

Roll Call

A meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, January 12, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to interview candidates for the City Commission.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell
Vice Mayor David Anderson
Robert Cinabro
Don Cooney
Barbara Miller
Jack Urban

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Interview of
Candidates to Fill
the Vacancy on the
City Commission

Commissioners discussed the process for interviewing the City Commission candidates and changes to the typical City Commission meeting procedures. By consensus the City Commission determined each candidate would have two minutes to make an opening statement, would be allowed one minute to respond to each interview question, and would have 90 seconds to make a closing statement.

Mayor Hopewell explained the candidates had voluntarily agreed to surrender their mobile devices and remain sequestered in the City Manager's Office until their interviews.

The City Commission interviewed the following candidates to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of former City Commissioner Stephanie Moore:

Grant Fletcher*
Eric Cunningham
Leona Carter
Mark Fricke
Tracy Hall
William Wells

*During his opening statement, Mr. Fletcher withdrew his application for candidacy and was not interviewed.

Each candidate made an opening statement, after which Commissioners asked the following questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the biggest issues facing the City of Kalamazoo that the City Commission should be working to address?
2. In light of the City Charter, how do you understand the roles and responsibilities of a City Commissioner, and how do you intend to interact with the City Manager and staff?

3. What would you like to see the City of Kalamazoo and the Kalamazoo metropolitan area be in 20 years?
4. What approaches, strategies, and tactics would you use to help achieve this (referring to question 3), and how do you plan to involve others in moving toward a desirable, shared future?
5. What has been your involvement with City of Kalamazoo affairs?
6. Please give your view on the relationship between the City of Kalamazoo and its neighboring jurisdictions. How could they work together to achieve greater attractiveness and infrastructure efficiency for the entire metropolitan area?
7. What do you know about the City's budget? What do you know about our General Fund? Can you tell me how much our budget is?
8. What experience have you had in the City's neighborhoods?
9. Explain your understanding of the City's OPEB liability and the actions recently taken to address it.
10. Engaging citizens has become an important priority for the City Commission. What ideas do you have to enhance the City's citizen engagement efforts.
11. The City has set as a priority the reduction of poverty, especially among children. How should we work to accomplish this?

Interview of Candidates to Fill the Vacancy on the City Commission (cont'd)

The meeting recessed at 7:50 p.m.
The meeting resumed at 8:02 p.m.

Meeting Recess

When given an opportunity to comment on the candidates, the following citizens addressed the City Commission:

Citizen Comments on the Candidates

Zjade Carter, City resident, expressed support for Leona Carter.

Passion Ridley, City resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.

Wendy Flora, City resident, expressed support for Tracy Hall.

Kevin Wordelman, City resident, expressed support for Tracy Hall.

Jamaal Thomas, non-resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.

Stephen Darden, non-resident, state he was a City business owner and expressed support for Eric Cunningham.

Cliff Maxwell, non-resident, expressed support for Leona Carter.

Joe Hawwer, City resident, expressed support for Tracy Hall.

<p>Citizen Comments on the Candidates (cont'd)</p>	<p>Dvwayne Cornyr, City resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.</p> <p>Elaine May, City resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.</p> <p>Herbert Cunningham, non-resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.</p> <p>Omar Carter, City resident, expressed support for Leona Carter.</p> <p>Zjalyn Carter, City resident, expressed support for Leona Carter.</p> <p>Dana Underwood, City resident, expressed support for Mark Fricke.</p> <p>LaToya McCants, City resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.</p> <p>Vicki Fricke, City resident, expressed support for Mark Fricke.</p> <p>Marietta Whitley, non-resident, expressed support for Eric Cunningham.</p> <p>Jan Murphy, City resident, expressed support for Leona Carter.</p> <p>Max Tibbitts, City resident, expressed support for Mark Fricke.</p> <p>JM Weekley, City resident, expressed support for Leona Carter.</p> <p>Chris Mbah, City resident, offered remarks on Bill Wells and Eric Cunningham.</p>
<p>Commissioner Comments and Discussion</p>	<p>Commissioners remarked the candidates were impressive and thanked them for interviewing.</p> <p>Commissioner Urban requested a discussion of the voting process and suggested a system of ranking of candidates rather than direct votes.</p> <p>At the Mayor's request, City Clerk Borling described the voting process used in 2010.</p> <p>After a brief discussion, Commissioners agreed to use paper ballots, with each Commissioner getting one vote.</p>
<p>First Ballot</p>	<p>City Clerk Borling distributed the first ballot and tallied the results after Commissioners had cast their votes.</p> <p>On the first ballot Leona Carter, Mark Fricke, and Tracy Hall received one vote each, and Eric Cunningham received three votes:</p> <p>Commissioner Cinabro selected Tracy Hall Commissioner Cooney selected Leona Carter Commissioner Miller selected Mark Fricke Commissioner Urban selected Eric Cunningham</p>

Vice Mayor Anderson selected Eric Cunningham
Mayor Hopewell selected Eric Cunningham

First Ballot (cont'd)

As no candidate had received at least four votes, Mayor Hopewell directed the City Clerk to distribute ballots for a second vote.

City Clerk Borling distributed the second ballot and tallied the results after Commissioners had cast their votes.

Second Ballot

On the second ballot Eric Cunningham received six votes:

Commissioner Cinabro selected Eric Cunningham
Commissioner Cooney selected Eric Cunningham
Commissioner Miller selected Eric Cunningham
Commissioner Urban selected Eric Cunningham
Vice Mayor Anderson selected Eric Cunningham
Mayor Hopewell selected Eric Cunningham

Having received affirmative votes from a majority of the City Commission, Eric Cunningham was appointed to the vacant seat on the City Commission.

In response to a question from Mayor Hopewell, Mr. Cunningham stated he preferred to take the oath of office on January 20th so his friends and family could be in attendance. Mr. Cunningham thanked his family and the community for their support and stated was looking forward to working with the Commission.

When given an opportunity to make general comments, the following citizens addressed the City Commission:

Citizen Comments

Asha Kazhad, City resident, expressed concern that none of the City Commission candidates had used the words freedom or liberty in their remarks and answers to questions.

Next, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments from City Commissioners, but no comments were offered.

Commissioner Comments

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on September June 15, 2015

Approved by: _____
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor
Dated: June 15, 2015