

1 **MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING** of the City Council of the City of Orange City, Florida, held  
2 on Tuesday, October 06, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, 201 N. Holly Avenue, Orange City.

3  
4 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

5  
6 The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Blair and roll call was taken.

7  
8 **ROLL CALL**

9  
10 PRESENT: Mayor Gary A. Blair; Council Member; Jeff Allebach, Jim Mahoney, Martin Harper; City  
11 Attorney Bill Reischmann; City Manager Dale Arrington; Public Information Coordinator Danielle  
12 FitzPatrick.

13  
14 TELEPHONICALLY: Vice Mayor O'Connor, Council Member Crippen, and Council Member Kelli  
15 Marks

16  
17 **INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

18  
19 Council Member Harper gave the invocation. Everyone stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

20  
21 **2. Discussion and Action**

22  
23 City Clerk Interview Process

24  
25 Jeremy Wiggins explained that this is a special meeting to discuss the City Clerk candidate selection. He  
26 explained there are four tiers of candidates that are meant to be used as a tool not as a guide. There is one  
27 candidate, Julie Herring, who qualifies for veteran's preference, and that the Council is required to  
28 interview the candidate. Vice Mayor O'Connor voiced a concern that the candidate did not meet the  
29 minimum qualifications in the job description and therefore did not meet veteran's preference. Mr.  
30 Wiggins said that he interpreted the candidate's time working in the military as government experience.  
31 The City Attorney said staff has condensed this information and ultimately that it is up to the Council.

32  
33 The City Manager stated to the Council that Danielle FitzPatrick will be serving the role of the clerk this  
34 evening as we asked the interim City Clerk Melani Beringer to not be a part of the official process since  
35 she is an applicant.

36  
37 Mr. Mahoney stated he has a different view than the Vice Mayor on that subject. He says it is up to each  
38 person to determine how much they are willing to look outside the box. He stated that even without the  
39 veteran's preference, he would have selected Ms. Herring as a candidate.

40  
41 Mr. Harper stated that Ms. Herring is a Juris doctorate which he considers a unique qualification.

42  
43 Mr. O'Connor stated that she also made his list.

44  
45 Ms. Marks stated that she did not think the qualifications were there for Ms. Herring. She then asked what  
46 the process is to remove veteran's preference from Ms. Herring.

47

1 Mr. Wiggins stated the Council needs to determine if the candidate meets the minimum qualifications.  
2 Ms. Arrington said she thinks it is better to air on the side of the caution and to interview her.

3  
4 Mr. Wiggins went over the minimum and preferred requirements for the City Clerk position. He then went  
5 over the options for Council to narrow the candidates down: written ballots, email or to verbally express  
6 desired candidates.

7  
8 The Council decided to select via a ballot email with Vice Mayor O'Connor and Council Member Crippen  
9 saying theirs verbally.

10  
11 Devlin Moore displayed the voting list of the Council's selected candidates on the overhead screen:  
12 Melani Beringer 7, Julie Herring 7, Kathleen Sotero 6, Julia Hewitt 6, Stacy Tebo 5, Cynthia Hood 2,  
13 Christine Johnson 2

14  
15 Mr. Wiggins stated that there is a natural break with five candidates receiving over five votes. Mayor Blair  
16 asked if the five candidates are within the central Florida area. Mr. Wiggins confirmed that the five  
17 candidates are all within the Central Florida area.

18  
19 Mr. Harper stated the city has an internal applicant who is serving as the interim clerk and was selected  
20 by all seven Council members to be interviewed. He then made a motion that the Council should appoint  
21 Melani Beringer. The motion was seconded by Ms. Marks.

22  
23 Mr. Mahoney stated that as a Council they decided to follow a process and they should follow through  
24 with the process that they agreed to. Vice Mayor O'Connor and Mr. Crippen agreed with Mr. Mahoney.

25  
26 Mr. Harper withdrew his motion and Ms. Marks withdrew her second.

27  
28 Mr. Mahoney stated the Council should discuss what they are looking for as a whole.

29  
30 Mr. Allebach stated that they need to select candidates and then independently decide what skills are  
31 needed for the clerk's office and then select the best candidate for that.

32  
33 Ms. Arrington stated that now is the time to talk about which candidates they prefer and why. If the  
34 Council feels someone should be added to the list, this is the time to do that. She then stated that the  
35 Council will need to decide the interview process, the method for voting for the clerk, the employment  
36 contract, and interviewing techniques. She stated that during the discussion on the interview process or  
37 during interviewing techniques, the Council can go over what they are looking for in a candidate. Ms.  
38 Arrington stated that the Council should ask each candidate the same questions.

39  
40 Mr. Reischmann stated that the Council still needs to determine whom they would like to interview.

41  
42 Vice Mayor O'Connor stated that he thinks the council should discuss if there is anyone else they would  
43 like to interview besides those on the initial list.

44  
45 Ms. Marks stated when she reviewed candidates, she wanted them to have deputy clerk experience and  
46 also their work experience in other places and how long they held those positions. She also stated the  
47 Council may want to remove a candidate, Stacy Tebo, due to her work history and length of time at each  
48 place.

1  
2 **Council Member Allebach moved to approve the City Clerk candidates with five votes and higher,**  
3 **seconded by Council Member Crippen, the motion passed by a 6/1 roll call vote of the City Council.**  
4 **(Mahoney was the dissenting vote)**  
5

6 Mr. Wiggins then stated the next item the Council needs to discuss is what type of interview they  
7 would like to utilize. The last time the Council had to select a City Clerk, the Council conducted  
8 one-on-one interviews between each candidate and each Council Member, followed by group  
9 interviews with the entire council and each candidate. Mr. Wiggins explained that Council could  
10 follow that same process or select only individual or group interviews between each Council  
11 Member and each candidate. Mayor Blair stated he prefers the one-on-one and group interviews.  
12 Mr. Mahoney agreed and definitely wanted group interviews, with discouraging the other  
13 applicants from sitting in the group interviews. Mr. Harper stated that one-on-one interviews and  
14 group interviews are a lot. Ms. Arrington explained that one-on-one and group interviews are  
15 expected by the candidates for a position of this nature. Mr. Crippen stated he liked the idea of  
16 both individual and group interviews. He would also like to use Go2Meeting for his interviews  
17 and Ms. Arrington said the City may be able to accommodate that. Vice Mayor O'Connor said  
18 he supports group interviews but isn't sure about the individual interviews. Ms. Marks stated she  
19 supports both individual and group interviews. Mr. Harper suggested that the Council could use  
20 a moderator for group interviews to ask questions to the candidates and the Council could take  
21 notes. He does not want to do individual interviews. Mr. Allebach stated individual interviews  
22 are needed to help determine to get a better feeling about a candidate.  
23

24 **Council Member Allebach moved to approve individual interviews followed by group**  
25 **interviews, seconded by Council Member Mahoney, the motion passed by a 7/0 roll call vote**  
26 **of the City Council.**  
27

28 Mr. Wiggins stated the next item to discuss is interview questions. Mr. Mahoney stated that he  
29 would prefer for HR to prepare questions for the group interviews but with the flexibility to add  
30 questions based on what the Council learns during the individual interviews. Mr. Wiggins stated  
31 that the Council can designate a moderator if they would like, whether it be a Council member or  
32 a staff member. Mr. Crippen stated he would like Mr. Wiggins to make sure his individual  
33 questions are acceptable. Vice Mayor O'Connor asked what date is proposed for the interviews.  
34 Mr. Wiggins stated the proposed date Oct 17. Vice Mayor O'Connor advised that he cannot attend  
35 on Oct. 17. The Council then decided that interviews will occur on Oct. 24.  
36

37 **Council Member Mahoney moved to approve the date for the City Clerk interviews on Oct.**  
38 **24, seconded by Council Member Allebach, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of**  
39 **the City Council.**  
40

41 Ms. Arrington stated that the Council still needs to discuss the method of voting and contract  
42 negotiations. The City Council was provided a list of potential questions and they have the  
43 flexibility to build upon questions if they would like. Mayor Blair expressed concern that the  
44 Council may have too many questions. Mr. Harper would like to cater questions to candidates  
45 based on their respective resumes but would run them through HR first. Mr. Allebach said all  
46 Council members can do that during their individual interviews.  
47

1 Ms. Marks asked if the group interview responses will be timed. Mr. Wiggins suggested that the  
2 Council let the candidates answer the questions in the time needed but limit the interviews to a  
3 set time, whether it be 30 minutes or one hour. Mr. Mahoney agreed that there needs to be a  
4 structure with a set time. The Council discussed that group interviews should be approximately  
5 30 minutes per person. Ms. Arrington stated that when everyone arrives on Oct. 24, they will go  
6 over the structure of the interview and what to expect.

7  
8 7:58 pm Council took a break

9  
10 8:03 Council meeting resumed.

11  
12 Mr. Wiggins stated that the next item to discuss is how to select the City Clerk after the interview  
13 process. There are several different options for the Council to use. Mayor Blair stated there should  
14 be a backup candidate in case the top pick can't accept the job. Mr. Allebach prefers the two-  
15 round ballot system to get the top candidates. Mr. Mahoney stated he would like to express why  
16 he prefers a certain candidate. Mr. Wiggins clarified that the Council can discuss how they feel  
17 about the candidates after the last interview, prior to voting. If discussion needs to continue  
18 between rounds of voting, it can occur. Vice Mayor O'Connor stated he likes two-round ballot  
19 system and he would also like a second pick candidate as a backup. The Council decided that they  
20 will also use the two-round ballot method to select a backup.

21  
22 **Council Member Allebach moved to use the two-round ballot method to select the top pick**  
23 **and another time to select the backup, seconded by Council Member Harper, the motion**  
24 **passed by a unanimous voice vote of the City Council.**

25  
26 The next item to discuss is the city clerk contract. Mr. Wiggins stated he can pass out the previous  
27 city clerk contract for the Council to review and the Council can discuss what to revise at the  
28 special meeting when the interviews take place. Mr. Mahoney asked what leeway they have  
29 legally to make revisions from the contract. Ms. Arrington stated that the prior contract provided  
30 that the City Clerk receive standard city benefits. She also stated that she needs parameters from  
31 the Council on salary, workdays, and so forth, so she can properly negotiate with the candidate.  
32 Mr. Mahoney stated that he is comfortable with Ms. Arrington negotiating the contract for the  
33 City Clerk. Mr. Allebach stated that he does not want to see the salary raised.

34  
35 Mr. Wiggins stated that the final point is to go over tips for the hiring process. HR will conduct a  
36 full background check on the selected candidates after the interview process. He will report back  
37 to the Council if anything alarming is found. Council does not need to perform a background  
38 check on the candidates. Mr. Wiggins then went over laws related to the interview process and  
39 what to keep in mind when asking questions. Mr. Blair asked if interview notes become public  
40 record and Mr. Wiggins stated that they do. Mr. Wiggins went over some questions to avoid  
41 during an interview. He also stated that the Council should go over his PowerPoint and contact  
42 him if they have any questions.

43  
44 Ms. Arrington stated that she and Mr. Wiggins will contact each Council member before the  
45 interview process to see if they have any questions.

46  
47 Mr. Crippen asked for a printout of the PowerPoint and questions.  
48

1 Mr. Mahoney asked if the Council calendars can be updated.

2

3 **3. ADJOURN**

4

5 **Council Member Mahoney moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council**  
6 **Member Allebach, the motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of the City Council.**

7

8

9 There being no further business, Mayor Blair adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

10

11

12 **RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

**APPROVED ON:**

13

14

15 \_\_\_\_\_

**10/27/2020**

16 Danielle FitzPatrick  
Public Information Coordinator

Date