

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

March 25, 2021

The Special City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Tebo via teleconference at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Mallory, Tebo, Hocquard, Kwiatkowski, Raab and Brandt

Absent:

General Business:

- City Manager Interviews
 - Michael Green, interview conducted by Mayor Pro Tem Mallory:
 - Q-What interests you about Cheboygan?
 - A-He is originally from Northern Michigan, he likes the slower pace and the outdoors.
 - Q-What is your experience with building a budget and what is the largest budget you have managed?
 - A-The largest budget he has managed is the Department Budget of approximately \$300,000. He has worked with Capital Improvement Plans.
 - Q-How are you with reading financial statements?
 - A-He is familiar with reading audits and working with auditors and accountants. He is fairly comfortable reading financial statements.
 - Q-Do you have any experience with grants?
 - A-He has collaborated on a couple of grant applications, the largest being a \$4 million grant for a Wastewater Treatment Plant.
 - Q-Do you have experience with negotiating municipal labor contracts?
 - A-He has been involved with negotiating labor contracts as an employee with the county.
 - Q-What is your management style?
 - A-He is hands on but doesn't micromanage. He believes in building a good team and giving them the information and tools to help them grow.
 - Q-Councilwoman Raab inquired what he thought the city's most challenging issues were.
 - A-The issues he had noted were blight, housing, rental housing, shopping and medical availability. He also mentioned the Wastewater Treatment Plant update. He prefers to think of the issues as opportunities but that it appeared Cheboygan had a well engaged community and strong downtown.
 - Q-Mayor Pro Tem inquired what he thought his strengths were in regards to the issues the city faces.
 - A-He has a strong planning background and is very personable.
 - Q-Councilwoman Brandt inquired what is concerns are with the job and what he needs to learn.
 - A-He is not afraid of challenges and believes he can do the job.
 - Q-Mayor Tebo inquired about how he deals with people who are resistant to change.

A-He gives them as much information as possible and an opportunity to be heard.

Q-Councilman Kwiatkowski inquired what BS&A applications he was familiar with.

A-He has mostly worked with the BSA Permit application and Assessing. He has also worked some with the billing application.

Q-Questions from the candidate-What are they looking for in the future?

A-Mayor Tebo responded a long term candidate. Councilwoman Brandt responded that they are looking for a candidate with a strong backbone that can handle conflict and who is part of our community. Both Councilwoman Brandt and Mayor Pro Tem commented that they are looking for a strong communicator.

Q-Questions from the candidate-Are you interested in structural changes if necessary and/or privatizing/sharing services?

A-Yes.

- Jason Smith, interview conducted by Mayor Pro Tem Mallory:

Q-What interests you about Cheboygan?

A-His family recently purchased property on Bois Blanc Island and he enjoys the slower pace.

Q-What is your experience in building a budget and what is the largest budget you have managed?

A-As Mayor of Jackson he worked hands on with the City Manager to create the budget of approximately \$101 million. He also sets and manages the DDA Budget of approximately \$156,000.

Q-How are you with reading financial statements?

A-He works closely with the treasurer.

Q-Do you have any experience with grants?

A-He has worked on the administrative side with the Façade Grants with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Q-Do you have any experience in negotiating municipal labor contracts?

A-He does not have much experience with negotiating contracts but he feels they are a necessary evil. He is currently taking a class covering contract negotiations.

Q-What is your management style?

A-He is a transformational leader, trust but verify. He believes in giving employees the tools they need to be successful.

Q-How are you with dealing with conflict?

A-Conflict is a necessary evil that you have to deal with.

Q- What are some of your goals?

A-Continuing education.

Q-Councilwoman Raab inquired what he thought his biggest challenge would be.

A-Community buy in for the Main Street Program, the cultural change that needs to happen to implement the Master Plan including the inspection program and coming up with funding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Q-Mayor Pro Tem Mallory inquired what he thought his strengths are in regards to the challenges.

A-He is an excellent communicator and focuses on infrastructure first.

Q-Councilwoman Brandt inquired about his weaknesses.

A-Communication could be an issue because he is an outsider. Also being an outsider will be harder to get buy in from the community.

Q-Questions from the candidate-How is the Main Street program working for the City?

A-Mayor Pro Tem Mallory responded that the program is great, the downtown is seeing a lot of investment.

Q-Questions from the candidate-How is the overall infrastructure for the city, has it been well maintained, beside the Wastewater Treatment Plant?

A-Mayor Pro Tem Mallory responded that there are other improvements that need to be made, including replacing roads and planning more housing.

Q-Councilman Kwiatkowski inquired what his comfort level is with the budgeting responsibilities.

A-He is very comfortable with the responsibility, he works very closely with the City Treasurer and City Manager.

Q-Councilwoman Raab asked him what his strategic plan would be for taking the position.

A-He would focus on getting familiar with the numbers, the Capital Improvement Plan and getting familiar with the community.

Q-Councilman Mallory inquired if he was capable of juggling projects.

A-He is comfortable bouncing around, he usually has 15 projects going.

- Consideration of Resolution to Approve a Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption Certificate Application under PA 210 of 2005, as Amended.
 - City Manager Eustice explained that a Public Hearing was held on March 9, 2021 and the tax abatement was unanimously approved for ten years. The attached Resolution is just a formality to approve for the application.
 - Councilwoman Raab moved to adopt a resolution to approve a Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption Certificate Application under PA 210 of 2005 as amended for 409 North+ Main Street, seconded by Councilwoman Brandt. A roll call vote was taken, motion carried unanimously.
- City Manager Interviews
 - Daniel Sabolsky, interview conducted by Mayor Pro Tem Mallory
 - Q-What interests you about Cheboygan?
 - A-It's a larger community than where he is with a larger budget and more professional staff. He feels it's a good fit with his expertise with budgeting, finance and grants. He is also an avid outdoorsman, it would be closer to his family, better weather and modern conveniences such as medical care.
 - Q-What is your experience with building a budget and what is the largest budget you have managed?
 - A-He was responsible for putting together a \$17 million budget with the finance director and the department heads.
 - Q-What are your thoughts on whether a fund balance should be spent?
 - A-If the need can be justified than he will figure out how to make that happen.

Q-How are you with reading financial statements?

A-He understands financial statements very well, this is one of his strengths.

Q-Do you have any experience in negotiating municipal labor contracts?

A-He does have experience, the key is the dialogue between management and laborers. Sometimes it helps to have an independent moderator present.

Q-What is your management style?

A-Lead by example. Help motivate and engage staff.

Q-What are your short and long term goals?

A-He likes to learn and experience new things, he enjoys the challenge.

Q-Questions from the candidate-How much money does the city have in reserves?

A-Mayor Pro Tem Mallory responded \$1.3 million unreserved.

Q-Questions from the candidate-Are you willing to implement the phases recommended in the Organizational Study and move forward? And would council be willing to spend an afternoon developing a five year plan?

A-Yes, they have implemented a couple of the recommendations already.

Q-Councilwoman Raab inquired what challenges he thought he would face.

A-He will have to rely on the Council and the Mayor to introduce him to the community. He also sees housing as an issue and retaining employees.

Q-Mayor Pro Tem Mallory inquired how he deals with conflict.

A-Communication is key and it should be dealt with directly.

Q-Councilman Hocquard inquired about funding the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

A-He gave an example of how he funded a \$2.5 million project with a revolving Line of Credit.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Mayor Les A. Tebo

Clerk/Treasurer Bridget E. Brown

Mayor Pro Tem Brett Mallory

Councilwoman Ashley Brandt

Councilman Ken Kwiatkowski

Councilman Kasey Hocquard

Councilwoman Diane E. Raab