

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI**  
**SATURDAY, March 22, 2014 AT 8:30 A.M.**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS – NOVI CIVIC CENTER – 45175 W. TEN MILE ROAD**

**Mayor Gatt called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Gatt, Mayor Pro Tem Staudt, Council Members \*Casey (arrived 8:34), Fischer, Markham, Mutch, Wrobel

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**CM 14-03-049 Moved by Wrobel, seconded by Markham; MOTION CARRIED: 6-0**

**To approve the Agenda as presented.**

**Roll call vote on CM 14-03-049**                      **Yeas: Staudt, Fischer, Markham, Mutch, Wrobel, Gatt**  
**Nays: None**  
**Absent: Casey**

**AUDIENCE COMMENT – None**

**PURPOSE OF SPECIAL MEETING**

Mayor Gatt explained the purpose of the special meeting is to interview recruitment firms for a new City Manager. There were three firms invited to interview. The firms interviewing this morning were physically separated to prevent them from hearing any interview questions. Each Council Member will be given the opportunity to ask two questions of each representative.

1. Interview the following firms to facilitate City Manager search process:  
  
8:30 a.m. Strategic Government Resources

Gary Holland, Senior Vice President Strategic Government Resources (SGR), spoke about his qualifications and his company's focus. They are focused on the needs of the City. He will sit down with Council members and staff to discuss the short and long term priorities for the City and the characteristics needed for the next City Manager. Next, he would develop a position and community profile that will be used for an outreach to city manager professionals across the country. The material will be approved by City Council before actively recruiting. SGR uses a multi-faceted approach to reach out to people in the profession. They use ads placed in professional publications, newsletters, websites, and e-mails to 66,000 local government professionals.

\*Member Casey arrived at 8:34 a.m.

They have a network of individuals across the country, but they don't have a specific set of candidates. He will personally do prospecting along with receiving the applications from individuals from ads. He recruited Clay and while he wasn't necessarily looking for a job, he knew of his skills and the fit with the City of Pearland Texas. SGR has an interactive process of receiving applications with an electronic system. They have an online application. He will go through and evaluate the candidates on a tiered level. He will present all the candidates that have applied to Council but will have detailed information on the candidates he feels meet the needs of Council. Once candidates have been chosen by Council for interviews, an online video recorded interview process will be utilized. Council can watch the videos as a group or individually and determine which of the candidates they want to interview personally. This will help see how they respond to questions. He will be available to help with the interview process and supply some interview questions. He can be available for contract negotiations and can mediate that process. All the candidates he has placed are still in their position. He said the process typically takes ninety days or more. After sixty days, it becomes an issue of scheduling interviews. He will work with Council as long as it takes to find a satisfactory candidate.

Member Markham had no questions as she stated she was new to the process.

Member Wrobel asked how attractive is this position and will there be local respondents or nationwide. Mr. Holland said candidate's regional characteristics will help determine whether candidates will fit in Novi. There will be many people who have the skills, but it is a question of how effectively they would be able to work with Council and other city leaders. He expects them from all over the country because the school systems are good, the City is more innovative, and the City Council is viewed as being stable and works together to get things done.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked, at any one time, how many searches are conducted and how will the time be balanced between them. Mr. Holland stated he never has more than five but currently has two in the final stages. The amount of time dedicated is whatever it takes to get the job done. Other communities have engaged them for only specific functions. He is currently involved in component searches, which is once they have selected a finalist for the positions; their Human Resources department takes over. Mayor Pro Tem noted that there is a reasonable expectation a city manager would be looking for a community of this size and as being a mid-level stepping stone. How long would he expect someone to stay if they are looking for a more progressive opportunity? Mr. Holland answered if you have a really good manager, the one issue will be compensation. There will be other communities who will be interested as well and if they can compensate them at a higher level, it would be out of the Council's hands. The stability that this City has demonstrated goes a long way towards the City Manager longevity.

Member Fischer asked what Council gets to see about the candidates. Mr. Holland said he will have them in a tiered format including their cover letter, resume, and a completed detailed questionnaire so Council can see what their answers are and not just what a candidate wants you to see. This would include things such as their most

important accomplishment, reaching a goal, if they were fired and why did they leave their other positions and how they managed their personnel. All these things give insight as to how they get results. Member Fischer asked if they censor any information. Mr. Holland answered no. Member Fischer mentioned it sounds like the information will be tiered for Council and by law, Council must be the ones to narrow down the candidates. He asked if they narrowed down the candidates in any way. Mr. Holland answered that they will see every candidate, but not as much information on the less qualified candidates.

Member Mutch asked, based on past experience, what a typical candidate would look like. Mr. Holland said those that might apply will not always meet the established criteria. He sees people who want to relocate near family, home, and those in the latter stages of a career. Council needs to discuss how long they expect someone to stay. With an experienced candidate, the positive is the wealth of experience, but the down side is they may be here 5-7 years. The aggressive younger candidate wants to accomplish goals, but will make some mistakes heading toward their goals and the balance will be important. There would be drawbacks to either one of these candidates. Ideally, it will be someone who is mid-career, but early enough in their career where they are interested in solid accomplishment. Novi will see a spectrum of applicants. Member Mutch noted the problems Michigan has had and asked if that might have an impact on prospective candidates. Mr. Holland asked area residents about Detroit, and many said that while they are from the Metro Detroit area, they live in Novi. The information that is put together will have to dispel any bad perception. Novi is a wonderful community and must speak about things like how picturesque it is, the industrial corporate area, and the fact that home values are good. People from Michigan will know, but those around the country may not know. Member Mutch asked what can Council do to make sure the process is successful. Mr. Holland noted the really good candidates will have other options and the more you can appeal to them, it would be mutual, in as much as they want to sell themselves to Council.

Member Casey asked how he has handled wildly divergent points of view from Council Members in developing the profile. Mr. Holland mentioned that when he interviewed each member of Council from different communities, a couple people have asked him how far out in left field are they. His response was that most want the same type of priority. Member Casey asked for specifics as to how and where he would market this position. Mr. Holland would advertise on websites and in newsletters for associations relative to local government. Unless he is specifically told otherwise, that is what they will use International City Managers Association, Michigan Municipal League, publications regional in nature and associations of city managers and assistant city managers.

Mayor Gatt asked what are the most important qualities that a successful city manager presents. Mr. Holland said successful city managers have a management style or personnel management style that facilitates accomplishment. They will be able to bring in new staff, mentor and develop existing staff. They will have the ability to communicate with City Council, noting the different backgrounds, being able to explain in terms that all of Council can understand and why the recommendations or

effectively communicate with problems and potential solutions. He would be effective in interacting with other organizations within the community, at the state level and regional level in a competent way to work towards meeting the needs of the city, and being a good fit with the community. Also, this would include If the residents felt they were consistent with the community in the way they live their life and reflect positively on the community. Mayor Gatt asked if they had been involved with any other Novi staff. Mr. Holland answered no. Mr. Holland said he was very excited to work with Novi and the stability of the community makes it a professional opportunity.

Council recessed at 9:05 a.m. Council reconvened at 9: 18 p.m.

9:45 a.m. Slavin Management Consultants

Bob Slavin, President, Slavin Management Consultants, noted he has placed more than 300 candidates in governmental agencies. They've done a lot of work in Michigan cities and most recently in Bay City. They are specialists in City Manager searches. He has a staff with great qualifications that he has hand selected including Dave Crains, former ICMA President, currently is a part time city manager in Ohio and heads the mid-west regional office and Paul Winberg, also on the board of directors for ICMA. George Goodman is a former MML Director and is available to help. He knows a lot of folks in Michigan and could help identify candidates. They've never failed to meet a client's needs, on time, and always within budget. 95% of their placements stay in their positions more than 5 years with an average of 8 years. They spend a lot of time at the beginning of the process to determine the needs and utilize data bases, web sites, professional associations, technology, and receive all resumes through e-mail. It's a very interactive and personal process. Mr. Slavin outlined some of the Michigan clients. They will focus on the recruitment process based on information and review criteria from Council. They conduct an on-site meeting with Mayor and Council. Then they do on-site interviews with candidates, background investigations, design interviews, and help with the selection process. The process is guaranteed so that if anyone left in the next two years, they redo the search for no additional fee. The process usually takes ninety days and they are prepared to begin the project within fifteen days of Council's decision making.

Member Casey asked about an experience in the past where there were wildly divergent points of view from the employer. Mr. Slavin answered yes, they've experienced that and with talking to each Council Member, they predominantly have the same characteristics. He said if the ideas are too divergent, he has asked the Council to vote on it. Member Casey asked what data bases will be used. Mr. Slavin said they will mostly use the ICMA, the MML, and their own extensive database. They also use information from their current searches. They will use National League of Cities, some commercial websites such as governmentjobs.com, and will also ask Council for a particular resource.

Member Mutch asked what type of candidates this position will attract and what impact does Michigan and Detroit have on attracting folks outside of Michigan. Mr. Slavin answered Novi stands out like a beacon of success far reaching beyond

Michigan's borders and will attract those interested in maintaining that excellence. The State of Michigan does have an improving reputation with the turnaround in the auto industry that helps the image. The City of Detroit's characteristics are not attributed to Novi and not to Michigan. It is possible to make sure people know that assessed values are going up, S & P rating is up, economic growth is up and the City has invested in seniors, etc. Member Mutch asked, in terms of the search process, what Council can do to ensure the process is successful. Mr. Slavin said they can work with him as a partner. He would need to have Council available for meetings, discussions, seeing all the resumes, and for progress meetings where he shares results of candidate search. He will help them in every way possible. He would be the agent and work together.

Member Fischer asked what Council gets to see on each of the candidates. Mr. Slavin said everything he gets from candidates is what Council can see. Member Fischer noted by law, Council must review the candidates and narrow them down. Mr. Slavin uses a specific process to develop the top 12-15 people then he sends a supplemental questionnaire to them. That is when he wants to come back and speak with Council to go over everything candidates have provided to them such as resumes, questionnaire, matrix, etc. including names and the importance of confidentiality. Council will see everything with all letters, resumes, etc.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked, at any one time, how many searches they were conducting. Mr. Slavin said the company handles 9 at a time and he can handle 3 at a time, otherwise, they don't bid. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked what would be a reasonable expectation for a City Manager to stay longer than 5 years. Mr. Slavin noted their average is around 8 years which is what Clay's time was. He said their average is much higher than the national average.

Member Wrobel asked if this was a local, regional or national search. Mr. Slavin viewed it as national search due to the things being done in Novi that are national. The net should be cast as wide as possible. Most of his successful placements have been where people haven't had to travel too far. Member Wrobel asked how many cities similar to Novi are currently looking for City Managers. Mr. Slavin noted Fort Collins was a similar city and nationwide in Colorado, California and Florida. Council will be looking for candidates who are in high demand. Once they have a candidate identified, it needs to be moving quickly so as to not lose interested candidates. He cited an instance where candidates took other jobs prior to the interview process.

Member Markham asked who specifically would be focused on this process for the city. Mr. Slavin said he would be the person managing, but may be able to involve George Goodman. He would also involve someone else in the process, in case something happened to him. They also use vendors to coordinate the networking process, background checks. Member Markham asked about the candidate pool, how many that would involve and if they use video to interview. Mr. Slavin said 5-7 candidates would be a good number. They have done Skype interviews and can use vendors to interview for industrial psychology. It is preferred to interview someone in person.

Mayor Gatt asked what were the most critical skills to become a successful city manager. Mr. Slavin said openness, communication, being ethical, ability to relate to Council members, and assisting in collaboration with Council while enhancing their goals, motivating staff to carry out those goals done with foresight, with strategic planning, and measureable. Mayor Gatt asked what their biggest success and greatest failure. Mr. Slavin said he completed an attorney search in Greenville, SC and only five were able to meet the qualifications. He negotiated terms and conditions but when a staff member found out, that person didn't like it even though the attorney would work for Council. He consulted with the staff member and Council to resolve the deal. With regard to failure, a City in Florida hired a consultant who did a search for a group with two factions. The consultant was hired and fired on a split vote. His firm was hired by a phone call and was given to his firm. This group couldn't agree on what they were looking for in a city manager, so Mr. Slavin withdrew from the process. In closing, Mr. Slavin noted he has been watching Novi since the last search in 2006; Novi still has a great reputation. A personal relationship was developed. They have a great reputation for treating candidates well and maintaining confidentiality. Their work is thorough and they are ready to do this work again.

Council recessed at 10:01 a.m. Council reconvened at 10:13 a.m.

#### 11 a.m. Waters Executive Recruitment

Chuck Anderson, Senior Consultant noted he came to Michigan yesterday to visit as he was a former Michigan resident in East Lansing for nine years. He is familiar with Novi and the community. One of the key criteria for their recruitment process is to understand the issues of the community. Novi has a great story to tell, diversity of the population base, diversity of our retail and commercial, parks and recreation, etc. They have a web based process that is very accessible to prospective candidates. They do extensive direct outreach throughout the process, to closely meet the City's profile. They will spend a lot of time with Council and they will be able to view all items submitted for the position. They have an interactive interviewing process for the 10-15 most qualified candidates. They do a personal interview with them on video. The data can be reviewed with Council. An on-site interview can be done with the 3-5 most qualified candidates. They can develop a community based survey that allows employees and citizens to share their information. This is a tool they offer if Council wishes to use it. If their firm is selected, he would be the lead consultant.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt noted, as a city so attractive, what should their expectation be, if they hire a young aggressive city manager, to retain them for a period of time? Mr. Anderson said they screen candidates with that idea in mind. Whether they are coming here to retire or coming here as a stepping stone, he didn't think they wanted either of those two. They should expect at least a 5 year candidate and hopefully longer but no one for less than 5 years to really make a difference. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked at any one time, how many searches will he be involved with and how would he balance them. Each of their people can handle effectively 4-5 recruitments. He would only handle two at this time. He has ample space in his portfolio for Novi.

Member Wrobel asked what else Novi could do to recruit candidates. Mr. Anderson said he would work with them on a professional brochure. He provided Council with a brochure they did for Muskegon and he also did the recruitment for Grand Rapids, MI and also some web based material on their website. The City has many assets to share. They won't wait for applications to come in the mail as they would be targeting those who may have a strong interest. Member Wrobel asked where the most viable candidates will come from. Mr. Anderson said Michigan would be a strong base but felt there would be a strong national interest. The City of Novi is widely known in the industry.

Member Markham asked about the survey with the staff, citizens, and Council and how much time that it will take. Mr. Anderson said if the survey process was chosen, he would develop the candidate profile, and then questions related to that would be done. It would include current issues being faced and other characteristics. He said on-line data from employees and citizens would be available to Council at the time of interviews.

Member Casey asked about building the candidate profile and asked if he had heard of wildly divergent points from those interviewed and how was that addressed. Mr. Anderson said in Colorado, some had divergent views on what they wanted. They worked it through and he acted as a facilitator to help Council get to where they want to be. Member Casey asked about specifics where they would market this position. Mr. Anderson said they have a strong relationship with the International City and County Management Association and attend their conferences, National League of Cities, strategic associations, local State associations, and then their own base of candidates they've worked with in the past. They have a very diverse array of candidates that may meet the criteria.

Member Mutch asked about the type of candidates he would expect to apply. Mr. Anderson said they would expect candidates applying that are looking for a stable governmental environment, a diverse development base, diversity in the population and economic bases, a strong residential base and park system. They will be looking at all those assets. They will look at those objectives for their family and work. They will have interest in our relationship to the metropolitan area, the airport, the City of Detroit, and a place for a strong educational environment which Novi has. Then the recruiter's job would be to help them understand why the connection would be good for them. Member Mutch asked what the Council could do to make sure of the search process was a success. Mr. Anderson said to make sure they come to a consensus on the candidate profile. Also, establishing ground rules to identify the spokesperson, as they don't ever speak to the media and only to the process, not of the candidates. It is important to agree on confidentiality, as candidates could be in jeopardy if it was announced too early. Confidentiality is highly necessary for an effective process. Also, to be committed to the time it takes over the 1-2 day process to determine the final selection.

Member Fischer noted his questions relate to process and asked what information Council would see. Mr. Anderson any material they develop is the City's property. They

will have access to the master applicant list and if they chose to look at every resume, they may. Once they finish the entries, the book will contain 10-15 of the most promising candidates and information related to the resume with the application. It will be provided in hard copy and on-line. If Council chooses, they could perform an on-line interview. With the finalists, detailed information will be given. They would never withhold anything and they ask candidates to share information as they never want Council to be surprised with any information. Member Fischer noted the decision solely rests with Council to narrow the candidates. Mr. Anderson stated if they got 75-100 applicants, maybe 25% wouldn't meet any qualifications. After that, they would narrow it down to 10-15 and they will obtain their information. If Council didn't like those, they will still have access to all the candidates. It is an interactive process. They can make sure our staff can assist in providing access to all the information.

Mayor Gatt asked about the most critical skills in order to be a successful city manager. Mr. Anderson answered they would have a strong commitment to ethical standards and conduct. They must view themselves as a partner with City Council by fully disclosing and sharing information and engaging the Council. They must have a strong customer focus with a deep belief in their stewardship as a public servant in assisting citizens to enjoy the community. They also must have the requisite professional skills, sense of humor, sense of calm and an interest in investing in the community by being out and about as a part of it. Mayor Gatt asked about their firms biggest success and failure. Mr. Anderson noted they've never been fired from a job. Sometimes a candidate didn't work out but their guarantee is that they stay with the community until a good candidate is found. They've also found that sometimes a restructuring of departments changed the search. He had a very successful recruitment with the City of Charlotte. He noted that the community had been engaged through community forums and employees were asked questions about the search. They want to find someone who is a really good fit. Mr. Anderson said Novi has a great community, has a good story, and he would love to tell that story throughout the nation.

**ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 A.M.

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Robert J. Gatt, Mayor

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Maryanne Cornelius, City Clerk

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Transcribed by Jane Keller

Date approved: April 7, 2014