

## **Council Minutes – June 18, 2013**

COUNCIL CHAMBER, Topeka, Kansas, Tuesday, June 18, 2013. The Councilmembers of the City of Topeka met in regular session at 6:00 P.M., with the following Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Hiller, Campos II, Ortiz, Everhart, De La Isla, Manspeaker, Schwartz and Harmon -8. Mayor Larry E. Wolgast presided -1. Council District No. 8 – vacant.

AFTER THE MEETING was called to order, Councilmember De La Isla gave the invocation.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by those present in the chamber.

THE CONSENT AGENDA was presented as follows:

MINUTES of the regular meeting of June 11, 2013, were presented.

Councilmember Ortiz moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion seconded by Councilmember De La Isla carried unanimously. (8-0-0)

SELECTION of Council Member to fill the unexpired term of Council District No. 8 was presented.

Mayor Wolgast provided a brief opening statement and explained that the interview process would proceed as follows:

- Interviews would begin with the applicants for the vacant Council District 8 position in the order the applications were received by the City Clerk.
- Applicants would have four minutes to make an opening statement and two minutes to answer each submitted question asked by each member of the Governing Body.
- Follow-up questions may be asked after all submitted questions are answered.
- After all applicants are interviewed, members of the Governing Body would vote for their choice on a written ballot and submit the ballot to the City Clerk to read the results of each ballot.
- Balloting ends when an applicant receives five votes.

Councilmember Hiller asked for clarification of when and by whom follow-up questions could be asked.

Mayor Wolgast clarified follow-up questions could be asked by any Councilmember after all interview questions have been asked.

David Mountain, Applicant No. 1, thanked the Governing Body and the City of Topeka for allowing him to apply for the Council District vacancy.

Charles D. Wilson, Applicant No. 2, thanked the Governing Body and the citizens of Topeka for the opportunity to serve as representative for Council District No. 8. He stated he believes there is a need to upgrade accountability and transparency, set standards of how money is used, increase customer service and satisfaction, manage delivery of City services with focus on results, assess needs in a timely manner, upgrade City interaction with neighborhoods and citizens and prioritize City operations as a whole. He stated he believes his skill set of basic life experiences would aid him in working beside the Council in the long-term.

Nathan Schmidt, Applicant No. 3, thanked the Governing Body for the opportunity to serve Council District No. 8 and for their dedicated service to the community. He stated he believes the Topeka community was founded by great forefathers and is a diverse community that offers remarkable resources. He stated he would continue to help make the community better and work hard to move Topeka forward by helping to provide opportunity and growth.

Following the opening statements, each applicant was asked nine separate interview questions. Their responses were as follows:

Question No. 1 - Councilmember Ortiz asked each applicant to describe their Council District.

David Mountain described Council District No. 8 as a community full of people who work hard and try to make their way in life, meet their goals and save for retirement.

Charles D. Wilson described the physical boundaries of Council District No. 8 and stated it is a community that has real challenges in regards to applying effective communication

between diverse neighborhoods and businesses. He stated he believes it will be essential for the selected Council District representative to understand how to communicate so the area thrives.

Nathan Schmidt described Council District No. 8 as a largely quiet residential area that values education, public safety and economic development with a sense of community pride.

Question No. 2 – Mayor Wolgast stated there is the issue of serving your Council District versus serving the city as a whole for Councilmembers. He asked each applicant to describe their thinking about how they would address this issue.

David Mountain stated constituents should be consulted first before finalizing any decisions about issues that affect each Council District or the city as a whole.

Charles D. Wilson stated his primary concern would be to communicate with constituents to find out their concerns and then set up infrastructure to communicate on a consistent basis. He also stated issues that affect the city as a whole such as water, streets and public safety should be dealt with as a whole and not by each Council District.

Nathan Schmidt stated as a Councilmember it will be important to represent all areas of the city while being aware of the issues in Council District No. 8. He noted there will be disagreements; however, issues can be resolved as long as everyone has the same goal to make the city a better place to live.

Question No. 3 – Councilmember Hiller asked each applicant to state the dollar amount of the City's annual operating budget and to react to that in terms of the responsibilities of being a City Councilperson.

David Mountain stated the City's annual operating budget is approximately \$238 million. He stated he believes the funds should be used to provide the required services to the community through decisions that are economical and efficient.

Charles D. Wilson stated the City's annual operating budget is approximately \$220 million (excluding the City's debt service amount) and employs approximately 1,200 employees. He stated there should be more transparency in reporting what and when funds are being spent; more line item assessment and development of a comprehensive budgeting process.

Nathan Schmidt stated the 2013 City annual operating budget is approximately \$238 million and he believes all expenditures should be transparent, efficient and allocated with a clear and known purpose.

Question No. 4 – Councilmember Campos II asked each applicant if the City Council were to support an extension of the Joint Economic Development Organization Half-Cent Sales Tax initiative what should the City's first priority be in the use of the monies collected.

David Mountain stated the first priority would be to meet existing obligations for the Half-Cent Sales Tax revenues followed by more investment in the economic development industry, as well as, subsidizing education to have a highly effective workforce to support economic development.

Charles D. Wilson stated the first priority would be to review economic development in terms of how to develop our workforce from preschool age children to working adults; performance measures should be clearly defined; set specific goals; and use an approach that involves a large cross section of community leaders and citizens that are involved with all aspects of development. He noted he would support a Half-Cent Sales Tax extension.

Nathan Schmidt stated the first priority would be to continue improving basic infrastructure which he believes the City has already made great strides. He suggested continuing to maintain what is critical to make Topeka a vital place to live and attract businesses.

Questions No. 5 – Councilmember Everhart asked each applicant to describe their participation in any community activities and how that experience will help them as a community leader.

David Mountain stated in most recent years his community service has been limited due to work and school; however, he served ten years in the U.S. Navy and has vast global experience that would be useful while serving on the City Council.

Charles D. Wilson stated his past work experiences have limited his opportunities for community involvement due to creating possible conflict of interests; however, he did serve in an oversight capacity to ensure the City of Topeka was ADA compliant providing him with the necessary skill set to handle constituents. He stated that he has provided pro bono grant writing services to a number of community organizations

Nathan Schmidt stated he is involved with the Let's Help Program, coached youth football and track, volunteered to assist and participate in the National Night Out and Fiesta Mexicana events, and has served on the City Redistricting Commission. He noted his community involvement has taught him the importance of fair and equitable solutions, a great asset to bring to the Council.

Question No. 6 – Councilmember De La Isla asked each applicant how they foresee the role of City Councilperson, as a policy maker or hands on.

David Mountain stated he believes the role of a Councilmember involves both being a policy maker and hands on. He stated he believes it is the duty of a Councilmember to see how the policy interacts with citizens before the policy is approved by the Council.

Charles D. Wilson stated he believes a Councilmember should concentrate on the concerns of the public and develop policy to ensure City programs and services fit the needs of the public, as well as, making sure policies are viable for City operations.

Nathan Schmidt stated he believes an effective Councilmember would be involved in both the policy making, as well as, being hands on so they would know how policies affect citizens, businesses and visitors to the community. He stated he would rely on staff and citizen input to better understand the intent of policies while accommodating the needs of the community.

Question No. 7 – Councilmember Manspeaker asked each applicant to tell the Governing Body of an experience that they have had in their life that makes them well suited to serve on the Council.

David Mountain stated his military background has given him worldwide experience resulting in a broader perspective when managing decisions on a local level.

Charles D. Wilson stated he assisted in creating a program for physically-challenged children. He reported the program mobilized an entire community while teaching him the importance of humility and the impact it has on the community as a whole.

Nathan Schmidt stated all of his life experiences are relevant to serving on the Council and he looks forward to giving back to the community what the community has given him.

Question No. 8 – Councilmember Schwartz asked each applicant how they would familiarize themselves with City operations including the budget, departments and contracts and how do they propose to ensure that public's funds are not being spent wastefully in each specific area.

David Mountain stated he believes the best way to familiarize himself with City operations is to read documents outlining the processes and manuals and spend time with employees to understand their job duties.

Charles D. Wilson stated his employment with the City has provided him with a vast understanding of organizational operations and he believes developing a systematic way to track the use of resources and physical assets would be helpful in meeting the needs of the public.

Nathan Schmidt stated he would familiarize himself with all documentation that is readily available to him and seek advice from experts and City staff.

Question No. 9 – Councilmember Harmon asked each applicant how they would complete the following sentence: “Leadership is.....”

David Mountain stated he believes leadership is being honorable and doing the right thing even when no one is looking; admitting and taking responsibility of your mistakes; being courageous; taking the initiative; having the determination to stand by your convictions and finish what you start. He stated other leadership qualities include being patient, tolerant, a great listener and expect change in order to make progress.

Charles D. Wilson stated leadership is the ability to get the help of others to obtain the result that would have not occurred any other way and have the ability to know when you should follow instead of lead.

Nathan Schmidt stated leadership is listening. He stated it is very important to listen to others concerns, opinions and expertise of whatever issue they may face and take the knowledge you gained to come to a decision that is in the best interest of the citizens of Topeka and Council District No. 8.

The applicants made the following closing remarks:

Charles D. Wilson stated what prompted him to apply was his personal interest in what is happening in his home town. He also stated that he believes he has reached the time in his life when he has the proper skills and knowledge to help build a better community.

Nathan Schmidt thanked the Governing Body for the commitment they have made to the city and the important service they are providing to the community.

Mayor Wolgast asked the members of the Governing Body to cast their vote. He stated a candidate must receive five (5) votes to be elected to the Council position.

Following the tally of votes, the City Clerk announced Nathan Schmidt received seven (7) votes and Charles D. Wilson received two (2) votes.

Mayor Wolgast announced Nathan Schmidt would serve as the new Councilmember for Council District No. 8.

Victor W. Miller, Administrative Municipal Court Judge, administered the oath of office to Nathan Schmidt, newly elected Councilmember for Council District No. 8.

Retail Cereal Malt Beverage License applications were presented for the following:

<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Seabrook Apple Market	1945 SW Gage Boulevard
Super Store	2121 SW Wanamaker Road
Woody's Express	101 NE U.S. Highway 24

Councilmember Campos II moved to approve the Retail Cereal Malt Beverage License applications as presented. The motion seconded by Councilmember Ortiz carried unanimously. Mayor Wolgast voted "yes." (10-0-0)

AN ORDINANCE introduced by Councilmember John Campos II authorizing the sale, consumption and possession of alcoholic liquor as part of the 2013 Fiesta Mexicana at specified locations and times for a special event pursuant to K.S.A. 41-719(a)(2) and K.S.A. 41-2645(e)(1) was presented for first reading.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE CITY MANAGER, MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL;

Jim Colson, City Manager, stated a storm microburst occurred on June 18, 2013, in a six block radius of North Topeka. He reported as a result of the storm approximately 1,300 residents lost power; one structure on Kansas Avenue sustained damage; and there were no injuries reported. He stated City and utility company crews were working to clean up the area and restore power to citizens.

Mayor Wolgast stated the Governing Body encourages citizen participation and welcomes public comment at all City Council meetings. He noted the Topeka City Council Rules and Procedure are in place to conduct Council meetings in a timely and orderly manner. He stated the Rules of the Council regulate Public Comment and state a person shall address the Council during a Council meeting if they have notified the City Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on the day of any Council meeting to speak on a specific matter on the Council agenda or during the public comment portion of the Council meeting. He encouraged citizens who wish to speak at a Council meeting to call the City Clerk's office at 368-3940 by 5:00 p.m. on the day of any Council meeting.

Councilmember De La Isla thanked David Mountain and Charles D. Wilson for their interest and dedication to the community.

Councilmember Schmidt thanked the Governing Body for selecting him to serve on the City Council. He also thanked fellow candidates and encouraged them to remain in contact with the Council and stay active in the community.

Councilmember Harmon congratulated Councilmember Schmidt on his candidacy. He thanked David Mountain and Charles D. Wilson for their willingness to serve and encouraged them to continue to stay engaged in the community.

Councilmember Hiller thanked the candidates for their willingness to serve the community. She congratulated Councilmember Schmidt on being selected to serve on the City Council and commended the Governing Body for a smooth interview process.

Councilmember Campos II reminded citizens the Fiesta Mexicana Royalty Food Sales would continue through June 30, 2013, at the Marlo Cuevas Balandran Activity Center located at 216 NE Branner Street. He congratulated Councilmember Schmidt for being selected to serve on the City Council and noted he enjoyed working with him on the Redistricting Commission. He thanked all candidates for their interest in serving the community.

Councilmember Ortiz thanked the candidates for their willingness to serve the community and congratulated Councilmember Schmidt for being selected to serve on the City Council. She encouraged Councilmember Schmidt to contact Ginny Burghart, City Council Assistant, as she is a valuable resource for the Council.

Councilmember Everhart encouraged the community to participate in the amateur radio and emergency communications event at the Kaw Valley Amateur Radio Club Annual Field Day on June 22-23, 2013, from 1:00 p.m. Saturday to 1:00 p.m. Sunday located at the northernmost end of Wanamaker Road. She stated they would conduct demonstrations on emergency preparedness and community awareness.

NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

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Brenda Younger  
City Clerk