

***ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – MARCH 31, 2020  
MINUTES***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, March 31, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus, and Jamie Barthel

Councilmembers absent: None

Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson

***REVIEW/DISCUSS CITY COUNCIL VACANCY APPLICATIONS***

Mr. Dickinson indicated the Council is asked to review and discuss the ten applications submitted for the Councilmember vacancy. If Council were to conduct interviews that date would be April 6, 2020.

Mr. Dickinson explained before tonight's meeting the Council was given a copy of each application and asked to rank their top five applicants. He received back from Council two top 5 picks and two top 4 picks. With the ranking results from the Councilmembers Mr. Dickinson created a Candidate Application Tabulation spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was handed out to the Councilmembers for review.

Mayor Trude asked the Council to review the tabulation to make sure their rankings are correct.

Mayor Trude stated the issue is the term is very short and staff is very busy. She would be fine making an appointment tonight. She asked how many interviews they would like to conduct. She would be fine with 3-4 interviews.

Councilmember Holthus asked how long the term is. Mr. Dickinson answered the term would go until January 5, 2021. Mr Dickinson continued the appointment and swearing in would be at the next Council meeting on April 7, 2020.

Councilmember Holthus stated it is a nine-month appointment, if a current commissioner is appointed does the commissioner have to vacate their seat on the commission. Mr. Dickinson replied that decision is up to the Council.

Mayor Trude indicated 3 of the top 5 are currently serving on a commission. She stated right now the priority is filling the vacant council seat.

Mayor Trude proposed the top four are brought in for an interview. Councilmember Bukkila suggested they interview either three or five since there is a tie. Councilmember Holthus asked if they still want to do interviews with the current health concerns. Mayor Trude asked if they would be ready to appoint someone tonight. Mayor Trude and Councilmember Holthus indicated they are ready to appoint tonight, Councilmembers Bukkila and Barthel prefer the interview process.

Mayor Trude suggested an interview time of 30 minutes for each applicant. Councilmember Barthel stated he agrees with the 30-minute interview, however with current COVID19 situation does the vacancy really need to be filled at this time. Mr. Dickinson replied Minnesota State Statute states “you shall appoint as quickly as possible.” Councilmember Bukkila stated that does not provide for a national emergency. She continued stating there has to be a responsible decision given the circumstances and that Councilmember Barthel is not wrong.

Mayor Trude stated normally everyone would be interviewed, that is the best way to get to know someone but during the current situation with the risk of leaving their home and coming in she feels 3-4 interviews would be best, she feels the face to face is important. She also feels the position should be filled as soon as possible incase one of the current Councilmembers were to get sick. Mayor Trude continued by interviewing the top four that would include one of Councilmember Bukkila’s top picks.

Mr. Dickinson stated he would contact the candidates to see if they are comfortable coming in for an in-person interview.

**Motion** by Trude, Seconded by Holthus to interview the top four candidates.

Mayor Trude asked for further discussion.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she would like all top five candidates interviewed.

Councilmember Barthel indicated Council was to submit their top five candidates and he thinks all top five should be interviewed.

Motion failed with 2 ayes (Trude and Holthus) and 2 nays (Bukkila and Barthel).

**Motion** by Bukkila, Seconded by Barthel to request interviews with the top five candidates on the Vacancy Candidate Tabulation. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Trude indicated the following would then be interviewed:

Peter Beberg

Ted Butler  
Bert Koehler IV  
Jason Van Hecke  
Mary VanderLaan

Councilmember Barthel asked if the interviews will be 30 minutes for each candidate. He indicated he was elected to make decisions on behalf of the people who elected him, but now he is going to pick someone that is going to make decisions that has never been elected. He finds that very difficult, the more time they have for the interview the better.

Mayor Trude stated this is a very short term and for someone that hasn't served the City it will take time to get up to speed.

Mayor Trude indicated 30 minutes for each interview, now a meeting time needs to be set.

**Motion** by Barthel, Seconded by Bukkila, to schedule a Special Council Meeting on April 6, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. to conduct candidate interviews. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Trude asked Mr. Dickinson to contact the candidates. She asked if the Council would entertain the idea of these candidates using their applications for the Park and Recreation Commission and EDA vacancies, if that were to appeal to the applicants. Councilmember Bukkila suggested re-advertising the vacancies.

Mayor Trude indicated they haven't set a plan for the commission vacancies, but at the next council meeting it should be looked at.

Mr. Dickinson explained the commission meetings have been postponed as far out as possible. The City Council does do official business such as contracts and there are timelines to be met. The Council does have items that need to be taken care of timely.

Mayor Trude asked for opinions on the people that have applied for this, should they be viewed for a position on the Park and Recreation Commission and EDA. Councilmember Bukkila feels it is very presumptuous of an assumed vacancy for commissions that was advertised separately.

Councilmember Holthus stated it should be up to the candidate.

Councilmember Bukkila stated advertise one event at a time when it occurs. To "stack the deck" or preempt people that met a deadline for an opening is disingenuous to the general public to change the rules after the fact.

Mayor Trude indicated the vacancies were advertised in December and it didn't do very well, it was advertised again with a deadline of the middle of March and then a councilmember vacancy came up. We still have an opening on the Park and Recreation Commission with another potential opening.

***OTHER BUSINESS***

Mr. Dickinson gave an updated, indicating the City is limiting some services, they are still doing the basic services that are required. Still issuing building permits and conducting building inspections. Being extremely cautious with inspections for existing and occupied homes, doing inspections on exterior structures relative to rentals. Staff is not going to be going into rentals. Construction contracts and projects are moving along quite well. It is very important at the next council meeting to get road project bids approved. Contractors want to get those projects started. Regarding COVID19 the City has been impacted from a staff perspective. The top priority is the safety of staff and residents.

Mayor Trude indicated the Mayor's list serve of the League of MN Cities website showing most cities have adopted an emergency resolution, there has been a lot of discussion on social distancing in the workplace and what cities should do regarding playgrounds.

Mr. Dickinson stated the City has put cautionary signs up at parks and closed the playgrounds. It may be something that can be pulled back on in May when the weather gets warmer.

Mayor Trude thanked Mr. Dickinson for all his work with staffing during these uncertain times.

***ADJOURNMENT***

***Motion*** by Bukkila, Seconded by Barthel, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hartner, Recording Secretary