

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Bellbrook City Council Work Session and Regular Meeting
August 4, 2021

PRESENT: Ernie Havens
Dr. Van Veldhuizen
Forrest Greenwood
Mayor Mike Schweller

ABSENT: Mr. Hoke and Elaine Middlestetter

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Schweller called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen made a motion to excuse Mr. Hoke and Mrs. Middlestetter from the meeting. Mr. Havens seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 4-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Schweller asked if anyone had any comments or corrections to the minutes of July 19, 21, and 24 Special Meetings. Hearing none he declared the minutes approved.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Schweller thanked Council for adjusting their schedules to accommodate this special meeting.

The Mayor announced that the meeting was called to appoint a new City Manager. This will be Bellbrook's fourth City Manager. He thanked applicants who applied for the position and the Council Clerk for the time and effort participating in the process to find a new City Manager. He explained that Council met several times in the past few weeks and exhibited a great spirit of cooperation and professionalism. The deliberations were both methodical and comprehensive with the goal of doing what is best for the citizens of Bellbrook. He thanked the Council Members present and Mrs. Middlestetter and Mr. Hoke.

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Mayor Schweller explained that as a result of the process they found Rob Schommer to be the most qualified candidate and tonight's purpose is to move forward with his appointment. Mr. Schommer impressed Council with his knowledge of city management. He has the experience to step in and begin addressing the City's needs.

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES - none

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES - none

RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Greenwood read **Resolution 2021-Z A Resolution to Appoint Robert Schommer as the City Manager, Approving His Service as the Director of Finance and Director of Safety, and to Approve and Enter Into an Employment Agreement.**

Mayor Schweller stated that as the interview process progressed Mr. Schommer stood out for his knowledge of the City and experience in city management. Council was pleased with the work Mr. Schommer had done prior to this. The rest of Council concurred with this.

Mr. Greenwood made a motion to adopt **Resolution 2021-Z A Resolution to Appoint Robert Schommer as the City Manager, Approving His Service as the Director of Finance and Director of Safety, and to Approve and Enter Into an Employment Agreement.** Mr. Havens seconded the motion. The Clerk called the roll. Mr. Greenwood, yes; Mr. Havens, yes; Dr. Van Veldhuizen, yes; Mayor Schweller, yes. The motion passed 4-0.

OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Schweller administered the oath of office to Mr. Schommer. After which Mr. Schommer took his place on the dais.

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS - none

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Service – none

Safety – none

Finance – none

Community Affairs – none

CLERK'S REPORT

Future Agenda Items (dates are subject to change)

- August 9 - Beautification Awards
- October 11 – 6pm Budget Work Session– Administration & Service Departments
- October 25 - 6pm Budget Work Session– Police & Fire Departments
- November 8 – 6pm Budget Work Session– Capital Improvement Plan
- November 22 – Introduction of 2022 Budget Ordinance
- December 13 - Public Hearing of 2022 Budget Ordinance

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Robert Schommer introduced himself. He recounted entering public service work 30 years ago. He began his career in law enforcement spending the last 25 years in Huber Heights. He stated that he is loyal to the idea and concepts of public service. He added when he retired from that position, he was unsure if he would look for employment in public service. He explained that when the opportunity with Bellbrook arose, he was very interested knowing about the City. As he studied more about the City and looked at the work products, he recognized the commitment to the community. He shared that he feels privileged to have the opportunity to serve. He pledged to the elected officials, staff, and the community that he will serve the will and vision of this Council and put that into action for the benefit of the residents and businesses. He welcomes hearing from residents stating that the ideals of openness, honesty, and transparency are paramount to a successful local government.

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COMMENTS

Mr. Greenwood stated that his thoughts during the process were for the citizens. He added his hopes to carry forward some of the things Melissa Dodd started. He opined that as we move forward the City will have challenges but the new City Manager is someone dedicated and experienced who can hit the ground running. Mr. Schommer stood out from the other candidates and vetted well. Mr. Greenwood thanked all of the candidates for applying and interviewing.

Mr. Havens thanked the other City Manager candidates. He explained that the way that executive sessions work by law is that no decisions can be made within the session. The decision was voted on tonight. He stated that Council needed to move quickly, and Mr. Schommer made that easy. Mr. Havens said he was aware that the community has concerns but they should rest assured that Council spent hours researching and checking references. He added that the deeper he dug, the more Mr. Schommer shined.

Dr. Van Veldhuizen also spoke to the citizen comments explaining that all of the issues mentioned were reviewed. Mr. Schommer spoke strategically, tactically, and operationally concerning upcoming challenges.

Mayor Schweller echoed the sentiments of the other Council Members.

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Buccalo, 126 Lower Hillside Drive, said he was glad to have a new City Manager. He asked the Mayor about allowing comments from the public before Council voted on the Resolution as he thinks Council rushed this process. Mayor Schweller explained that Resolutions do not allow for public discussion. Mr. Buccalo stated that had not had time to thoroughly review the employment contract but believes there are items that the public question. Council has already voted on and approved the contract so Mr. Buccalo wanted to know what good public input is at this point.

Meredith Brinegar, 2221 Ivy Crest Drive, asked for clarification concerning Mr. Schommer's resignation without 30 days' notice from Huber Heights, the \$150,000 lump sum consulting agreement, and if this could cause a conflict. She explained that she read the pertinent Huber Heights codes and the

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agreements. In those documents there is a stipulation that resigning would forfeit the right to severance. So how is the \$150,000 not a severance package. Mrs. Brinegar stated that this lump sum agreement which was more than his annual salary leads her to believe he did not leave Huber Heights to “personal opportunities.” She asked how Council answers these questions.

Mrs. Brinegar stated that the media and public records indicate that Mr. Schommer is involved in open lawsuits against him and the Huber Heights Council. These items lead her and others to have a lack of trust in Council’s actions. She also asked if staff were included in the process or anyone from the public.

Mr. Schommer answered that he can provide any answers that he is allowed to give including that the accompanying resolution eliminated the 30-day notice and added details about the severance. He stated that was his previous employment and now he is focused on this community. The terms of his separation have no bearing on this employment. Mayor Schweller added that Council followed the standard process . Staff was introduced to Mr. Schommer on Tuesday. It is Council’s responsibility to make this decision. Mr. Greenwood added that the City Charter outlines the process. The Council reviewed many candidates.


Dr. Van Veldhuizen reminded the Mayor and Council that he will be out of town on business and will not be able to attend the next Council Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor announced that there was no further business and adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM.



Michael W. Schweller, Mayor



Pamela Timmons, Clerk of Council

