

Missoula City Council Committee of the Whole Minutes - DRAFT

**August 24, 2022
10:30 AM
Microsoft Teams 1**

Members present: Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Mike Nugent, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Heidi West

Members absent: Kristen Jordan, Jennifer Savage

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

Approved as submitted.

1.2.1 Minutes from committee meeting July 27, 2022

1.2.2 Minutes from committee meeting August 17, 2022

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Mayoral Applicant Interview Questions Discussion

Council President Gwen Jones reviewed the mayoral replacement process this far and going forward.

Questions re Reopening Nominations

Amber Sherrill asked what happens if there are two roll call votes and no one gets seven votes, what is the process? Marty Rehbein, City Clerk, responded that the rules allow for nominations outside the existing applicant pool if there are two successive identical votes.

Jim Nugent, City Attorney, noted that the law requires appointment within 30 days. There is nothing that disallows the appointee from having another job. Also the successive vote rule is a City Council rule, and the council has the power to suspend their own rules by 2/3 of those present and voting. This happened with the appointment of John Toole who had not applied to be mayor. There is not a state law that requires you to choose only from the applicants.

Stacie Anderson clarified that if there were two identical successive votes, the council MAY open nominations, not shall. Marty Rehbein confirmed.

Discussion About Interview Questions

Amber Sherrill asked about whether or not the questions will have the name of the submitter. Gwen Jones said she was looking at the substance of the question rather than the submitter, so right now names are not included.

Gwen Jones suggested that 40 minutes be devoted to answering the written questions and 5 minutes for a closing statement.

Daniel Carlino asked if someone doesn't answer the question may they ask it again. Gwen Jones stated that not answering is also an answer. Marty Rehbein said that too much follow up might limit time to answer other questions.

Sandra Vasecka asked if the interviewees could answer out of order. Marty Rehbein and Gwen Jones said that the questions should be in the same order.

Heidi West said her preference was that each applicant gets the same questions, to avoid council steering the conversation.

Amber Sherrill said that if the applicants have time at the end then they could have a closing statement or have a more open conversation.

Stacie Anderson said that allowing the applicants to manage their time will give a better picture of the applicants.

Marty Rehbein read the interview questions submitted by council (attached).

Jordan Hess added one question about leading an organization of the city's size.

Gwen Jones suggested removing the name of the current contractor from the question about security at the homeless camps. Daniel Carlino agreed.

Daniel Carlino, regarding the MRA question, suggested removing the last part about other departments' spending. Heidi West was concerned that the mayor cannot actually change the role of the MRA unilaterally.

Mirtha Becerra is concerned that the question implies that we're all in agreement that the MRA needs to be changed, should the question be reworded to be more neutral. Gwen Jones asked if the author was present (no one responded).

Daniel Carlino asked that number 6 follow number 2.

Sandra Vasecka asked for assistance rewording question 7 to be neutral. Gwen Jones suggested some alterations (see video). Heidi West suggested a question about balancing your personal ideologies versus your larger constituency.

Gwen Jones suggested making the MRA question more neutral. Jim Nugent suggested that the City Council likely has the power to set MRA policy. Amber Sherrill suggested making the the question better reflect what the mayor's role would be if MRA policy were changed. Stacie Anderson mentioned that having it be more neutral would but the onus on applicant to understand and articulate the MRA. Heidi West is concerned that there are other agencies that also have similar structures, maybe this question should reflect a broader policy. Marty Rehbein clarified that council sees MRA's expenditures and all projects that require bonding. The mayor's role also is to appoint members of the MRA board with the advice and council of city council. Mirtha Becerra articulated that this interview is for the council and community to learn as much as possible, and questions

with bias won't solicit the best answers. Heidi West said she was comfortable changing the question to be more broad. Sandra Vasecka asked if they could reach out to applicants if they don't get an answer. Jim Nugent responded that everything in should be in the public record.

Gwen Jones said that they will continue the MRA discussion to next week.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 11:38am.