

* * * RECEPTION * * *
MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2012
CITY HALL LOBBY
6:00-7:00 P.M.

* * * DELIBERATIVE AGENDA * * *

ORGANIZATION DAY, CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2012
CONTOIS AUDITORIUM, CITY HALL
7:04 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Weinberger, Councilors Adrian, Bushor, Kranichfeld, Tracy, Brennan, Siegel, Aubin, Hartnett, Mason, Shannon, Blais, Paul, Decelles and Dober

1. AGENDA

Acting City Council President Schrader adopted the agenda as presented.

2. APPOINTMENT OF ESCORTS FOR THE MAYOR

Councilors Shannon, Brennan, Dober and Bushor escorted the Mayor.

3. MAYOR-OATH OF OFFICE

The Honorable William K. Sessions administered the oath to Mayor Miro Weinberger.

4. MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor Weinberger stated he was honored to serve Burlington as Mayor. He thanked both incoming and outgoing City Councilors. There were more parents with young children on the Council than ever before which indicated the City has a broad range of perspectives. He especially thanked outgoing Councilor Kurt Wright and City Council President Keogh for their decades of service to the City. He thanked Kurt Wright for the substantive campaign and issued him a proclamation.

Mayor Weinberger went on with the following statements. The City has faced a mood of anger and anxiety about the future. Months of debate have given clarity to these feelings. The City has serious financial challenges in immediate budget gaps and unfunded long term obligations. Projects around the City were stalling. The cost of housing in Burlington is too high and this threatens the middle class. There needed to be new economic activities in the City. Incomes were flat and too many children live in poverty. There is increasing diversity and this trend should be continued to strengthen the community. Most importantly, the loss of trust between the Mayor's Office, the Council and the public must be repaired. This is a daunting list of challenges and solutions which will require years of hard work and collaboration. Elections generate innovative solutions through debate. It is the most direct opportunity for citizens to affect the course of the future. The City's mood has shifted dramatically. The City is filled with optimism and purpose. He stated the door to his office is open and he wants to restore cooperation and collaboration between City Council and the Mayor's Office. He will work with citizens of all ages to make sure Burlington is an affordable and attractive place to live. There will be straight talk and engagement from him. He is eager to form partnerships that will make the City stronger. He will join the team of City employees and work with them to deliver services taxpayers deserve and respect. He stated he will value the input of citizens to provide the fresh start that was promised. He stated he will rely on old principles that have guided the City well. There will be prudence with money and will stay within means. Those means will be grown to get great things done. The City must remain dynamic and engaged in commerce.

He will fight for just society that separates Burlington from other communities. The state of the City is challenged but reinvigorated.

5. OATH OF OFFICE-NEWLY ELECTED AND RE-ELECTED COUNCILORS

Acting City Council President Schrader requested the newly elected and reelected Councilors stand to be sworn in.

Mayor Weinberger swore in Councilors Siegel, Adrian, Mason, Paul, Tracy, Aubin and Decelles.

6. ELECTION OF CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Councilor Adrian nominated Councilor Shannon as City Council President. He stated it was important to join the Weinberger administration and work together. He stated Joan Shannon is up to the task. Although they have not always seen eye to eye, she will make an excellent City Council President. The City Council President is someone who must set a tone of civility and fairness. Although she is a passionate advocate for issues she believes in, she always ensures opposing viewpoints are heard. She has made relationships across the Council and is a respected leader. Councilor Shannon can bring the Council together to address important issues the City is facing.

Councilor Shannon was unanimously elected as City Council President.

Councilor Shannon thanked everyone for their votes. Everyone has high expectations and she stated she will work hard to meet them and earn confidence. Her first priority will be to ensure a climate of civility. Burlington's passions are a great asset and it is reflected in the Council. Sticking to issues rather than personalities will go a long way to ensure a respectful tone. She stated she will do her best to treat all members from all parties fairly. The agenda will be set to the will of the Council. The Council looks forward to working with the new Mayor, but also will challenge and consider mayoral initiatives. They will work to serve the people of Burlington in the best way possible.

7. ELECTION OF BOARD OF FINANCE MEMBERS

Councilor Decelles nominated Councilor Bushor to the Board of Finance. He stated he has known her for 6 years, but has seen her face around for much longer. Many faces have come and gone, but she has been the one constant. She has passion for the City and always attends and participates in the Board of Finance meetings. She deserves a spot there.

Councilors Adrian inquired if the nominees can be voted on as a slate. City Attorney Schatz stated they can if they chose to.

Councilor Blais nominated Councilor Paul for the Board of Finance. He stated he has been impressed by her dedication, insight, and skill that she brings to both the City Council and the Board of Finance. She is currently on the Board of Finance and has excelled. The City would benefit from her continuing to serve in this capacity.

Councilor Dober nominated Councilor Decelles for the Board of Finance. He was previously on the Board of Finance and did a fantastic job.

Councilors Bushor, Paul and Decelles were unanimously appointed to the Board of Finance.

8. APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CAO

Councilors Adrian and Dober made a motion to approve the appointment of Paul Sisson as the Interim CAO.

Councilor Dober inquired if it was a temporary or interim appointment. City Attorney Schatz stated there was no legal difference between the two titles.

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Councilor Adrian stated Mr. Sisson has an impressive audit resume. He will bring fresh insight to the finances of the City and looks forward to working him.

Councilor Decelles and Hartnett made a motion to defer action to the next regular meeting.

Councilor Decelles stated he has not had the opportunity to meet Mr. Sisson. His information was received on Saturday and there were questions he wanted answer. The questions were answered this afternoon, but that was very late. It was a break from practice to debate anything like this. A more appropriate time would be at the next meeting after discussions with HR took place and people could meet him. He stated he is uncomfortable appointing someone that he could not point out in the room.

Councilor Adrian inquired if the Mayor intended to appoint a permanent CAO in June where the Council will have the opportunity to vet that person. Mayor Weinberger stated that is the intention, and if they are not ready by then, they will request an extension of the temporary position. Councilor Adrian inquired if this needed to be done sooner rather than later. Mayor Weinberger stated time is of the essence. Paul Sisson has the qualifications for the position, is up to speed on City finances, and has been a member of the budget and transition teams throughout the campaign. There are decisions that need to be made by the end of April. Losing a week would complicate those decisions. It was a break with precedent but it is an important step. Councilor Adrian stated this is an unusual circumstance, but the City has problems that need to be addressed as soon as possible. There will be opportunities to vet the extension or permanent appointment of a CAO in three months. He stated he hopes the Council can trust the administration to bring someone in to fill this position.

Councilor Blais stated it would be regrettable not to appoint someone. Everyone has seen the resume and it reflects that he is very qualified to take over the position. Time is of the essence so decisions can be made quickly. Waiting would not serve the interests of the community.

Councilor Paul stated she understood the hesitation because it is unusual to do work on Organization Day. However, this is an unusual circumstance. They were starting with a new beginning and it is important to allow the Mayor the opportunity to start with his own person in this position. She stated she does know who Mr. Sisson is and looks forward to working with him. She would have liked the chance to meet Mr. Sisson; however, it is only fair that the Mayor be given the benefit of the doubt. Two weeks is a long time when you only have a few months to approve a budget. The Mayor has given his word that there will be a national search during this period of time.

Councilor Siegel inquired how the Interim CAO felt about giving up his position. Interim CAO Schrader stated he would be happy to give it up. He agreed that a budget needed to move forward and there needed to be a determination of whether or not a tax increase was needed. The more hands the better. He has seen Mr. Sisson's qualifications and has met him. He would be a good addition to the Clerk/Treasurer's Office.

Councilor Dober inquired what the term and pay of the Interim CAO would be. Mayor Weinberger stated the term will be from the time of his appointment to June 30. The salary would be a prorated share of \$118,082 annual salary. There will be no additional benefits. Councilor Dober inquired if this will be taken out of the budgeted portion for the CAO's salary. Mayor Weinberger stated there is unspent funding intended for this position that has been vacant for the fiscal year. There will be no fringe benefits.

Councilor Bushor stated she wishes this had happened differently. She stated she has reservations about this and wanted time to look to see if all three positions are necessary. This needs to be evaluated and the Mayor told her it will happen during the time before July 1. She stated the retired CAO felt there should be three, but the two remaining members of the CAO's Office have done a great job. She stated she does not want to limit the ability to address the budget. She stated she will support this with reservations.

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Councilor Decelles stated he had the opportunity to speak to the Mayor's Assistant. The Mayor does deserve the fresh start, but there do need to be checks and balances. If the Council ultimately approves this after the process takes place, Mr. Sisson could be paid retroactively.

The amendment to defer action failed by a vote of 13-1 with Councilor Decelles voting against.

Councilors Brennan and Decelles made a motion to call the question. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion to appoint Paul Sisson to the Interim CAO position passed by a vote of 12-2 with Councilors Decelles and Tracy voting against.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, City Council President Shannon adjourned the Organization Day Meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Attest:

Lori Olberg, Licensing, Voting and Records Coordinator and Amy Bovee, Executive Secretary