

**STATE OF KANSAS)
WYANDOTTE COUNTY)) SS
CITY OF KANSAS CITY, KS)**

SPECIAL SESSION, THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2018

The Unified Government Commission of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, met in Special Session, Thursday, June 14, 2018, with eleven members present: Bynum, Commissioner At-Large First District; Burroughs, Commissioner At-Large Second District; Townsend, Commissioner First District (arriving at 5:07 p.m.); McKiernan, Commissioner Second District; Murguia, Commissioner Third District; Johnson, Commissioner Fourth District; Kane, Commissioner Fifth District; Markley, Commissioner Sixth District; Walters, Commissioner Seventh District; Philbrook, Commissioner Eighth District; and Alvey, Mayor/CEO presiding. The following officials were also in attendance: Ken Moore, Chief Legal Counsel; Carol Godsil, Deputy Unified Government Clerk; Joe Connor, Gordon Criswell and Melissa Sieben, Assistant County Administrators; Emerick Cross, Commission Liaison; Mike Taylor, Public Relations Director; Renee Ramirez, Director of Human Resources; and Officer Dent, Sergeant-at-Arms.

MAYOR ALVEY called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL: Johnson, Kane, Markley, Walters, Philbrook, Bynum, Burroughs, McKiernan, Murguia, Alvey.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL SESSION of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, to be held Thursday, June 14, 2018, at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers for an introduction and presentation of Fire Chief candidates. Immediately following will be a public meet and greet in the lobby.

CONSENT TO MEETING of the governing body of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, accepting service of the foregoing notice, waiving all and any irregularities in such service and in such notice, and consent and agree that we, the governing body, shall meet at the time and place therein specified and for the purpose therein stated.

Mayor Alvey said as the Clerk stated, our Fire Chief candidates have been invited to introduce themselves to us this evening. I will turn it over to Administrator Bach for some opening remarks and to announce our first candidate.

Doug Bach, County Administrator, said tonight I am pleased to present to you an excellent group of six candidates that we have advanced into our Assessment Center. This is an accumulative process that has gone on for several months actually as we work through this. It goes through a series of evaluations and interviews that we do to be able to get the candidates to the position they're in today. We're now in the second day of an Assessment Center that started yesterday. They have gone through a series of interviews with various people from within our community and professional staff. They've gone through oral exercises, written exercises and various events to show their performance and how they achieve through that process and our vetting process to determine how they are. With that, I'm ready to start moving through and I will bring the candidates in. They will introduce themselves. They have been given latitude to present what they would like to. They are going to be limited to five minutes during this timeframe and we will go from there and then they will move on out and the next candidate will come in.

John Rukavina said I have been a firefighter, fire officer and a Fire Chief and I love the fire service. There was a period of time where I thought I was meant to be a lawyer and I actually went to law school and became one, but I also discovered that my true passion was with the fire service and I've been involved in that activity ever since. I will say though, that my legal experience has made my job as Fire Chief much easier.

My first Chief job was just up the river actually, St. Joe, MO, just up in Missouri from here so I learned a good bit about Kansas City while I worked in St. Joe. I was the first outside Chief to work in St. Joe. When I left 2.5 years later, I was the Interim City Manager. I sent then to Asheville, North Carolina in the mountains of the western part of the state, became the Fire Chief there and worked there for a little over 13.5 years where again I was the first outside Fire Chief that the Asheville Fire Department had. In 2000, I went to Wayne County, North Carolina which is the county where Raleigh and communities around Raleigh are located, a population of about a million people and I served as Public Safety Director there.

I'm familiar with many of the things that the Kansas City, Kansas Fire Department has done. I think they have an exemplary EMS agency. I would be proud to serve as your Fire Chief.

Kansas City, Kansas has all the attributes I find desirable in a city in which to work. It's not a major metropolis. I had an opportunity to work in that setting in Wayne County with a population of over a million. I much prefer an environment where I think I can have an impact and I think Kansas City, Kansas is that jurisdiction.

I'm also looking for a challenging work environment and I know there have been significant issues at the Fire Department and you, as elected officials, have dealt with and I would like to offer my services in that regard.

Finally, I would look forward to working with a group that continues to demonstrate its commitment to doing its best for the people of Kansas City, Kansas notwithstanding any other issues that may arise. I think in the heart of every firefighter there is a desire to do good and to help out in the community and I continue to associate myself with that and I would consider it a great honor to be able to do that here. Thank you very much for this opportunity to address you and I hope you have a good meeting this evening.

Christopher Riley said I'm a Fire Chief candidate for the position of Fire Chief here in the city of Kansas City, Kansas. I'm very, very happy to be here. I guess by way of introduction, I know my time is limited here, but I've got 36 years in fire service. Ten years roughly of it was as a Fire Chief both in Pueblo and Colorado Springs. I was Chief Officer for about 20 years and I've been kind of thinking about what I want to share and what I stand for in terms of being a Fire Chief. The safety of the firefighters of course is paramount and also the safety of the community by way of training and risk reduction and things like that.

I'm a very firm believer in things like training and mentoring. I'm also a believer in the accreditation process that I had a chance to talk to Mr. Bach about and also Mayor Alvey and what the benefits of accreditation are. I'm also a very firm believer in the absolute importance that there's a healthy labor/management relationship between fire management and fire labor. I've spent most of my career working in a collective bargaining environment so I'm very familiar with that environment working with a contract and things like that.

I also just want to say before I kind of forget, is that I just want to thank Mr. Bach and his team. As a candidate I've been really kind of wowed by this process, the professionalism of

it, and I've told my fellow competitors for the position that we've had a week of being a Fire Chief for a couple of days here in Kansas City, Kansas. There is not a tool in my toolbox I don't think I've used, my toolbox is empty. I'm maybe a little bit braindead right now because of the week we've had. I hope I'm sharing everything I want to share, but thank you for inviting me here in the process. I'm honored to be here and visiting the firefighters at the stations. It was great. You've got some great, great firefighters here. They've got a very good reputation in terms of their professionalism, safety, how they fight fires and so it's a great Fire Department, a great city and I'm just happy to be here.

Thank you very much and I'm happy to answer any questions you might have or is that appropriate or a part of this? **Mr. Bach** said we're not doing that now. We will do that in the lobby if anybody has any one-on-one. **Mr. Riley** said thank you very much and thank you for the opportunity.

Michael Callahan said thank you for inviting me out. I'm excited about the opportunity and the challenges that this represents. My name is Mike Callahan. I'm from Chicago. I have almost 40 years in the fire service exclusively with Chicago. I'm a firefighter DNA. I come from a firefighting family so it's in my blood. My father was a firefighter. I think I might have told some of you in 1960 the Chicago Police and Chicago Fire Department both called my dad to come into their academies on the same day; one on Monday and one on Wednesday. The Fire Department called on Monday. He had six kids so that's probably why I became a fireman instead of a policeman.

I've served, like I said, exclusively with the Chicago Fire Department for my nearly 40 years in the fire service. I have descended linearly through every rank that the Chicago Fire Department has from all of the tested competitive ranks that are in the bargaining unit as well as the ranks that we call exempt. It's an administrative rank and appointed rank.

I was searching for a job because my wife is a police officer and she wants to retire. I'm going to retire from the Chicago Fire Department very soon and I'm hoping—the deal my wife and I struck was I could continue on in the fire service because I believe my training certifications and education are still valuable and I believe that I can impart some of that knowledge onto others. Historically, the Fire Department is known for mentoring. We began mentoring before mentoring was a word. That's how we trained those that came after us and so I believe I can impart that here

in KC and I would like to—my wife and I, as I said, we struck a deal. She doesn't want to work anymore and I do and the agreement we came to we had to be somewhere that was a smaller community with a lower cost of living and more opportunities for outdoor activities. This place picks all of those boxes for both of us so, again, I would like to thank you for having me out and putting me through the process and I'm excited about the opportunity.

Jack Andrade said first off, I would like to thank Renee Ramirez and her HR staff. They did an excellent job in putting this process on for us. It went tremendously well and also everybody else who participated and took time out of their busy schedule and I do appreciate that. I learned a lot over this last few days about myself and about other candidates that were in the process and they did a fabulous job. It was nice getting to know them.

I'm Jack Andrade. I'm the Senior Assistant Chief of Logistics for the Kansas City, Kansas Fire Department and I've been in the Command staff for three years. I know over those three years I've grown quite a bit. I've learned a lot and I've been able and fortunate to be in front of you at least three times over the last three years.

One thing with me, I'm the internal candidate for one of those that is internal and I know the KCK Fire Department and the process that needs to take place to make them more successful. I understand the qualifications, the limitations, and the abilities of our Command staff and everybody else below us. We do a fine job out there and I know we can be more successful in the future. I do have a 100-day plan that I would love to share with you guys if you're willing to see it. Please feel free to email me and I will send it to you.

I do appreciate your time and, again, thanks to Renee and her staff and everybody else.

George Sheets said before I get started, I want to let you know I'm from St. Louis, MO, but I'm a diehard Kansas City Royals fan. I've been in the fire service for 36 years. I just retired in February after 22 years of being a career Fire Chief so I have a career history of success. My forte is labor/management bringing the two diverse groups together. I'm married. I've got a daughter that's 16 and she just called me and said, dad, I found a car that I want so probably on the way back I've got to pick up that car for her. I've got a son that's 23 who is a senior in college in Chicago and he is majoring in graphic design.

I've very happy to be selected as one of your finalist for this community. I went around the community and I've seen 10 of the 18 fire stations and I'm very pleased with what I've seen. You've got a very diverse organization and I'm very happy to see that the individual neighborhood groups have a lot of input with what goes on within the organization. That shows me they are engaged with the local government.

Again, 36 years in the fire service. I've been very successful in my career and I look forward to this opportunity if selected.

John Droppelmann said I'm your current Fire Marshal. I'm truly honored to be here this evening to know that you think that much of me and value my work ethics and leadership to continue this far in the process is truly humbling.

When I started my fire service career in 1991, I never imagined even being considered for a Fire Chief so if you can imagine that, it's been quite a shock to me. I think a lot of what's got me here is my attitude, my ethics, my morale's and that's all due to my parents and I thank them. They raised me the way I am to appreciate what I have, what's around me and those around me and make sure I serve them correctly. I try to instill that in my family, my daughters and those that work with me and I will continue to do that as long as I serve this city.

Why am I here today? I know that the Fire Department has had quite a few challenges over the years. Most of the members of the department that I work closely with we've all been concerned that the leadership needs a change, a better direction and a few of us were identified and we took the challenge of going through this process to hopefully give you all what you want for this Fire Department.

I know, Mr. Bach, you've got a big decision on your hands and I will tell you this much, for the past three days that I've been associated with these gentlemen that came before me, I've had my chance to kind of (inaudible) them a little bit. I don't think you're going to go wrong with any of them. I think they all possess and have shown me the leadership you guys are looking for. Any of the five or myself I think is what you guys are looking for so if that takes any of the stress off of you for your decision, I hope it does. Whatever personality you guys are looking for, you know that's your easy decision I think whoever works most closely with you, but I think the six that you have seen are what you guys are looking for and you've done a good job of finding them.

If this is the end of my venture into this part of the Fire Chief selection process, I thank

you all very much. I still look forward to serving you as your Fire Marshal. There is a ton more work I want to get done. I plan on being back here in front of you all in a couple of months. I've got several more proposals to see you with so thank you guys very much.

Mr. Bach said, Mayor, I will note that we will be emailing out summary packets of information on all the candidates so that commissioners have that information. If any of you are looking for or if you want some information this evening, we can give you a hard copy so you can have that to peruse through as well. That concludes the formal introduction session as we had planned. We have an open lobby session you can go to. It's for informal one-on-one type session to be able to move through to meet the candidates, to talk to them in more detail or in groups or however you would like.

**MAYOR ALVEY ADJOURNED
THE MEETING AT 5:20 p.m.**

dt

Carol Godsil
Deputy Unified Government Clerk

June 14, 2018