



CITY COUNCIL

Nominations & Appointments Committee

**Monday, March 3, 2014
Meeting Report**

Attendance: S. Marmarou, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, D. Sterner, C. Daubert, D. Reed, J. Waltman

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, L. Kelleher, V. Spencer, C. Younger, B. Rivera

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

I. Interviews

Gery Fisher (reappointment – Water Authority)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Fisher was interested in serving on the Water Authority. Mr. Fisher stated that this is outlined on his application form. He stated that in November 2013 he received a very high water bill and found that there was a leak at his meter. He stated that during this time he learned that there were two vacancies on the Authority. He stated that it has been 20 years since he has volunteered but that he is now retired. He stated that he has also stopped working the family farm which has been in his family since 1790.

Mr. Marmarou questioned Mr. Fisher's understanding of the mission of the Water Authority. Mr. Fisher noted his understanding that it would be to provide quality water, high service and great customer service. He stated that during the time he was correcting his leak he received excellent service and support from Authority staff. He stated that the problem was corrected in two days.

Mr. Marmarou questioned Mr. Fisher's understanding of the primary responsibility of the Water Authority. Mr. Fisher stated that he has not served on an authority before. He stated that it would be a learning experience. He stated that the Authority is dealing with many issues and that he spent the last two years of his career working in leasing. He stated that during that time he learned a lot about the leasing process and stated that leases are very complicated.

Mr. Marmarou asked Mr. Fisher to describe his public service and community involvement. Mr. Fisher stated that he has listed these items on his application form. He stated that he was formerly involved in the Democratic Party and had an unsuccessful campaign for County Commissioner.

Mr. Marmarou asked Mr. Fisher to describe the skills he would bring to the Water Authority. Mr. Fisher stated that he has listed these on his application form.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how much time Mr. Fisher would have to dedicate to the work of the Water Authority. Mr. Fisher stated that he is retired and looking for volunteer opportunities.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the Water Authority has challenges that could affect the future of the City. She questioned if Mr. Fisher would have any potential conflicts of interest while serving on the Authority. Mr. Fisher stated that he would not as he does not serve in any other capacity and is retired.

Mr. Fisher expressed the belief that the City should not sell the water system. He stated that there would be no competition which is important for pricing.

Ms. Reed questioned how long Mr. Fisher lived in Reading. Mr. Fisher stated that he moved into the City in 1994 from Oley.

Ms. Reed questioned how closely Mr. Fisher was following the Water Authority issues. Mr. Fisher stated that his experience with the Water Authority occurred within the last six months and that he only knows what he reads in the newspaper. He stated that the lease issue arose after he submitted his application.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if Mr. Fisher had any questions for Council. Mr. Fisher questioned when the City would make a decision on the lease issue. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that Council cannot discuss the lease issue specifically but stated that there is a timeline for the process. Mr. Sterner stated that it is a very complicated issue.

Ms. Reed noted the business background of Mr. Fisher and stated that this would assist him with understanding the dynamics of the Water Authority.

Mr. Acosta arrived at this time.

II. Executive Session

Mr. Waltman announced the need for an executive session. Mr. Younger explained that it was to discuss potential litigation and a personnel matter. Council entered executive session at 5:19 pm and exited at 5:35 pm.

I. Interviews (continued)

Ernie Schlegel (Water Authority)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Schlegel was interested in serving on the Water Authority. Mr. Schlegel stated that there are vacancies and expressed the belief that his experience would bring strength to the Authority.

Mr. Marmarou questioned Mr. Schlegel's understanding of the mission of the Water Authority. Mr. Schlegel stated that it was to provide safe, clean water in a cost effective manner.

Mr. Marmarou questioned whom Mr. Schlegel would represent as a member of the Water Authority. Mr. Schlegel stated that he would represent the Water Authority.

Mr. Marmarou questioned Mr. Schlegel's understanding of the primary responsibilities of the Water Authority. Mr. Schlegel noted his understanding that the Authority would make fiduciary and policy-making decisions.

Mr. Marmarou asked Mr. Schlegel to describe his public service and community involvement. Mr. Schlegel stated that he has been a member of the Library Board for four years and spent a short time on the PARC before that. He stated that he also organizes community clean-ups.

Mr. Marmarou asked Mr. Schlegel to describe the skills he would bring to the Authority. Mr. Schlegel stated that two years ago he was recognized as library trustee of the year. He stated that he has extensive management experience.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how much time Mr. Schlegel could devote to the Authority. Mr. Schlegel stated that he could attend both monthly meetings. He stated that he is retired and has time to volunteer.

Mr. Marmarou questioned what other commitments Mr. Schlegel has. Mr. Schlegel stated that he is retired and is involved in the Democratic Party, does home repairs and volunteers.

Mr. Waltman asked Mr. Schlegel to name two good things about the Authority and two challenges. Mr. Schlegel stated that the water is reliable and that the Authority is well-run. He stated that two challenges are infrastructure upgrades and adding new customers. He noted the need of the Authority to understand their stake in the operation of this asset.

Mr. Waltman questioned what role Mr. Schlegel would take in directing the Authority. Mr. Schlegel described his experience with the Library Board and its adversarial relationship with the County. He stated that he encouraged the County to examine the Library and suggest improvements. He stated that currently there is a firm evaluating Library operations. Mr.

Schlegel stated that he would take a similar approach with the Water Authority to examine issues and come to agreement.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if Mr. Schlegel would have any potential conflicts of interest. Mr. Schlegel stated that he would have no conflicts.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned what action Mr. Schlegel would take to prevent conflicts of interest. Mr. Schlegel stated that he would not put himself in the position to have a conflict.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned how Mr. Schlegel would address the infrastructure. Mr. Schlegel stated that he would work with his colleagues and examine and research the issue.

Mr. Acosta suggested that Council members send their preferences for the two appointments to him via email. He stated that a tally will be made and two names brought forward. He noted the need for Council to get their preferences to him by noon on Wednesday so that the resolutions can be added to the agenda for March 10.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 5:51 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk