

MINUTES
Plainwell City Council
February 21, 2023

1. Mayor Keeler called the special meeting to order at 5:01 PM in City Hall Council Chambers.
2. Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present.
3. Roll Call: Present: Mayor Keeler, Mayor Pro Tem Steele, Councilmember Overhuel, Councilmember Keeney and Councilmember Wisnaski. Absent: None.
4. Approval of Agenda:
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to approve the agenda for the special meeting as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
5. New Business:
 - A. City Manager Wilson presented a letter of resignation, effective March 16, 2023. The original resignation was given verbally on February 15, 2023. He thanked Council for his 21 years of service. Mayor Keeler noted the tremendous amount of work Manager Wilson has done during his tenure. Councilmember Overhuel noted so many changes since Erik took over. Councilmember Keeney said Manager Wilson did a lot of great work for the city.
A motion by Overhuel, seconded by Keeney, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Erik Wilson as City Manager, effective March 16, 2023. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
 - B. Finance Director Kelley presented three (3) proposals from executive search firms to Council. He reported these firms all have experience with recruiting and searching for city managers, and that using a firm would be in the city's best interest as the firm would handle the process from beginning to end and would present the best candidates available. Mayor Keeler asked for a recommendation to which Finance Director Kelley suggested the Walsh Municipal Services proposal offered the most comprehensive package after only a cursory review. The Council discussed options and all wanted more time to review the proposals.
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to table consideration of city manager search firms until the February 27, 2023 regular meeting. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
 - C. Mayor Pro Tem Steele opened a discussion about the number of projects ongoing and how a transition plan would look. Topics included the workload on Community Development Manager Siegel who would be the lead person on five (5) major projects, creating a possibly overwhelming workload. Councilmember Overhuel noted that with all that is going on, stability is needed. Councilmember Keeney noted that Manager Wilson has a lot of knowledge of the projects and that the city could use his consulting support. DPW Superintendent Nieuwenhuis questioned whether a project manager could take over the projects and keep them going rather than waiting for a new city manager to get up to speed. There was more discussion of Manager Wilson continuing on in a consulting role or whether the cord should be cut. Manager Wilson said he wants to be an asset to the city and that continuity would benefit the city. Council asked for a listing of projects and a cost of consulting at the next meeting.
A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to table consideration of any project consulting until the February 27, 2023 regular meeting. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

D. City Manager Wilson reminded Council that City Clerk Maggie Fenger had resigned her position as of February 17, 2023. As the City Clerk position is listed in the City Charter, it needs to be filled. While the city will search for a permanent replacement, Manager Wilson recommends appointing Brian Kelley as City Clerk, subject to confirmation by Council.

A motion by Keeney, seconded by Overhuel, to confirm the City Manager's appointment of Brian Kelley as Plainwell City Clerk, effective immediately. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

E. City Clerk Kelley discussed the City Clerk job description and presented some minor changes to the description, to include some permitting and planning/zoning functions, for Council's consideration prior to posting the position.

A motion by Keeney, seconded by Wisnaski, to approve the updated City Clerk job description. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

6. DPW Superintendent Nieuwenhuis asked about internal discussions of using a project manager no longer being considered, which launched a debate about workloads and keeping the city moving forward.

7. Mayor Keeler asked about appointing interim city managers, suggesting DPW Superintendent Nieuwenhuis and Finance Director/Clerk Kelley be appointed. Councilmember Keeney asked if they wanted the appointment and Superintendent Nieuwenhuis asked what the appointment looked like. Councilmember Wisnaski noted that Wilson would be a good resource to mentor. Councilmember Overhuel said both would be great for the appointment. Mayor Pro Tem Steele asked the two of them write down what they want and present that to Council. Mayor Keeler agreed with written proposals on how things would work, who does what and how disagreements would be resolved. Council asked for discussions at a future Council meeting.

8. Public Comments: None.

9. Staff Comments:

DPW Superintendent Nieuwenhuis congratulated Manager Wilson.

Community Development Manager Siegel wished Wilson well in Texas Township.

Manager Wilson appreciated everyone and said this would be good for the city.

10. Council Comments:

Councilmember Overhuel expressed sadness about the registration, but understands. He thanked staff.

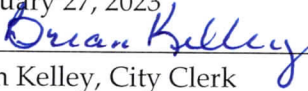
Mayor Pro Tem Steele thanked all the staff for stepping up and reported there will be an open house for Manager Wilson on March 9.

Councilmembers Keeney and Wisnaski thanked the staff.

11. Adjournment:

A motion by Steele, seconded by Overhuel, to adjourn the meeting at 6:16 PM. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes respectfully
Submitted by,
Brian Kelley
City Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL
February 27, 2023


Brian Kelley, City Clerk