

**CITY OF ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO
CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
6:00 P.M., COMMISSION CHAMBERS
JANUARY 20, 2009**

**MAYOR STEVE BROCKETT
MAYOR PRO-TEM CHRIS LUJAN
COMMISSIONER RON GRIGGS
COMMISSIONER ED COLE
COMMISSIONER MARION LEDFORD**

**COMMISSIONER ERIC BREWER
COMMISSIONER JOE FERGUSON
INTERIM CITY MANAGER MATT McNEILE
CITY ATTORNEY STEPHEN THIES
CITY CLERK RENEE CANTIN**

The City Clerk called the roll. Commissioner Brewer was absent.

1. To review applications for City Manager recruitment.

Mayor Brockett announced we are here to review the applications for City Manager recruitment.

Gus Cordova from the Mercer Group thanked the City Commission for the opportunity to come before them. One of the most important criteria for our search was the conversation that we had a while back and the questionnaire that you provided answers to. We used this questionnaire to review each of the applicants. We looked at the military background and water right issues for the top candidates. We also included the experience in terms of saving water and the desalination project. He mentioned other issues that were presented to him from the City Commission. The matrix showed seventeen key issues.

Mr. Cordova touched on Public Housing and tourism. There were not many applicants that had these qualifications. We made sure we included a cover letter, a resume and the actual responses to those questions. You having had the opportunity to review the resumes and applications, we would like to see if you have the narrowed down list of candidates. Once you narrow down the candidates list we will do the background checks.

Mayor Brockett stated he was surprised there were only thirty applicants.

Gus Cordova, Mercer Group said a lot of times it's the time of the year. Some that dropped out weren't sure of making the move to Alamogordo. In the profile, we sent we tried to cover information on the City. He mentioned that up to the point of the questionnaire the applicants seemed interested.

Mayor Brockett said one of the things we didn't cover was past liabilities on the applicants. I noticed a lot of these people seem to have happy feet and do not stay in one place for too long.

Gus Cordova, Mercer Group said the background is very in depth and usually takes about a week to two weeks. What were the reasons they left the previous employments. It's a pretty expensive process to do that on all candidates, that's why we do that after selection. For the majority of them they have no problem in giving us the authorization for background checks.

Commissioner Ledford stated he knows of a couple of these applicants and he's a little surprised they made it. The discretion level that you have is credited.

Gus Cordova, Mercer Group stated they do a phone interview, and then they follow it up. Then they ask the applicants to reduce that to writing which requires a little bit of time.

Commissioner Ledford announced he had not read this detail that he received, but the questionnaire is really good. He understands why five would drop out because of the level of scrutiny. He would like to have more time to review these.

Commissioner Ledford: ok, I haven't had a chance to do anything. I would like to go into executive session to discuss some of these.

Mayor Brockett mentioned this is not a meeting to select the five finalists we may not want any of them. We will get back with Mr. Cordova and express what concerns we might have. I think city staff can help us if we provide specific questions.

Commissioner Cole feels the point person should be Mr. Cordova. He also had concerns about how you would engage a person that might be a fine candidate that has moved around a lot.

Mr. Cordova did not know that in this process that we've included criteria to evaluate something like that. We have templates of questions that we ask and we can certainly add that question to our list.

Commissioner Ferguson asked if there was an average of City Managers and how often they move overall. Mr. Cordova responded that the average turnover is four years. Under the ICMA Code of Ethics they agree to stay at least two years before applying to another position.

Mayor Pro-tem Lujan had a question about the pay range that was presented. Mr. Cordova feels it has more to do with where the position is available and then the pay comes second in line.

Mayor Pro-tem Lujan asked what the average pay is of the applicants. Mr. Cordova will get that number for the Commission.

The advertising was discussed. Mr. Cordova stated they made it clear in advertising that people needed to have certain knowledge, skills, and abilities. What has been presented to you, are those who have met those skills and abilities. Mr. Cordova then announced they advertised in the journal that City Manager's receive. We did personal letters to city managers in the state and we had two responses. He rated them based upon the telephonic interviews we had. They are ranked according to their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Commissioner Cole feels they should just take the top five. Mr. Cordova said based on the resume and the responses to the questionnaire, he has ranked them one through five. That does not mean number five is as strong as number two. They have very much the same kind of rate. The Commission has the prerogative to arrange them in a different order. Once you've decided who they are, we will proceed.

Mayor Pro-tem Lujan moved to go into executive session at 6:42 p.m. to discuss limited personnel matters (City Manager recruitment). Commissioner Cole is concerned that only the top ten have been presented. **Commissioner Ferguson seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Motion carried with a vote of 6-0-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Recess into Executive Session to discuss limited personnel matters (City Manager recruitment).

Commissioner Ferguson moved to go into open session at 8:00 p.m. Mayor Pro-tem Lujan seconded the motion. Motion carried with a vote of 6-0-0.

Commissioner Ferguson moved to reopen the position with a cut off date of March 31, 2009 and provide background information for candidates 11, 12, 14, & 15. Commissioner Cole seconded the motion. Motion carried with a vote of 6-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Pro-tem Lujan moved to adjourn at 8:03. Commissioner Griggs seconded the motion. Motion carried with a vote of 6-0-0.

The work session was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

/s/Mayor Steve Brockett

Mayor Steve Brockett

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

/s/Reneé L. Cantin

City Clerk Reneé L. Cantin

(Prepared by Reneé Cantin, City Clerk)

Approved at the Regular Meeting held on February 10, 2009.