

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING

August 14, 2023

The City Commission met this evening for a workshop in the Commission Chambers. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM with the following in attendance.

Mayor	:	Hubert B. Smith
Commissioners	:	Catherine Hamilton
	:	Christine Wasdin
	:	Edward Crosby
	:	Clark T. Browning, IV
City Clerk	:	Tammy Johnson
Police Chief	:	Joe Hart
Fire Chief	:	Tommy Mayville
City Attorney	:	Hayward Dykes
Public Works Director	:	Nathan Kelley (camera)
Recorder	:	Beth Millsaps

Others in Attendance (Not Inclusive) J D Cameron, Kelly Irwin, Bob Webb, Carl Scott

1. City Manager/City Administrator Position

Mr. Dykes said this workshop had been set up to discuss what type of city manager/administrator that we would be interested in and whether the city would like to make this a position or not. Mr. Dykes has provided a sample copy of an ordinance to create such a position.

Mayor Smith said to remove someone from this position he thinks a 3 to 2 vote should be needed not 4 to 1. Also, providing that this person must reside in the City of Valparaiso, but we should allow them time to move into Valparaiso, or possibly remove the resident requirements all together. Mayor Smith said he also believes that the department heads are the ones who should decide what to do with their personnel, not the city manager.

Comm. Wasdin said if a worker has a problem with a department head this person would give them someone to go to. Comm. Hamilton asked if he is worried about the hiring and firing? Mayor Smith said it is his opinion that hiring and firing should be taken care of by the department heads. Mrs. Johnson said the city manager could work with department heads on personnel.

Mr. Dykes said in paragraph 9, it states "the city manager, through the department heads or department supervisors, determine day-to-day work schedules of city personnel, to include all departments of the city. Any differences of opinion regarding city personnel between the city manager and clerk or chief of police shall be presented to the city commission." Mr. Dykes said he doubts a manager would want to schedule what each department needs to accomplish in a day. He said the city manager would provide the resources to the department heads. Comm. Wasdin said the manager and department heads should have staff meetings and work together, not minute to minute operations. She feels this position is more of a big picture person. Provides central oversight, helps with the issues the citizens now come to a certain commissioner on this person would take care of that, be the city representative.

1 Mayor Smith said he believes it is best to leave hiring and firing for the department heads, not the
2 city manager. Chief Hart said all department heads discuss with one another if they are looking for
3 another opinion the city manager would be another avenue to talk with. Comm. Wasdin asked if Chief
4 Hart and Mayor Smith don't wish to have the city manager oversee the departments hiring and firings.

5 Chief Hart said no, thought city manager should be over all the things such as going between the
6 Commissioners and Mayor and department heads.

7 Mr. Dykes said he hears the concerns and can go back and massage the words if necessary.

8 Mr. Bob Webb, 106 Choctaw Cove, asked if we hire many employees that have left, back? He said
9 with the police department continues to have Chief Hart as the one who sees who is hired along with
10 his Captain, but the city manager could be a part of that conversation. Chief Hart said he has no
11 problem with that he just does not want him to be able to pick up an application and tell me this is the
12 man you are going to hire. Mayor Smith said that is the point he is trying to make.

13 Mr. Dykes said the city manager's position would be another set of eyes. He said we do not have
14 to change the charter, delegate to the manager some of the things the Commission has to do. Comm.
15 Hamilton said the city manager will serve at the pleasure of the Commission.

16 Comm. Browning asked how is this not changing our charter? Mr. Dykes said the charter allows
17 the commission to create any department it wishes. This would be a new department with a new
18 department head, the City Manager. You are trying to delegate some things you can delegate as much
19 as you want, or you can make it benign and not have a lot of authority. Mr. Dykes said a manager
20 would be there to do their best to delegate to help the city run more efficiently.

21 Mr. Dykes said on the residence issue, if the city makes it mandatory for the manager to live within
22 city limits you might be limiting yourself to who you can hire. Mr. Dykes said this is the first look at
23 this, Mayor Smith said he believes we need to move forward to the manager/administrator. Comm.
24 Hamilton said looking to make the city as a whole more efficient.

25 Comm. Browning said manager will want power to build the team they need. Mr. Dykes said at
26 first there might be some personality conflicts, or the manager might see ineffectiveness. Mayor Smith
27 said not trying to be difficult, he would like the manager to help run things, help with grants, work with
28 the Commission. Comm. Wasdin said we could just cross out #14 they cannot hire or fire. Mr. Dykes
29 said we could have language that says city manager with input from department head. Mayor and
30 Comm. Hamilton stated they were good with that. Comm. Wasdin said she would not want to be a
31 department head if she could not hire and fire her own people so let's take them out of the HR loop.
32 Comm. Browning asked what is the city manager going to do? Commission Wasdin listed work on
33 grants, public affairs, it is the face of the city, the intermediary between the departments that is what
34 this is, not somebody's boss. Mr. Dykes said on residency the city could change it to say the
35 Commission may require residency unless waived he said most places are waiving this requirement.

1 JD Cameron, 267 S Bayshore Drive, said he strongly encourages the Commission to be very specific in
2 their language.

3 Comm. Hamilton said we have checked out a few points and meet again once Hayward has
4 changed it. Comm. Wasdin said do we agree it takes 4 commissioners to fire? Comm. Hamilton said
5 no, can fire with a 3 to 2 vote. It was the consensus of the commission that it will take three votes for
6 both an appointment and removal of a city manger.

7 Mr. Dykes said the Commission could make any edits they would like and either email them to
8 Mrs. Johnson or himself and he will address.

9 **ADJOURN**

10 With time running close to the regular Commission meeting, the Mayor adjourned this meeting at
11 5:54. There will be another meeting on September 11 @ 5PM, to continue working establishing city
12 manager/administrator position.

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Hubert B. Smith
Mayor

Catherine Hamilton
Chair, VBCS

ATTEST:

Tammy Johnson, CMC
City Clerk

***A recording of the August 14, 2023, Commission meeting will be kept on the City's secure
file server as a permanent part of these minutes.***