

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Committee of the Whole Meeting
Held January 20, 2011 6:00PM

The meeting was called to order by President of Council Larry Oberdorf. and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Eckel, Marquette, Hermes, Scott, and Oberdorf all present. Duricek is expected shortly.

Mr. Oberdorf outlined that the purpose of the meeting was to interview candidates who have indicated an interest in filling the council seat vacated by the resignation of Mr. Richards. He said the format will be the same as used in the past with each candidate having three minutes to give a brief introduction, then council will ask questions with replies limited to three minutes and then each candidate will have three minutes at the end to give a summary.

Candidate Opening Statements

Robert Ruse outlined his previous experience and current position as contained in the resume provided to council and said he will bring a commitment to the community and that his experience as an engineer and in Findlay would be of value to the city.

Craig Tymiak said he is a life-long resident of Rossford and outlined his work experience as contained in the resume he provided to council. He said he would hope to have the ability to find answers to questions, is able to talk to anybody, will find out and know what's going on, won't be swayed from his convictions, and that he loves Rossford and that he will bring that love and his intelligence to help the city.

Jerry Staczek outlined his experiences as contained in his resume which council has and said his main concern is that others have the same childhood in Rossford that we had as well as concerns with seniors and city services and what we can do to help. *At this time Mr. Duricek entered the meeting.*

Neil Mackinnon did not provide a resume to the clerk as requested. He said he is a lifelong resident, lives on Jennings Rd. with two kids at Eagle Point School, is a member of All Saints Parish where he is on the finance committee, and is a member of the Knights of Columbus. He said the community is a part of him and that he would love to serve and be part of a team to take the city forward. He previously was Vice-President of Operations for Nordmann Roofing and has now started his own company Mckinnon & Co. He previously served as vice-chairman of River East Toledo and has a background in commercial business and real estate development. He said he would serve the city well.

Dennis Foy outlined his previous experience as stated on his resume that was provided to council and said he has been a resident for 41 years. He stated that the biggest reason for seeking this position is with the best interest of Rossford in mind and also to fulfill his first commitment as a councilman that was elected and then resigned after one year to serve as Chief of Police. He said he has always felt he let down those voters who voted for him in the 1997 election. He understands the responsibilities of the legislative branch and feels he could do a good job on council.

Mr. Oberdorf read the written statement from Jackie Brown who could not attend. All council members were provided with a copy (attached). Mr. Marquette asked if it is possible for Mrs. Brown to serve in two elected roles as she indicates she will not resign from the school board. Mr. Heban said he will check on that.

Council Questions

Mrs. Eckel asked each candidate what one particular skill or experience they have that can benefit council.

Mr. Staczek said he is a team player and that he listens and gets information before making a decision.

Mr. Mackinnon said that his previous experience in being a member of a CDC has made him familiar with commercial development and private/public partnerships.

Mr. Foy said that his one year of legislative experience may put him a step ahead as well as having seven years of executive experience as Chief of Police.

Mr. Ruse noted his experience in Findlay saying he attended council meeting every two weeks, worked with over 400 employees, negotiated contracts, set water rates, and that he understands contracts and utility rates and the role of council and the administration.

Mr. Tymiak said he is a problem solver and a people person who can get cooperation. He has served as a union steward, been on negotiating committees, and can deal with citizens. He feels he can talk to anybody from the President on down to the homeless and is able to deal with all types of people.

Mrs. Eckel then asked how important it is to balance the old Rossford versus the future and how would they maintain the quality of the community.

Mr. Mackinnon said he sees three items as important- schools, downtown, and the casino. His experience shows that traffic drives retail and that increased traffic from the casino will drive our chances to get decent retail in the downtown. He said he wants the best facilities we can have for our schools but that elementary schools need to be in neighborhoods and that the high school is the heart and soul of our community and that we cannot have a great community without great schools and that he likes that we can walk to school and football games.

Mr. Foy said things are a lot different than when he was hired as a patrolman in 1970 but that change is not necessarily bad. He said to progress we need economic development and that council needs to take advantage of what it brings while being aware that services may need increased. He said we need to go forward and there is no benefit in looking backwards.

Mr. Ruse said we need to focus on the quality of life and balance that quality with development and ask ourselves if that development is worth the investment. We need to balance and maintain what people are accustomed to. He said the challenge with the downtown is the blend of school, business, and casino and how we work together to handle these issues and make things work. He would have a commitment to balance our old qualities and move forward at the same time.

Mr. Tymiak said he has an old school versus new school way of thinking. He said he grew up in small town Rossford and was comfortable with that feeling. He feels things changed over the years due to the decline of LOF. He says everyone can participate in a small town atmosphere even though we do not know everybody anymore. He said there is a love in this town for people with each other and he wants to keep that going in the future.

Mr. Staczek said we need to listen and communicate with people in the community and all of council will have to work together to maintain the right balance.

Mrs. Eckel asked Mr. Tymiak if he had any thought on ways to get more street paving done with limited funds. Mr. Tymiak said Rossford does a fantastic job with limited funds but that mill/fill and micro surfacing are ways to pave more miles on the same amount of money.

Mrs. Eckel asked Mr. Ruse about the importance of storm water utility to a community.

Mr. Ruse said it is very important and he actually started one in Findlay by adding \$1 to the water bill. That money was used to help projects that controlled overflows without using general fund or sanitary sewer fund monies. With the EPA mandates on storm water it is necessary to work on this.

Mr. Marquette said he knows all these candidates individually and is impressed they are here. He asked what criticisms or decisions of council brought them here.

Mr. Foy said no specific thing brought him here and that he has no grudges against anyone, rather it was his lifelong commitment to the city.

Mr. Ruse said it was the need to find ways to advance issues and not be divided. He said there is no communication between the city and the schools and that we have a downtown plan with grant money available but no action has been taken. He noted that the recent letter from the NWSD confused him and he just wants to do his little part in advancing the city.

Mr. Tymiak felt this was a tough question as he is usually in favor of what council does. He would like to see more information and publicity on what is going on.

Mr. Staczek said he came because he noticed during the last election that a lot of people complain but do not step up and get involved so he decided to become involved.

Mr. Mackinnon said he is here because he cares about his community and he would like to be a guardian of our way of life. He said if chosen he would not accept his council pay but return it to the community.

Mr. Hermes asked what their one favorite thing about Rossford is.

Mr. Tymiak said it is the community camaraderie and the way people come together and are happy to see each other. He likes that most everybody knows everyone in a positive way.

Mr. Staczek said it is the sense of home you feel.

Mr. Mackinnon said he agrees with Mr. Tymiak and Mr. Staczek and said he loves the people here and the safety of the community.

Mr. Foy said it is the fact that despite tough economic times we still provide a safe community.

Mr. Ruse said it is living in a safe and secure community.

Mr. Scott asked them what they see as the major challenge for the city.

Mr. Ruse said it is development and infrastructure. He related development to the downtown, casino, and schools. He said since infrastructure is underneath the ground people do not see or think of but that improving existing infrastructure is probably our number one issue. As an engineer he understands that and that once he has a handle on our finances he would look for grant money. He would also work with the county and make sure to coordinate water/sewer projects with road and sidewalk projects.

Mr. Tymiak said it is the water/sewer lines. He said we have a lot of old lines that need to be replaced before the problem becomes worse. He also said lack of sidewalks in areas where kids walk to school is a problem and that we need to figure out a way to make the downtown attractive to people leaving the casino. Mr. Scott asked what is the most pressing issue and Mr. Tymiak said it is downtown redevelopment and he does not have an answer to solve it.

Mr. Staczek said it is the city's image and how we look to others and see ourselves. He said the last election showed there is a lot of negativity about our image. He deals with facts and does not know all the facts yet but feels we need to improve our image.

Mr. Mackinnon said it is economic development because without it we cannot progress. This cannot be solved alone but will take the effort of everyone.

Mr. Scott asked each candidate if they would run for the seat again if chosen.

Mr. Foy said yes as he is trying to fulfill his four year commitment from his previous election.

Mr. Mackinnon said yes.

Mr. Staczek said yes.

Mr. Tymiak said yes and that hopefully he would do a good job before running for election.

Mr. Ruse said yes and that his intention would be to do a quality job and the community would want him to run.

Mr. Duricek asked each candidate to name one personal attribute they would bring to council.

Mr. Mackinnon said he is fair, honest, and a team player.

Mr. Foy said he is a team player and could work with anyone on council.

Mr. Ruse said he is a detail person and researches reasons and facts before making a decision.

Mr. Tymiak said he lives his life thinking actions speak louder than words, treats people with respect, and is an honest and caring person while speaking his mind. He conducts his life knowing that he is always watched "Fear God, not man".

Mr. Staczek said he tries to put himself in the other person's shoes and listen to the other side of an issue.

Mr. Oberdorf asked what their views on the NWSA agreement are.

Mr. Ruse said he was confused by the correspondence he received from them in the mail. He would need to get a better understanding of the agreement before offering an opinion but that he respects the NWSA and their people.

Mr. Tymiak thinks the NWSA agreement was the best decision the city could have made. He thinks Toledo could care less about us and he hopes that NWSA will look at our infrastructure.

Mr. Staczek said he does not know all the information but there are some nagging red flags he would need to look at further.

Mr. Mackinnon said he only knows what he read in the paper and he would need to do more research before offering an opinion.

Mr. Foy said he only knows what he read in the paper and the letter he received from NWSA but thinks council did the right thing.

Mr. Oberdorf asked them what work related project they are most proud of.

Mr. Tymiak said he is proud of coming to Toledo as a laborer and working his way up to become a supervisor using his own intelligence and abilities.

Mr. Staczek said he is most proud of his biggest failure – the one summer of positive experience running the Rossford riverboat.

Mr. Mackinnon said he is also most proud of a failure- that being the work done on trying to make the Rossford amphitheatre a viable project. He said they had an agreement with an operator but that the township imploded the deal. He said that was the most fun and challenging project he had ever worked on.

Mr. Foy said he is most proud of working his way up from a patrolman to becoming Chief of Police and also being elected to council.

Mr. Ruse said he is proud of his business having its best year in 2010 despite being hard economic times, completing a \$45m project in Findlay, and building a community based playground in Findlay in 6 days with donated material valued at \$250,000.

Mrs. Eckel said she has asked this question of candidates before – what is your favorite college team.

Mr. Foy said Notre Dame, Mr. Mckinnon said Michigan, and Mr. Staczek, Tymiak, and Ruse said Ohio State.

Candidate Closing Statements

Mr. Ruse said he appreciated the opportunity to be here and said he would bring a great deal of experience and an understanding of the community and issues. He would like to see advances on these issues and more open communication on these. He is committed to the community and can be part of a team moving Rossford forward.

Mr. Tymiak said thank you for the opportunity and said no matter whom council selects they will not get a loser in that all are good candidates. If he is chosen he will put his best foot forward to cooperate with everyone and communicate and share ideas. He knows people in key positions in Toledo and has the ability to speak to anyone.

Mr. Staczek said thank you and that this has been a wonderful experience. He is a team player with an open mind and the ability to research facts. Rossford has challenges and he is willing to listen and communicate.

Mr. Mackinnon said thank you and that Rossford has problems. He said that no matter if you have been here 1 year or 100 years, went to school here or did not, that we all are just as important. He said we should not get in our own way, as there is some exciting stuff happening.

Mr. Foy expressed his thanks and said he was impressed by everyone and their answers. He said qualifications are the number one indicator of what the candidate could provide. If appointed to council he thinks he can hit the ground running and has the necessary qualities to be a good councilman.

Audience Remarks

Mayor Verbosky thanked everyone for showing an interest in Rossford and expressing their willingness to serve.

Mr. Oberdorf also thanked them and said they are all fine candidates.

Mr. Duricek moved and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.

Larry Oberdorf, President of Council

Robert P. Watrol, Clerk of Council