



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, January 31, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Hussain called the meeting to order at 6:01p.m.

PRESENT

Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Carol Wood
Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson
Councilmember Jeffrey Brown

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Jim Smiertka, OCA
Lisa Hagen, OCA
Chris Swope, City Clerk
Mark Lawrence, Mayors Administration
Undra Brown
Caitlin Cavanagh
Brian Daniels
Benjamin Dowd
LaSandra Jones
Samuel Klahn
Ryan Kost
Glenn Lopez
John Schneider
Farhan Sheikh-Omar
Tirstan Walers
Loretta Stanaway

Public Comment

Ms. Stanaway asked the Council to pay attention to any candidates employed commitments that would restrict their time for meetings and respond to their constituents. She also asked they look at leadership experience and critical thinking skills.

Interviews

Council President Hussain spoke to materials in the Council binders on the first interview process, finalist questions, applications, and support letters. He then outlined the ballot in the

back where they can vote up to 3, and those ballots will be read into the record. Council President Hussain then spoke to the candidates and the materials in the folder including 2022 meeting dates, letter on tonight's process and finalist interview questions for 2/1/2022.

Undra Brown

Mr. Brown provided brief details on his work experience and residency. He confirmed he intended to run on the ballot in the future for the 1st Ward for 2023 and 2024 and assured Council he is committed. In regards to serving he noted his dedication and working with the City to lobby with the state to focus on infrastructure. Mr. Brown spoke on a support of the Ad Hoc on Housing and Resident Safety and the use of social workers in the LPD. Regarding his understanding of the responsibilities he outlined his goals. Lastly he noted that he is a registered lobbyist, and familiar with the governmental process, and believes he has strong practice with working with the local and state government.

Council President Hussain outlined for Council that if there is a follow up question, that question would have to be asked of all candidates.

Caitlin Cavanagh

Ms. Cavanagh briefly outlined her experiences as outlined in her resume, volunteer work including advocate in the courts. She also spoke on her love for research and was committed to doing thorough research into the topics. She also plans to run in 2022 and 2023. Ms. Cavanagh then outlined her interest in extending her volunteer work. As to responsibilities, she noted policies, and her representation of the 1st Ward, highlighting budgeting experience with past work and internships. As an academic in her current career and obtaining grants, she feels equipped to help the City in handling financial decisions. The second aspect on being on Council is consensus building with experience on serving on other committees, or work with the State of Michigan. Closing the function would be consensus building and budgeting into having a good outcome for the City. Lastly, Ms. Cavanagh stated her specific set of skills match this needs of the moment.

Brian Daniels

Mr. Daniels first outlined his residency in the City, and what he has learned in civic duty. Mr. Daniels spoke then on what he learned while serving in the military and the impact of serving. Mr. Daniels confirmed he will campaign in 2022 and 2023.

Mr. Daniels expanded on his business on the east side, his role and advocacy with the Parks Board. Whether chosen or not Mr. Daniels intends to work with the 1st Ward to keep working on progress. Regarding the questions in the candidate letter, Mr. Daniels assured the Committee he understands budget work, committee work and procedures with investigations. He understands how things need to be fixed, and believes he has the qualities for leadership experience, finding common ground and listening to people.

Benjamin Dowd

Mr. Dowd briefly spoke about his residency and community activating over the last 4-6 years in the City. This included a brief outline of his work with the LPD, and his roles in community development field. Mr. Dowd confirmed he intends to run for the position in the future. Mr. Dowd assured the Committee that his experience to service and connect with people will be an asset. And his knowledge of this elected position, policy, budgeting, communication and listening to the voice of the constituents.

LaSandra Jones

Ms. Jones highlighted her experience and her commitment to serving in this role. She then expanded on what she believed her qualities of integrity, a long standing resident, not a bully, and her belief in pursuing her passion. Ms. Jones assured the Committee that people need to come together and get things done.

The Committee took a break at 6:52 p.m.
The Committee reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

Council President Hussain went through the process for the new candidates.

Samuel Klahn

Mr. Klahn spoke to the Committee on his residency in the 1st Ward and his communications with residents on their concerns with streets. Mr. Klahn assured the Committee he understands the role of the 1st Ward member with committee assignments, representing the City to other municipalities, and confirming appointments from the Mayor to Boards and Commissions. Mr. Klahn continued by stating he believes the Council needs to be immersed in the community to hear, see and understand what people are saying. Mr. Klahn thought the qualities he can bring to Council include citizen involvement, understanding of the resources of what the city and county has, his work with Thomas Morgan with transient housing, getting them funding, and interfacing with the community.

Ryan Kost

Mr. Kost began by noting he intends to run this year and also in 2023 for the 4 year term. He then expanded on his residency in Lansing and his family residency as lifelong members of the community. He spoke on being a member of the trades union and closed by talking about his family and their work with façade cleanup. Regarding why he wants to serve, Mr. Kost stated he wants to be a voice for the 1st Ward. He assured the Committee he was aware of the City Charter, working as a body to make the best decisions for Lansing, bring resources to the constituents of the 1st ward.

Glenn Lopez

Mr. Lopez outlined for the Committee his lifelong residency in Lansing on what he can do for his community. Mr. Lopez highlighted what he believed the 1st Ward position needs. He was asked if he intended to run for the position in 2022 and 2023 and he confirmed. He then spoke specifically why he wanted serve and noted he wants to be part this body to help.

John Schneider

Mr. Schneider confirmed he would run again, has lived in the east side for 10-11 years, and over the course of time has been a web designer. He spoke briefly on his work experience with Lansing businesses, and as a canvasser. Mr. Schneider assured the Committee that he believed he has experience listening and helping in consulting with people to help them find the root of their problems.

Farhan Sheikh-Omar

Mr. Sheikh-Omar addressed the Council and acknowledged the opportunity and noted he will run this year and next year. He noted he came in 2015 as refugee and then spoke about the experience they received when they came here. Mr. Sheikh-Omar noted for the Committee that he believes the 1st ward needs someone to listen, come up with solutions, and needs healing to stabilize the ward. He then assured them that since he has run before he is aware and understands the budget and the roles of Council. He hopes to bring qualities such as community awareness, diversity making the community unique, and with his appointment it would give voice to the communities.

Tirstan Walters

Mr. Walters confirmed he intends to run if appointed in 2022 and 2023. He is currently a State of Michigan employee with MDHHS and has experience in volunteering for causes, and has leadership roles from his time at MSU. He would like to effect change at a larger level to assist more people moving forward. Mr. Walters outlined his understanding of the roles of Council and what his qualities would be to the Council.

Discussion/Action:

Council President Hussain asked for any Committee comments.

Council Members acknowledged all the candidates, encouraged them to seek appointment on Boards or Commissions if they are not appointed to this vacancy and continue to working with their community.

Voting on 1st Ward Council Member Finalist

Council President Hussain asked each Council Member to vote on the paper ballot and submit to Ms. Boak, Council Office Manager to be read into the record.

Ms. Boak read the votes:

Council Member Spitzley- Brian Daniels, Benjamin Dowd, Farhan Sheikh-Omar

Council Member Wood – Brian Daniels, LaSandra Jones, Ryan Kost

Council Member Garza- Brian Daniels, Benjamin Dowd

Council Member Jackson – Caitlin Cavanagh, Brian Daniels, Farhan Sheikh-Omar

Council Member Hussain – Brian Daniels, Benjamin Dowd, Ryan Kost

Council Member Brown – Caitlin Cavanagh, Brian Daniels, Samuel Klahn

Council Member Spadafore – Caitlin Cavanagh, Brian Daniels, Benjamin Dowd

The tally of the votes determined that Brian Daniels, Caitlin Cavanagh, and Benjamin Dowd were the top 3 vote getters and would be interviewed on February 1, 2022 as the finalists to fill the 1st Ward Council Member vacancy.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary,

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee February 14, 2022