

Meeting of: COLUMBIA HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL
 Date of Meeting: March 13, 2017
 Time of Meeting: 6:00 PM
 Location of Meeting: Council Chambers
 Purpose of Meeting: WORKSESSION

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL - The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM

Present: Mayor Schmitt, Councilmembers Murzyn Jr, Williams and Buesgens
 Also Present: Walt Fehst, City Manager and Katie Bruno; City Clerk

1. Discussion related to interviews for council vacancy

Mayor Schmitt asked each of the council members what they are looking for in a council member. Councilmember Williams indicated he would like someone who has experience with the City, who would fit in well with the current council, and who shares his same vision of economic development and of maintaining low taxes.

Councilmember Murzyn, Jr. indicated he would like to see someone who has a feeling for Columbia Heights, who listens to the residents and the staff, who is aware of the City’s past accomplishments, and someone who can get along well with the current council.

Councilmember Buesgens indicated she is looking for someone who can bring a balance of perspectives and a younger voice to the council. Buesgens also would like to see them have varied experience and an educational background.

Mayor Schmitt indicated she would like to see a “younger thinking” person with fresh new ideas, someone with a servant’s heart, and who has a history of working in the community. Schmitt also indicated she would like to see someone who is proactive, passionate, and prepared for meetings.

Schmitt asked each of the council members to list their top three choices of the candidates, not necessarily in order.

	Williams	Murzyn, Jr.	Buesgens	Schmitt
First Choice	Tami Diehm	Nick Novitsky	Sean Broom	Sean Broom
Second Choice	Nick Novitsky	Tami Diehm	Frost Simula	Frost Simula
Third Choice	Stan Hoium	Stan Hoium	Did not provide	Nick Novitsky

Councilmember Williams stated Tami Diehm has served on the council, she is young, she knows the City, and she is a good moderator. Williams stated Nick Novitsky knows the City, he’s a hard worker, he has done a lot of good work with the Lions Club, and he is able to get things done. Williams stated Stan Hoium is a great man who is very active in the community and the Lions Club.

Councilmember Murzyn, Jr. stated Nick Novitsky is an outstanding Lions Club Member, school volunteer, and he worked hard to take third place in the November election. Murzyn, Jr. stated Tami Diehm was reasonable and fair while she served on the City Council. Murzyn, Jr. stated Stan Hoium is outspoken, hardworking, and has served on various City commissions.

Councilmember Buesgens stated Sean Broom ran an impressive campaign, and he has an outstanding background both in education and in the workplace. Buesgens indicated Frost Simula has strength in communication, has new ideas, has been a volunteer, and has a servant's heart.

Mayor Schmitt reported she has met with Sean Broom several times, and he has good experience and a vision for planning. He is an active volunteer in both Columbia Heights and Minneapolis. Schmitt stated she is very impressed with Frost Simula; he is dedicated and he has followed and attended many City Council meetings. Schmitt stated Nick Novitsky is active in the community, and he would be a good connection to the schools. Schmitt said Nick has worked hard to bring young people into the Lions Club, and she also did express concern with possibly having three Lions Club members on the council.

Councilmember Murzyn, Jr. questioned the concern with having three Lions Club members on the council. Mayor Schmitt stated there is a risk of violating the open meeting laws. Councilmember Buesgens agreed with Schmitt. Councilmember Williams stated he would resign from the Lions if necessary.

Councilmember Buesgens asked councilmembers Williams and Murzyn Jr. why they are not considering a candidate that could offer a newer perspective. Williams responded Nick Novitsky was 100 votes behind in the November election. Councilmember Murzyn, Jr. agreed with Williams.

Mayor Schmitt summarized that two of the strong candidates also received votes in the recent election, and she recommends they be interviewed again.

Mayor Schmitt asked if the council would be interested in interviewing four candidates. It was decided to interview two: Sean Broom and Nick Novitsky.

The council agreed to video and broadcast the interviews live on March 27th beginning at 6:00 pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:53 PM

Respectively Submitted,



Katie Bruno,
Council Secretary/City Clerk