

**THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BENSON, ARIZONA
HELD NOVEMBER 14, 2013, AT 4:00 P.M.
AT CITY HALL, 120 W. 6TH STREET, BENSON, ARIZONA**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor King called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present were: Mayor Toney D. King, Sr., Vice Mayor Al Sacco, Councilmembers Patrick Boyle, Ron Brooks and Jeff Cook, Chris Moncada and Peter Wangsness.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of and possible direction to Staff regarding the candidates for the City Manager position

Mayor King asked for input on the most recent candidates and then stated he would begin. Mayor King stated he liked the Colonel because he has run bases for many years and has knowledge of UAV projects since he is in the Air Force. Mayor King then stated there is no difference between a base and a town, adding they both deal with planning, finance and people. Mayor King then stated a Colonel knows how to keep things quiet when they should be quiet, knows how to speak out when he needs to speak and deals with a police force and golf courses on base, as well as utilities departments, hospitals, libraries and transportation on base, which is why he thinks the Colonel is the right man for the job. Mayor King then stated Mr. Stephens may be in the military but Mayor King doesn't believe the League of Arizona Cities and Towns is right in saying there is a difference between military experience and municipal management experience, adding he disagrees 100%, adding there is no difference between a base and a city. Mayor King then stated secondly Mr. Stephens said he would come in for \$90,000, adding the Council could offer him \$80,000 and let Mr. Stephens make up his mind. Mayor King then stated Mr. Stephens is retiring from the military and he thinks Council should think about him, adding there is the possibility of the UAVs coming to Benson and Mr. Stephens knows the language, knows exactly how to talk to the military and how to handle it. Mayor King then stated Mr. Stephens is his pick for the new City Manager.

Councilmember Wangsness stated he came to the same conclusions as Mayor King, adding Mr. Stephens' Air Force background is a benefit for our airport and the UAV possibilities. Councilmember Wangsness stated Mr. Stephens went out of his way to study Benson before his interview and is from Arizona. Councilmember Wangsness then stated he was sure Mr. Stephens has dealt with municipalities and has strong organizational skills.

Vice Mayor Sacco stated as a veteran, he takes exception to the comment made about military experience being different than municipal management experience, adding the military has better training than any civilian company in this country. Vice Mayor Sacco then stated the military is also very disciplined and think things through before a decision is made.

Councilmember Wangsness stated there is also the military tradition of a strong distinction between the political side and military side and knowing how to separate the two.

Mayor King then stated Mr. Stephens was a full-blown Colonel and has been in charge of a whole base and was responsible for everything on that base and no one could tell him that Mr. Stephens doesn't know when he is spending too much money or not enough. Mayor King then stated when he lived on base, he had to keep his lawn a certain way or he would get a ticket, adding the military means business and if Mr. Stephens comes to Benson, he will know how to take care of business fast.

Councilmember Boyle stated Mr. Stephens would be outstanding, adding the UAV project may still come to Benson and Mr. Stephens might be what seals the deal, adding Mr. Stephens knows everything there is to know about the Air Force. Councilmember Boyle then stated people talk to Council about the need for airport improvements and Mr. Stephens is someone who knows everything there is to know about airports and improvements and probably knows the way to get the best possible bang for the buck. Councilmember Boyle then stated with all of that and with discipline and everything else, he thinks Mr. Stephens would be outstanding, adding he didn't think the Council could do better at any price. Vice Mayor Sacco agreed.

Councilmember Moncada stated he had ranked the candidates, with Mr. Scannell being number 1, Mr. Stephens being number 2, Mr. Hancock being number 3 and Mr. Museus being number 4. Councilmember Moncada then stated Mr. Scannell interviewed well, has a lot of experience and good references, adding the people Councilmember Moncada talked to really liked Mr. Scannell. Councilmember Moncada then stated he ranked Mr. Stephens number 2 because economic development experience was one of the main things Council was looking for in a new City Manager and a military base is a natural economic development driver that doesn't require much effort for economic growth, which is one of the main differences between running a base and a municipality, but noted Councilmembers brought up some good points regarding the UAV project. Councilmember Moncada then stated Mr. Hancock interviewed pretty well and that he ranked Mr. Museus number 4, adding he has a lot of experience, but was unemployed for 2 years, which was a concern.

Councilmember Brooks stated he came to the same conclusions for Mr. Scannell, adding he thought Mr. Scannell was top notch and if his salary expectation was lower, Mr. Scannell might be his first choice. Councilmember Brooks then stated Mr. Scannell knows what he is worth and the Council doesn't want to go that high on salary. Councilmember Brooks then stated he will concede with the rest of the Council that the Colonel really does seem to fit the bill, adding he thinks the employees have not had a true manager for years and years and Mr. Stephens manages personnel like crazy and would be great with the public and with employees and would get camaraderie going. Councilmember Brooks then stated Mr. Stephens might be a little weak in economic development, since it is not specifically what he does, but he thinks Mr. Stephens can do it, adding he is sure Mr. Stephens deals with a lot of professional people and knows how to deal with people on that level, adding if Council has to work on that as a committee, he thinks they could. Councilmember Brooks then stated he thinks the Council is getting a better deal with Mr. Stephens, because he thinks the Council can pick up the ball where Mr. Stephens may not have it but he thinks as far as people coming to the City and seeing Mr. Stephens and talking to him, Councilmember Brooks thinks Mr. Stephens would represent the City well. Councilmember Brooks then stated it also stuck in his mind that Mr. Stephens is retiring from the military and is not hurting for money, so the salary isn't a big thing to him, adding what stuck in his mind is that Mr. Stephens said the City would be number 1. Councilmember Brooks then stated he would go along with the rest of the Council on Mr. Stephens.

Councilmember Cook stated he agreed Mr. Museus was not the right person for the job. Councilmember Cook then stated Mr. Hancock was his top choice, adding Mr. Hancock was appointed to the Colorado Aeronautics Board by the Governor which required Senate approval in 2005 and has been there ever since, which has been 8 years; noting that kind of experience with aeronautics is something the City needs as we pursue the UAV enterprise at the airport. Councilmember Cook then stated Mr. Hancock spent his life in public service, adding his last job was the Assistant County Manager in Garfield County, Colorado. Councilmember Cook then stated there is a difference between Mr. Stephens and Mr. Hancock, adding the main thing that stands out to him is that he heard for several years about the problems that come when there is a City Manager with a strict disciplinary background. Councilmember Cook then stated he was referring to the Police Chief who was the City Manager, adding there were complaints about that kind of background and because of that, he was shying away from Mr. Stephens, who has the strict military background. Councilmember Cook then stated Mr. Stephens has also not had to deal with civil law and that's what the City Manager is going to have to deal with every day that he's on the job and Mr. Stephens has no experience in that, adding for those reasons, Mr. Hancock is his first choice. Vice Mayor Sacco stated he took exception to Councilmember Cook's comments, adding there is better training in the military than in any civilian college in the United States with Councilmember Cook stating he didn't disagree with Vice Mayor Sacco. Vice Mayor Sacco then stated Councilmember Cook implied Mr. Stephens didn't fit the bill with Councilmember Cook

stating he did not imply that.

Councilmember Brooks stated he would like to reiterate Councilmember Boyle's statement about the UAV project, adding he is really hoping it comes to Benson and Mr. Stephens and his Air Force background might be a magnet for that. Councilmember Brooks then stated he didn't mean to say he wanted to hire Mr. Stephens for that reason, but it definitely is a plus for the City, adding as far as what Mr. Stephens lacks and the similarities of running a base vs. a city, if the Council gets a good law firm, Mr. Stephens will be able to utilize them to get any questions he has answered, so he isn't too concerned.

Mayor King then stated he wanted to make a comment about the economic development side of it, adding he doesn't think Mr. Stephens needs a lot of economic development experience, but Mr. Stephens does deal with economic development, adding Mr. Stephens buys from the military, deals with the exchange store, the commissary and has some experience with contractors. Mayor King stated Mr. Stephens deals with fast food restaurants in getting them on the base so does have some economic development behind him, adding it may not be a whole lot, but the Council is looking for someone to live here and start getting the job done. Mayor King then moved to start contract negotiations with Mr. Stephens to become the new City Manager. Seconded by Councilmember Moncada, who then stated he wanted the Council to discuss the cost of moving expenses, adding he wanted Mr. Stephens to be specific on what he wants for moving costs. Councilmember Brooks stated he would like to actually remove that one section in the contract that addresses moving expenses, adding he thinks the Council can live with those expenses and if there is something in there that doesn't belong, the Council can talk to Mr. Stephens about it, but he didn't think it was proper to tell Mr. Stephens the Council would pay to get him moved halfway here, adding that would just be insulting. Mayor King stated he would add that to his motion. Motion passed 6-1 with Councilmember Cook voting nay.

Mayor King then stated the Council didn't need to address the next item.

Councilmember Brooks asked Mr. Hamilton if the attorney proposal had been received yet with Mr. Hamilton stating there have been email problems, but if it is received, it will be on the agenda for the November 25 Council meeting. Councilmember Brooks then asked Mr. Hamilton to send it out as soon as it was received, adding he thinks the Council should call a special meeting if it's before November 25. Councilmember Wangsness stated he would be gone until November 27 for an optical project, adding hopefully, some optical buildings will be developed in Benson in the future.

2. Discussion of and possible direction to Staff regarding the position of the City Manager

Mayor King stated this item was not needed as action had already been taken. Mayor King then moved to table this item. Seconded by Councilmember Wangsness. Motion passed 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Brooks moved to adjourn at 4:20 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Boyle. Motion passed 7-0.

ATTEST:

Toney D. King, Sr., Mayor

Vicki L. Vivian, CMC, City Clerk