

## **VILLAGE OF PENTWATER**

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### **MINUTES**

#### **VILLAGE COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 5, 2024, at 9:30 A.M.**

**PARK PLACE MEETING CENTER @ 310 NORTH RUSH STREET**

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Jeff Hodges called the regular meeting of the Pentwater Village Council to order at 9:30 A.M. from Park Place Meeting Center.

#### **II. COUNCIL ROLL CALL**

Present: Dave Bluhm, Phil Frame, Jared Griffis, Dan Nugent, Kathy O'Connor, Don Palmer, and Jeff Hodges. Absent: None.

Also present were Interim Village Manager Steve Brock, Clerk/Treasurer Rande Listerman, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer VanNortwick, and Accounting Clerk John Bartlett.

#### **III. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Items on the Agenda).**

None.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

President Hodges requested approval of the agenda. Motion by Nugent, supported by O'Connor, to approve the agenda as presented.

Voice vote: Yes: 7. No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 7 - 0.

#### **V. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A. Comments from President Hodges.

President Hodges recognized the passing of long-standing citizen Marilyn Emery, owner of Birdland Hardware Store. Marilyn did a lot for the community over the years.

#### **VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. None.

#### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Candidates for Village Manager Interviews.

Each of the four candidates was placed through a two-step process of interviews with the same set of questions: The Village Council interview was one hour and ten minutes, including 10 minutes for the candidate to ask questions of the Village Council.

Council Interview Schedule:

9:30 A.M. – 10:40 A.M. Katherine “Katie” Anderson.

10:45 A.M. – 11:55 A.M. Kelly Ewalt.

At Ease for Lunch 12:05 P.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Back In Session 1:00 P.M.

1:00 P.M. – 2:10 P.M. Drew Willison.

2:15 P.M. – 3:25 P.M. Rachel Witherspoon.

Interview Questions from the Village Council.

*Candidate Opening*

1. Please provide a five-minute overview of who you are, what you bring to this position professionally as well as personally, and the impact you will bring to this organization.

*Communication*

2. Describe a situation where you had to explain a complex issue to a diverse group of stakeholders. How did you ensure your message was understood?
3. What communication strategies would you find most effective for keeping the Council aligned and motivated?
4. How do you ensure Village staff and Council are all working towards the same goals?

*Leadership Skills*

1. Can you provide an example of a significant change you initiated in a previous role? What was your approach, and what were the outcomes?
2. How do you identify and cultivate leadership qualities within your team?

*Community Building/Stakeholder Engagement*

1. What experience do you have in fostering partnerships with local government leadership or other organizations? Can you share a successful outcome from one of these partnerships?
2. How do you assess and respond to the needs of the community while aligning these efforts with organizational goals?
3. Tell us about a time when you had to build consensus among stakeholders with conflicting interests. What strategies did you use, and what was the outcome?

*Interpersonal Leadership*

1. Can you provide an example of a difficult interpersonal conflict you were engaged in? What approach did you take to resolve it?
2. How do you balance team and/or Council input while making decisive leadership decisions? Can you give an example where this balance was particularly challenging?

### *Budget Management*

1. Please discuss your experience with managing budgets. What is the largest budget you have overseen, and how do you approach decision-making to maximize resources within a multi-project environment that carries across multiple years?

### *Cultural Fit*

1. The Village of Pentwater has strong goals as it relates to affordable housing, environmental sustainability and downtown redevelopment. The Council and the community remain committed to ensuring that the small-town feel of Pentwater stays a priority. How do you manage major projects, redevelopments, and other major changes while prioritizing the core values of the Council and the residents?

### Citizen Roundtable Interview Schedule.

9:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. Kelly Ewalt

10:45 A.M. – 11:45 A.M. Kate Anderson

1:00 P.M. Rachel Witherspoon

2:15 P.M. – 3:15 P.M. Drew Willison

The Citizen Roundtable was a one-hour interview, and the panel was comprised of Mary Marshall, Amy LaBarge, Joe Roberson, Dean Gustafson, and Interim Manager Steve Brock. During this session, candidates had 5-10 minutes to outline their initial plans, focusing on key areas such as community engagement, intergovernmental relations, and economic development. Following their presentations, the panel members had the opportunity to ask follow-up questions, fostering a dialogue that allowed candidates to demonstrate their understanding of local issues and their ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders. This roundtable ensured that the community's voice is integral in selecting a Village Manager who is committed to driving positive change.

Back In Session: 3:44 P.M.

### B. Council Review.

Mitch Foster shared the community members' comments after the Open House with the Village Council.

After the round-table interviews, the citizen Panel shared their thoughts about each candidate, and the Council discussed each candidate's interview.

President Hodges recommended the appointment of Rachel Witherspoon as the next Village Manager.

Motion by Griffis, supported by Frame, to approve extending an offer to Rachel Witherspoon for the Village of Pentwater Manager position.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes: Bluhm, Frame, Griffis, Nugent, O'Connor, Palmer, and Hodges.

No: 0. Absent: 0. Motion approved 7 - 0.

The council asked Mitch Foster from Double Haul Solutions to contact Rachel Witherspoon and ask her if she is interested in entering into contract negotiations for the Village Manager position. If yes, Mitch will also let the other candidates know that the Council appreciated their interest in the Village of Pentwater. Each candidate interviewed well, and the Council thanked them for their time.

#### **VIII. CLOSED SESSION**

None.

#### **X. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*All comments will be addressed to the Village President and limited to 1 time at the microphone for up to 3 minutes. You are asked to state your name and address.*

Heather Douglas, 818 First Street. – Asked if the Council will offer relocation expenses.

Claudia Ressel-Hodan, 490 E Sands – Thank the Council for all their hard work.

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

President Jeff Hodges asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Palmer, Supported by Frame, to adjourn the meeting at 4:48 P.M.