

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NORMAL TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, NORMAL CITY HALL, FOURTH FLOOR UPTOWN STATION, 11 UPTOWN CIRCLE, NORMAL, MCLEAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS – MONDAY, JUNE 14, 2021.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Koos called the Special Meeting of the Normal Town Council to Order at 5:32 p.m., Monday, June 14, 2021.

2. ROLL CALL:

The Clerk called the roll with the following persons

PRESENT: Mayor Chris Koos and Councilmembers Kathleen Lorenz, Stan Nord, Karyn Smith, Chamberly Cummings, Scott Preston, and Kevin McCarthy, also present were City Manager Pamela Reece, Assistant City Manager Eric Hanson, Corporation Counsel Brian Day, and Town Clerk Angie Huonker.

ABSENT: None.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Koos led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Patrick Dullard spoke to the Council regarding his support of City Manager Pamela Reece, indicating Councilmember Nord's suggestion that Ms. Reece has violated ethics needs to stop.

5. MOTION TO ALLOW REMOTE ATTENDANCE OF COUNCILMEMBER CEMBERLY CUMMINGS DUE TO FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCE:

MOTION:

Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy, the Council Accept a Motion to Allow Remote Attendance of Councilmember Chamberly Cummings due to Family Circumstance.

AYES: McCarthy, Nord, Smith, Lorenz, Preston, Koos.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: Cummings.

Motion declared carried.

Councilmember Chamberly Cummings participated by phone until 6:30 p.m., when she exited the meeting.

6. COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Mayor Chris Koos introduced City Manager Pamela Reece and opened a discussion regarding accusations of unethical behavior made by Councilmember Stan Nord.

City Manager Pamela Reece made a statement regarding recent accusations from Councilmember Stan Nord on her obligation to comply with the professional code of ethics, specifically relating to the Citizen Summit, One Normal Plaza PUD, and the Town's procurement policy. Ms. Reece addressed Mr. Nord's multiple attempts to call into question her ethics and the integrity of Town leadership, noting these insinuations would not be taken lightly.

Corporation Counsel Brian Day spoke to the specifics of the three issues cited by Councilmember Nord. Mr Day stated that he wanted to be clear and absolutely unequivocal on his point that he alone is responsible for the legal opinions that he provides for the organization, and the City Manager has no say in what those opinions will be.

Mr. Day went on to discuss the Town procurement policy and his legal opinion outlining procurement procedures for Councilmembers, and his legal opinion pertaining the Council discussion of Zoning matters and the Public Hearing process. Mr. Day's final comments pertained to the Citizen Summit. Mr. Day noted it was a Council decision that determined the number of invitees that would participate in the event, and not City Manager Pamela Reece.

Mayor Chris Koos noted the reason for the open meeting is transparency and to reaffirm to the public that the issue is being taken very seriously so there is no misunderstanding in the direction of Council. Mayor Koos stated he finds the multiple accusations disappointing. Mayor Koos then read an excerpt from outside legal counsel regarding a formal complaint of harassment filed by Councilmember Nord previously, indicating the complaint was politically based and without merit.

Councilmember Chamberly Cummings stated her defense of the integrity of City Manager Reece, noting her ethics have never come into question. Ms. Cummings further stated attempts to defame, berate, or belittle Ms. Reece and her career are a serious matter not to be taken lightly. Ms. Cummings called into question the ethics of the person bringing the accusation.

Councilmember Kevin McCarthy stated a very serious charge was made, noting there use to be the burden of proof when making charges like this publicly. Mr. McCarthy further stated that no one, including Councilmember Nord have contacted him with any type of proof or documentation to validate such accusations. Mr. McCarthy went on to discuss that these accusations cost taxpayers money and is inefficient government. Mr McCarthy stated this is not good for the community and asked citizens to hold elected officials accountable for accusations and professional slander.

Councilmember Stan Nord stated he feels the meeting has been orchestrated.

Councilmember Kathleen Lorenz stated the meeting was not orchestrated, indicating this is an unusual forum not a normal meeting. Mrs. Lorenz then stated that she has had no observations of anything unethical. Mrs. Lorenz went on to discuss her working relationship with City Manager Pamela Reece. Mrs. Lorenz then discussed emails between Councilmember Nord and Ms. Reece that were uncomfortable. Mrs. Lorenz

then reviewed the three main items of concern, noting she has no interest in breaking laws or rules.

Councilmember Karyn Smith stated she had no pleasure in being at this meeting, noting that it can only reflect poorly to have to have this discussion publicly. Ms. Smith stated there has been no violation. Ms. Smith then stated that Council sets policy as a majority, indicating her concern that Mr. Nord continues to push an individual agenda rather than seek support of the Council.

Councilmember Scott Preston stated that he has reflected on the last two years and how Council dynamic has affected the organization. Mr. Preston indicated that City Manager Pamela Reece has done an outstanding job leading the organization during a time when it is not easy, citing a lack of trust in government. Mr. Preston then questioned what the hopeful outcome of the meeting is supposed to be, noting he would not be a fan public shaming but would support public reinforcement or support for City Manager Reece.

Mayor Chris Koos responded that the purpose of the meeting is to provide and show unified support of the ethics, professionalism, and decisions of City Manager Pamela Reece, noting it was very important the Council spoke tonight.

Councilmember Stan Nord stated that are accusations without proof going around. Mr. Nord then stated he feels the context of the meeting is wrong. Mr. Nord then reviewed his thoughts on the three items of concern previously mentioned. Mr. Nord spoke about what he feels is a need for a Town ethics policy for staff, appointed, and elected officials, noting there is nothing in place to hold anyone accountable.

City Manager Pamela Reece responded that her takeaway from Councilmember Stan Nord's summary statement is that his continued accusations and statement of no ethics policy or definition affirms that his accusations are unfounded and without merit.

Councilmember Kathleen Lorenz questioned whether the accusation by Councilmember Stan Nord have more to do with interest in forming a code of ethics, which she noted is vastly different than questioning the City Manager's behavior. Mrs. Lorenz then asked Mr. Nord to indicate which is his issue.

Councilmember Nord responded by stating that he does not think ethics should be tied to an individual employment agreement but to an organization as a whole. Mr. Nord then discussed the complaint process of Illinois City Manager Association (ICMA), noting it is not the Council's responsibility to adjudicate complaints.

Councilmember Scott Preston stated if the point of the meeting was to make clear where Council stands with the ethics of the organization and the City Manager and hopes there is no question where the vast majority of Council stands so Council can get back to doing the policy work that constituents are relying on.

Councilmember Karyn Smith gave the definition of ethical behavior in the workplace, indicating that City Manager Pamela Reece has consistently demonstrated it. Ms. Smith then stated she feels the examples cited by Councilmember Stan Nord have less to do

with violation of ethical conduct than efforts to demonstrate a political prospective or interpretation, noting she feels it is unfounded, unfair, and unprofessional.

Councilmember Kevin McCarthy reminded they are here because of an accusation of ethical violation by Councilmember Stan Nord against City Manager Pamela Reece, noting there have been no alleged violations against Mr. Nord. Mr. McCarthy then stated Mr. Nord provided no evidence to support his accusations. Mr. McCarthy then noted he has served on Council for 13 years and City Manager Reece has acted with the highest level of professionalism.

9. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Koos called for a Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session for a discussion concerning Personnel as permitted under SEC 2(c)(1).

MOTION:

Councilmember Preston moved, seconded by Councilmember McCarthy, the Council Accept a Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session for a discussion concerning Personnel as permitted under SEC 2(c)(1).

AYES: Nord, Smith, Lorenz, Preston, McCarthy, Koos.
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: Cummings
Motion declared carried.

Mayor Koos adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Normal Town Council to Executive Session at 6:47 p.m., Monday, June 14, 2021.