



Richland County Council
Interim Administrator Ad Hoc Committee
August 28, 2018 – 2:00 PM
Administration Conference Room
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia 29204

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Norman Jackson, Chair; Jim Manning, Co-Chair, and Calvin Jackson

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Onley

1. **Call to Order** – Mr. N. Jackson called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 PM
2. **Adoption of Agenda** – Mr. C. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Manning, to adopt the agenda as published. The vote in favor was unanimous.
3. **DISCUSSION/ADOPTION OF RULES** – Mr. N. Jackson stated there were some concerns about the rules and Ms. McBride wanted to have a discussion about how to follow the rules. He stated, his understanding, from the meeting we had, we were going to go to continue with the same rules until there is some collective discussion on how to change the rules and proceed. When the Council meeting was held and a decision was made, we want somebody has experience in County Administration or City management, who could come on board and run with it. And, not waste time getting someone who meets the qualifications but does not have what we want for this immediate situation. He talked with Mr. Hanna and told him if he had anything or anyone the committee missed to put them together and the committee would have a meeting. There was no intent to circumvent anything. He stated it is really an emergency. We need someone in charge because nothing is happening. He stated he got an email last week that no County staff should be attending any meetings because we do not have an Interim Administrator. Yesterday, at Hopkins Park, there were 2 County employees at a meeting, so that is what he is dealing with. He feels like he has been singled out. He stated if there are any request for changes in the process, please let him know and we can send it to Council.

Mr. C. Jackson inquired, since we went through this process, and did not reach a successful, and started over, where are we now.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the position was re-advertised, until the position has been filled.

Mr. C. Jackson inquired if there were any new applications.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he believes there were 3 new applications. Initially, there were 16 applicants. The problem we had the first time is we did the background check after. He requested Mr. Hanna to do the background checks upfront and provide the information to the committee. If we decide to offer the position to someone, we already have the background check done. Mr. Hanna provided him with 2 additional applicants that met the

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qualifications the committee was looking for.

Mr. C. Jackson inquired as to where we are with those 2 applicants.

Mr. N. Jackson stated Mr. Hanna already has the background check. Mr. Hanna needs to provide the information to the committee. He stated he did not choose who qualified. He left it up to Mr. Hanna. One of the applicants we had discussed, but because of the Internet thing we did not interview them. He stated he spoke with Mr. Smith, and Mr. Smith stated we have to be mindful. We can interview them, but do not have to hire them.

Mr. Manning stated, the applicant we interviewed from Ohio and the other one that was interviewed here, if we are still considering everything, have we done background checks on them.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we did not accept those.

Mr. Manning stated he would not say we did not accept them, but out of the 3, we voted for the one to recommend. Then because of the background check issue, this background issue came in. To him, he would think, until someone tells him otherwise, that the 2 we interviewed are still active applicants. As would be, the ones that have come in since we re-advertised, and have done background checks on.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we could ask Mr. Hanna to do a background check on those 2 applicants, and provide it to the committee members.

Mr. Manning stated, if we are going to look at changing how we interview these next applicants, we need to go back and look at that same process. For example, if we decide this time we are going to score questions and turn our scores, and have a data analyst look at it. If we are going to do anything different, he does not know how we do not go back and do whatever is different.

Mr. N. Jackson stated that was his point. If we started a process, he does not think we should change the process for the applicants midstream.

Mr. Manning stated we also need to make some determination as to what we as a Council, and especially as we are moving forward with the County Administrator position, because it appears where we ended up was if an applicant requests anything different, then that is a rejection of our offer. If that is going to be the way we are handling that he thinks we need to know that ahead of time, and applicants need to know at whatever point we offer you something, if you ask for something else that will be considered a rejection of the offer and Council will proceed based on the offer being rejected. He always thought those were negotiations, but he learned this Council believes that is a rejection of an offer.

Mr. N. Jackson stated this committee is charged to interview and make recommendations to full Council. Whatever rules they have at full Council, this committee is just a recommending body. We can recommend an applicant, and a Council member can say we want somebody else, that we did not interview, get six votes and move forward. The discussions and emails he has been getting from his colleagues is they want to discuss the rules and the process, and make a recommendation. If we decide to continue with how we are doing or change it, what do we need to change. Interview whoever we need to interview and send it Council, and let Council make that decision. To keep meeting to discuss midstream what needs to be changed is setting us back, and time is of the essence.

Mr. Manning stated it looked like one of our colleagues said they were not coming, not I cannot come.

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Mr. N. Jackson stated they said they were not coming.

Mr. Manning stated we are in a bit of a dilemma because we are here talking about processes and moving forward, and he is wondering if he made a trip down here for something that is going to be sabotaged.

Mr. N. Jackson we have a quorum. If one person refused to not come, we cannot hold up the whole County and the citizens of Richland County not having any one to sign documents, hire or fire people. He saw the Class & Comp Study is set back because there is no one here to review it. We cannot put the County on hold.

Mr. Manning stated he did not see why it was not moving forward. What he responded to was that we were going to let staff know that because of stuff going on in the last few months, is why it was not done in April. Well April was a few months ago, so he is not sure why we are telling staff because of challenges in the last few months.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his understanding was there was no one to review and make a recommendation. Council is ultimately responsible.

Mr. Manning stated, if that is the reason, then they put in writing lies.

Mr. N. Jackson stated it was requested by a Councilmember to have this meeting. To discuss it and move forward. They stated the date and times they would be available. He spoke with Ms. Onley and set it up.

Mr. C. Jackson stated it is very disappointing. He is echoing what Mr. N. Jackson and Mr. Manning are saying. He does not mean to be redundant. He does not mind coming, and will come anytime he is asked to come, even if he disagrees with the outcome, or the anticipated outcome, he still comes, voice his opinion, and casts his vote. The decision is what it is, but to not show up after wanting to have the discussion is very unprofessional, and not respectful of his time. He stated he could be doing other things, as well, but he wanted to be present to hear and share. Not to try to influence, persuade, convince, or coerce anyone, but to just hear and share his thoughts. Not to be able to have that happen is very disappointing, and not very respectful of his time. We have to handle business differently, even when we disagree. He inquired where we go from here. What do we do? We have a quorum, but do we then try to decide on whether we move forward. He stated he could not agree more with Councilman Manning. Any changes you try to make to the process now, you cannot disregard all of the people who evaluated under the old process. You have to go back, and review them through that lens. You cannot do that. We had a question in here, where someone asked, and he wrote a note to them during the interview, please be sure to ask that question of everyone else now because it was not one of the ones on the sheet. He stated he just wanted to make sure everyone was treated fairly. He stated you cannot do this. "Here are our new rules going forward." That is not the way you do it.

Mr. N. Jackson stated, if he has a motion, to continue with the rules we have because it would be wrong to change it midstream.

Mr. Manning stated he was reluctant to make that motion because he does not feel you have rules until you have something written down. You can have processes that are not written down. Technically, at least for him, when you start using words like "procedures" or "rules" that is something that can literally be posted on a wall or put in a notebook. If we are talking about having a motion to continue with the additional applicants in the same way, and manner, that we handled the first set of applicants, and with regard to background checks we go back and conduct background checks on the 2 applicants that were interviewed previously, he would be happy to make that motion.

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Mr. C. Jackson stated he would be willing to second the motion.

Mr. Manning stated that is his motion. He stated, for clarification, in the ways and manner in which the first applicants pool was handled.

Mr. C. Jackson stated, for clarification, we are eliminating one of the applicants that rejected the offer, so the 2 Mr. Manning is referring to are the one from Ohio and the gentleman that worked for the County 25 years ago.

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS** – Mr. N. Jackson stated most of us agreed we wanted somebody who can come and keep it moving, instead of learning on the job. We wanted someone with Administrative experience, or municipal management experience.

Mr. Manning inquired as to what we advertised.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we advertised for that experience.

Mr. Manning stated, as long as that is what we advertised. He is not okay with us, as a committee, coming up with different minimum, wording or standards of what minimum qualifications if we have publicly advertised twice.

Mr. N. Jackson stated Mr. Hanna had “Not Qualified”, “Qualified” and “Preferred.” The “Preferred” was Master in Public Administration. He stated you could have a Master’s in Public Administration and not have Administration experience. He stated we would request Mr. Hanna to do the background check on the 2 applicants that were previously interviewed, and forward the information to the committee. In addition, any applicants that meet the qualifications.

Mr. Manning stated he does not know that we need to wait on the background information on the 2 applicants that were previously interviewed. We need that information by the time we are interviewing and making a recommendation to Council. If any of that information puts them ahead of where we were, or if one of those things eliminates them, he does not need that before we schedule the interviews.

Mr. C. Jackson stated, for the 2 new applicants we received...

Mr. N. Jackson stated we received 3 new applicants.

Mr. C. Jackson stated Mr. Hanna had done the background check on 2 of them.

Mr. N. Jackson stated Mr. Hanna said that one was qualified, and he did a background check on them. The other one was qualified, but the committee did not interview them. Mr. Hanna did a background check on this applicant also.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he thought there 2 new applicants since the interview process ended.

Mr. N. Jackson stated are 3 new applicants.

Mr. C. Jackson inquired where we are with regard to scheduling the interviews for the new applicants.

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Mr. N. Jackson stated, after this meeting, we will tell Mr. Hanna to send the committee the information, and we can move forward.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he believes we need to do this posthaste. He thinks we need to try to pull something together before the September 11th Council meeting.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he told the Chair that we need to schedule a one-hour Special Called meeting to appoint an Interim Administrator. Council said "let's do it." Now the emails indicate we need to wait until we come back, and that is not what was discussed.

Mr. C. Jackson stated Mr. N. Jackson was correct.

Mr. Manning stated next Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday he accepted the invitation to the White House, so the committee will have to proceed without him.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS** – Mr. C. Jackson inquired as to where we are in regards to the search process.

Mr. Manning state you will always see him ask questions, and you will always not see an answer. He stated the Vice-Chair knows no one answers him, so if he likes the question he will send it in again. He stated the Chairwoman did send an email to us, week before last, saying she would be appointing a committee within the week. He stated the way the search firm came up with 2 visions and mission statements was she went online, and in the CAFR Report there was one listed, and the other one was listed elsewhere. The mission statements and visions were very different. When we were at the Township, with Charles Weathers, Mr. Manning stated that all decisions should be made with regard with the mission.

Mr. N. Jackson stated, next month, it will be 4 months without an Interim Administrator.

Mr. Manning stated or acting.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he keeps saying we need so and so, and it is like he saying too much and he needs to shut up, but enough is enough. He stated he will have Mr. Hanna to forward the committee what he has. We move forward with it. At the end of the day, we say yea or nay, and at least we did our job.

Mr. C. Jackson stated, considering the information Mr. Manning just shared, and the obvious absence of our other committee member, he does not know how we are going to be able to move forward with the new applicants until after Mr. Manning returns.

Mr. N. Jackson stated Mr. Livingston will be back on Tuesday.

Ms. Onley stated Mr. Livingston will not be back until Wednesday.

Mr. C. Jackson stated and Mr. Manning will be leaving on Wednesday. He suggested we wait until the following week.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the following Monday. He stated we make get some more applications in by then. He directed Ms. Onley to set up a meeting for Monday, September 10th.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he would let full Council know, so there is no confusion about being fully transparent with

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the process. At the last interviews, there were several people that were not a part of the committee that were present.

Mr. N. Jackson stated to begin the meeting at 1:30 PM.

6. **ADJOURN** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:31 PM