was a little different because they had their work session and then the public meeting which was held in Council Chambers. The work session, even though it was public and everybody could hear, was the place they hashed out a lot of things. She felt like it was important. We don't always have to agree, but it is important to respect each other, respect each other's opinions and to try to come with a single voice. She thought that was important for the whole City of Hickory. In terms of the argument of having an at-large system that seems to be the argument, so that it doesn't get in terms of different areas having second Ward fighting against first Ward, or sixth Ward. She thought for this City Council it was very important that they all get along.

Alderman Zagaroli asked Ms. Williams to give an example of how she would advocate for diverse viewpoints to be considered and how the City should seek them out when they appear to be missing.

Ms. Williams thought they need to get people at the table. That is one way. She had this a number of times everywhere she had worked. They do this with students at Lenoir-Rhyne. "Well we gave them an opportunity, but they didn't come to the meeting, they didn't show up you know". "We have surveyed them, no one returned the survey". She thought there were some ways that they could get at reaching certain groups. One of the things that they have often noticed with

March 14, 2018

School Board especially, is they have to get out into the communities. They were starting to actually do this once a quarter, meeting at different schools versus the City Council Chambers. She thought that worked. They actually went out into the places where people were. First of all they feel more comfortable. People don't want to always come to City Council. It would be an opportunity to get staff, it doesn't have to be each of Council, maybe get staff out there, hold more community meetings and really find ways to collect different views and even use community leaders to get information, collect information, or even convey what is happening. It doesn't have to be the people always being at every meeting, which would be really very hard. She thought that we have to meet people where they are, but also continue to invite people to join in on the process.

Alderwoman Patton asked how she would apply strategic thinking to developing policy for City Council.

Ms. Williams knew that Council came up with priorities and plans. She considers herself a strategic thinker. She presumed that Council had their strategic plans and some of their goals that they had already talked about. She knew that Council was having a retreat. Those are some of the ways in which Council has an opportunity to do some idea sharing and really come up with things outside of the structure. Where you can be more creative, bring people in. She thought one of the things that really helps was not making policy in a vacuum. There are a lot interesting things going on in other places. Bringing experts, or people, or decision makers from other areas that have gone through the challenges that we are going through and have really broken through and really been able to maybe make it to that next level that we want to be at. She thought that it was also listening to others who have already been there, but also to give Council an opportunity to really do some cohesive, inclusive strategic planning in terms of looking beyond just the day to day, but where do we really want to be and how are we going to get there.

Mayor Guess thanked Ms. Williams.

City Councilmembers filled out their evaluation forms.

Staff brought Mr. Edwards back to Council Chambers.

City Attorney John Crone collected the evaluation forms and gave them to the Clerk to tally the scores.

Mayor Guess thanked the two candidates for all the work that they put into this. It wasn't an easy task on that end of the desk, but it certainly wasn't an easy task on this end of the desk either. It was not something that anyone on Council took lightly. They all put a lot of thought and work into the process. He advised assuming that there is a person that scored the highest and there is not a tie, Council has their Council retreat tomorrow at CVCC, which has been planned for quite a while. The person who scores the highest tonight would be invited to that public meeting, as well as everyone else, not just that person, but depending on that person's schedule they are certainly invited to come tomorrow and participate in that. The ordinance requires that whoever Council appoints that they swear them in at the next scheduled meeting. Even though the next meeting is a retreat, it is Council's next scheduled meeting, so that person, assuming we don't have a tie tonight, would be formerly sworn in at Council's retreat tomorrow. Council realized that this was a real tight schedule and that they wouldn't be able to have family and friends and relatives present for that. They would also do a formal swearing in at the next regular Council meeting in Council Chambers where they would have the opportunity to invite anyone that they would like to have present for that formal swearing in. That is how Council would proceed with this assuming there is not a tie tonight.

Alderman Lail mentioned that someone would have the honor of a double oath. No one on Council had taken a double oath.

Mayor Guess commented that was correct. He asked if he had explained that correctly.

City Manager Warren Wood advised it would be based on availability. It is short notice, assuming that everybody is available.

Mayor Guess commented that whoever is selected if not available to come to the retreat tomorrow, it is perfectly okay. Council understood that was such short notice.

City Manager Warren Wood commented typically they do have family and friends come and it is a celebration and there is a little event beforehand in the atrium before the regular City Council meeting.

Mayor Guess asked the date.

City Manager Warren Wood advised March 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Guess commented assuming they can make tomorrow's meeting.

City Attorney John Crone advised in the event of a tie Council would address that at their Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Alderman Lail mentioned that the Clerk was tallying the scores. He commented from his perspective he was looking forward to working with whomever, Charlotte Williams or Ryan Edwards. They both had presented themselves well, they both had great resumes and good

March 14, 2018

interviews. He regrets that one of them was not going to be selected tonight. He thought a lot of each of them.

Mayor Guess commented that he would say the same thing for the other candidates. They could have selected any of the eight candidates. They were all well qualified candidates.

Alderman Seaver commented out of all the candidates he would have liked to have picked the qualities he liked from each one, and build their own. It just can't happen in today's world.

Alderman Williams commented that both candidates did really well, they both are winners. Council would be lucky to have either of them, we as a City would be lucky to have either of them.

Alderwoman Patton thanked both of the candidates for going through this process. It had been a good process for Council and for the citizens of Hickory.

City Attorney John Crone commented this process makes you proud to live in Hickory in his opinion.

Alderman Seaver commented that the City of Hickory was the real winners, we have such good quality people that live here. He says that often and he will continue saying that.

Mayor Guess mentioned that in about 20 months they would have to face the real election. A harder election.

City Clerk Debbie Miller handed the tallied score sheet to City Attorney John Crone.

City Attorney John Crone advised the results that he had in his hand were public record, as were the scores of each Councilmember. The cumulative score for Charlotte Williams was 317 and the cumulative score for Ryan Edwards was 304. He commented you can't get any closer than that. He wished he could have them both sitting up there. He entertained a motion from Council to confirm the score.

Alderman Lail moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton confirmation of the vote tally. The motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney John Crone advised for the record he requested a four majority vote. He thought Council had done that, but for the record, he requested that Council move to approve Ms. Williams as the next Councilperson.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Mayor Guess to approve Charlotte Williams as the next City Councilmember for Ward 2. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Guess congratulated Ms. Williams. He asked if Ms. Williams or Mr. Edwards wanted to speak.

Ms. Williams thanked Council for the process. She knew it was difficult.

Mr. Edwards congratulated Ms. Williams.

City Attorney John Crone commented two class acts right there.

Mayor Guess commented this meeting will be adjourned, anyone that is available tomorrow, they are welcome to come to the public meeting, Council's retreat at CVCC at 8:00 a.m. in the morning. He asked for any further questions.

V. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

---

Mayor

---

City Clerk