

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2016

A special meeting of the Council of the City of Lebanon, Pa., was held in Council Chamber of the Municipal Building, Lebanon, Pa., this evening, Chairperson Parker presiding.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present--Mr. Carey, Mr. Wertz, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Parker, Chairperson. Absent--none.

Also present were Mayor Sherry L. Capello; Director of Administration-Assistant to the Mayor Debra J. Gates; Fire Commissioner Duane Trautman; 11 persons in the audience; and 1 member of the news media.

Chairperson Parker proposed the following voting process for the selection of a candidate to fill the vacancy on Lebanon City Council: The Council Chair will read the name of each prospective candidate in the order in which they were interviewed, and request whether any member of Council is prepared to vote for that prospective candidate. Indications from members that they might or could vote for that person would be non-binding. Prospective candidates receiving no support would be eliminated from consideration. Council Chair would then read the names of the remaining candidates in the same order and ask members of Council if they would cast their vote for that candidate. This would be the first ballot and each member would only be permitted to vote once in this ballot and in succeeding ballots. As such, this vote by each Councilmember would be binding for that ballot only. Balloting will continue until three (3) members of Council vote for one prospective candidate or until Councilmembers agree that they are deadlocked. Once a prospective candidate receives three (3) votes, the Chair will make a motion to select him/her to fill the unexpired term, and a vote of Councilmembers will be taken. If no selection is made, the matter will be referred to the Court of Common Pleas for selection of a prospective candidate to serve the unexpired vacant term, and the meeting will be adjourned.

The foregoing voting procedure was adopted on motion of Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Carey. Yeas--Mr. Carey, Mr. Wertz, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Parker, Chairperson--4; nays--none.

Chairperson Parker announced that candidate William Bishop advised that he would not be able to attend the October 24 and November 28 Council meetings due to prior commitments.

Chairperson Parker stated that he was impressed with the presentations by the candidates and thanked the candidates for their interest in serving on Council.

First Round of Voting

Chairperson Parker read the names of each candidate and Councilmembers indicated if they might or could vote for that candidate, as follows:

Greg Vaitl – Mr. Parker

Dr. Joseph Elder –Mr. Parker and Mr. Wilson

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Joseph Morales – Mr. Wertz, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Parker
Jeffrey Boltz – none
William Bishop – Mr. Carey, Mr. Wertz, and Mr. Parker
Josh Brady – none
Peter Ehrgood – none
Aurelis Garcia – Mr. Wilson
Glenn Meck – Mr. Wertz and Mr. Parker

Second Round of Voting

Chairperson Parker read the names of each remaining candidate and Councilmembers cast their vote, as follows:

Greg Vaitl – none
Dr. Joseph Elder – none
Joseph Morales – Mr. Carey, Mr. Wertz, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Parker

On motion of Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Carey, Joseph Morales was appointed to fill the unexpired term of R. Anthony Matula, effective September 19 and expiring January 2018. Yeas--Mr. Carey, Mr. Wertz, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Parker, Chairperson--4; nays--none.

Patrice Royer, 521 Canal Street, Lebanon, commended Council for the decision in appointing Mr. Morales. She stated that she has known Joe for a long time and she feels he will do a great job for the city.

Councilmember Wilson stated that he hopes the candidates that were not chosen tonight will consider running for office in the next election.

Councilmember Carey read a prepared statement. He thanked all the candidates for demonstrating their heart and soul for the city.

Councilmember Wertz stated that he understands this was a nerve wracking experience and he thanked the candidates for having the courage to participate in the interviews.

John Bower, 213 Stuart Street, Lebanon, stated that during the interviews, Council asked the candidates what they felt was the biggest challenge for the City of Lebanon. He asked Council what they feel the biggest challenge is for the city.

Chairperson Parker stated that he feels a major challenge for the City of Lebanon and other third class cities is that third class cities serve as more of a function than a place for 25,000 residents to live. He added that he feels the state legislature needs to develop a system where more than property owners and business owners contribute. The legislature needs to recognize that a third class city does not have the ability to support infrastructure, fire protection and police services to more than its residents.

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Councilmember Wilson concurred with Mr. Parker. He also expressed his concern that residents and some landlords are not taking pride in their property.

Councilmember Carey stated that there are many challenges. The citizens need to come together to realize that the only thing that is constant is change. He stated that one challenge is reigniting the people of the city to love the City of Lebanon.

Councilmember Wilson stated that most volunteers in the city are not residents of the city. He added that residents of the city need to step up to volunteer.

Councilmember Wertz stated that this city has been good to his family for 85+ years. He stated that he feels the city needs to provide goods and services to ensure the safety of its citizens. Councilmember Wertz stated that 2/3 of the properties in the city are rental properties. He added that, in his opinion, property owners residing in owner occupied properties tend to show more pride in their property.

George Horn, 315 South First Avenue, Lebanon, stated that he was thrilled by the response to fill the vacancy on Council. He expressed his appreciation to Council for everything they do for the city.

Patrice Royer, 521 Canal Street, Lebanon, thanked everyone who participated in the interviews. She stated that she was impressed with the candidates and she hopes those who were not chosen will take an interest in the city and run for office next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

CHERYL J. GIBSON, Clerk