



**CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL**  
**JUNE 26, 2023**

**SUBJECT:** Appointments to Boards and Commissions

**SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT:** City Clerk

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** Presentations for Boards and Commissions candidates were held Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. Attached is the ballot for appointments to Boards and Commissions, Council interview memo, presentation draft minutes, candidates' applications, and current Booklet List.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Appointments to Boards and Commissions

# MEMORANDUM



**TO:** MAYOR GATT AND COUNCIL MEMBERS  
**CC:** CORTNEY HANSON, CITY CLERK  
**FROM:** MELISSA MORRIS, DEPUTY CITY CLERK  
**SUBJECT:** PRESENTATIONS FOR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS  
**DATE:** JUNE 5, 2023

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Attached please find applications for the current openings on Boards and Commissions along with a ratings sheet and current Boards & Commissions Booklet List.

In accordance with Council Rules, all boards and commissions candidates will present to City Council. Please see below for current openings for which candidates are presenting.

<b>Board or Commission</b>	<b>Number of openings</b>	<b>Term expiration</b>
Construction Board of Appeals - Alternate	1 partial term	03/01/2025
Corridor Improvement Authority <i>*Mayoral appointment</i>	1 partial term	12/31/2025
Economic Development Corporation <i>*Mayoral appointment</i>	1 partial term	03/01/2025
Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Services Commission	2 full terms	06/30/2026
Planning Commission <i>*Mayoral appointment</i>	1 full term	06/30/2026
Zoning Board of Appeals - Alternate	1 partial term	01/01/2026

Attendance Records for members seeking reappointment:

Planning:

David Dismondy – attended 34 out of 44 meetings since 2020 (77% attendance)

PRCS:

Ryan Joseph – attended 20 out of 27 meetings since 2020 (75% attendance)

Harry Torimoto – attended 25 out of 27 meetings since 2020 (93% attendance)

**BALLOT**  
**APPOINTMENTS BY MAYOR**  
**June 26, 2023**

**Planning Commission**

1 full term - Terms Expire 06/30/2026

David Dismondy *\*reappointment*

John Prior

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**BALLOT**  
**APPOINTMENTS BY CITY COUNCIL**  
**June 26, 2023**

\* Minimum 4 votes required for appointment to Board or Commission

**Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services  
Commission**

2 full terms- Terms expire 06/30/2026

- Ryan Joseph *\*reappointment*
- Sajit Pillai
- Hideki "Harry" Torimoto *\*reappointment*
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Planning Commission**

1 full term – Term expires 06/30/2026

- David Dismody *\*reappointment*
- John Prior
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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**Council Member Signature**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI  
MONDAY, June 5, 2023 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**Mayor Gatt called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Gatt, Mayor Pro Tem Staudt, Council Members Casey, Crawford, Fischer, Smith, Thomas

**ALSO PRESENT:** Victor Cardenas, Interim City Manager  
Thomas Schultz, City Attorney

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**CM 23-06-068 Moved by Casey, seconded by Thomas; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**To approve the Agenda as presented.**

**Roll call vote on CM 23-06-068**                      **Yeas: Staudt, Casey, Crawford, Fischer, Smith,  
Thomas, Gatt**  
**Nays: None**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS: None**

**PRESENTATIONS: None**

**PRESENTATIONS FOR APPLICANTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Mayor Gatt explained that he would call the candidates up one at a time, keeping in mind that we have your resume and application with them. He mentioned that some candidates have already been on a Board or Commission, so you are not unfamiliar to the Council. He stated they would be given two minutes to present to the City Council on why they wanted to be on that Board or Commission. He said at the end of the two minutes he would cut them off to keep it fair for everybody.

**1. Ryan Joseph - Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission**

Ryan Joseph said he was before you this evening for reappointment to the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission a board that he has sat on for the last three years. He commented that over the last three years, not only has he sat and done his Commission responsibilities, but he has also sat on the Grants Committee as well as the Parks Foundation. He said within those roles, he was proud to say that in conjunction between the two groups that he was able to do quite a few things for the city. He said the first one being the Jessica Starr Splashpad, from the ideation to fundraising too soon to be implementation, if not this year, next year. He stated they have also done the land swap with the Bosco Fields to be able to expand those facilities and connecting it to the IT Pathway as well as offering bigger services at that facility. He said they have the Northwest Park that we gained funding for through grants that will expand and offer a unique park for the citizens in love with natural parks and natural playscapes that we

have up in that area. He said they had a unique opportunity with RC Racetrack just to name a few opportunities. He commented as a Novi resident for the last 25 years, he was passionate and dedicated to serving, and giving back to the community. He would like to say he was just getting started, big things coming up on the agenda with the big ITC Community Sports Park Master Plan, he was looking forward to being the conduit between the city and the citizens, as we get that kicked off. He appreciated Councils consideration for reappointment.

2. David Dismondy - Planning Commission (absent)

3. Sajit Pillai - Planning or Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission

Sajit Pillai said he was a relatively new resident in Novi. He has been here for two years. He mentioned over the last six to eight months, he has been part of the Ambassador Academy, CERT Committee and a part of the Citizens Academy. He said he has given him a good understanding of the working of Novi and that is why he felt it was his responsibility to give part back to the city. He said that was the reason why he was applying for both Board positions. He stated professionally, he was an engineering manager. He felt his professional skills in both the planning and project management should help in both the Planning Commission as well as the Parks and Recreation. He believed Novi was very culturally diverse and has very good diversity and inclusion and that is the attribute that he would like to contribute and expand on if given a chance in the Parks and Recreation & Cultural Services Commission. He said overall he felt there is relatively good green space, but including, or increasing that green space and the number of outdoor activities that are available for younger adults as well as you know, children of the adolescent age. He thought is an important aspect of the growth of the city and making it more appealing to all masses for every class. He mentioned the Planning Commission and said he on a day-to-day basis does project management, so he budgets a schedule plan, that is kind of his activity. He that he could oversee some of the problems or opportunities, as he called it, and try to solve them foresight, not as they happen. He said he has been seeing some of the construction that is happening in the City of Novi, and he felt like if there was active planning, there could have been avoidance of some of these roadblocks, because it looks like there is not communication that actively happens between different agencies in different counties. He hoped that being part of the citizens of Novi, at least he could contribute and maybe give some opportunities for different perspective on some of those matters.

4. John Prior - Planning Commission – (absent)

5. Hideki "Harry" Torimoto - Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Commission

Hideki "Harry" Torimoto thanked Council for the opportunity to apply for the reappointment. He though Commissioner Joseph touched on a lot of the responsibilities of being a commissioner, but for him, there are two areas. He stated one is based on his own experiences with his family, his neighbors, his friends, as well as what you hear from the community members. Really being a representative of the citizens towards what the city services and the functions are. He said second, is really being able to take that and

plan to make sure that you build upon what the needs are and know where the gaps are. He said he has been part of some of the, not just going through the monthly commission meetings and providing input there, he has attended the planning sessions, strategic meetings, except for some of the big capital improvement projects that are going on right now was something unique for him. He said he was pretty involved in the Japanese community through COVID, he somehow became a teacher. He teaches now in the Japanese school in Detroit, it was his third year there. He said even there with the kids, he was trying to encourage them to understand opportunities to volunteer in a civic way. He said he is trying to get them to be more involved in the city that way too. He looked forward to continuing to be involved for himself, his family, his neighbors, but also for kind of the broader diverse needs in the future for the citizens in Novi.

Mayor Gatt announced that was the end of the presentations. He noted that there will be no decision made that evening, they will announce the decisions at our next regular scheduled meeting. He thanked everyone for coming out. He said it is people like you who make Novi so great. You always want to get involved and move it forward, so thank you.

**MANAGER/STAFF REPORT:**

Interim City Manager Cardenas said it was asked that he report on the status of the Public Safety Building Needs Committee at the last meeting. He wanted to let City Council know that Redstone, our contractor, and consultant of this project was back into the offices last week and the Public Safety offices conducting additional interviews. He stated they plan on having his report in hand by the middle of August after that is combing all the research, all the reviews, all the visits to all the facilities, and the interviews with the different entities, fire and police, but also paid-on-call and full-time fire as well.

Mr. Cardenas said lastly, there was another request for a sign to help our businesses at Ten Mile and Haggerty, that should be going up next sometime in the next day or so that will include a QR code to help our drivers. He stated it is kind of circumvent at that intersection and get them to that intersection easier because it is only eastbound traffic now tend to be under construction here the next week or so since school will be out and that is going to get done pretty quicky. He said we are making our way through the projects we have gong on in the city.

**ATTORNEY REPORT: None**

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS:**

Joe Bertera, 130 Rexton, Novi in the Lake Wall Subdivision. He commented that this was the seventh meeting and the 12th time he has spoken at Audience Participation regarding the Lakefront Protection Ordinance and how this flawed ordinance is affecting not only his subdivision, but also affecting every resident of Novi by costing them wasted taxpayer dollars and attorney fees that he was sure could be better spent elsewhere. He stated maybe even the half million-dollar memorial that the Mayor wants to put his name on before leaving office. He has tried to bring the truth to light and how this ordinance

was never meant for existing subdivisions before 1986. He said as residents with broken promises and then adopted this ordinance under disguise breaking the public trust. He said on the Novi website it states the City of Novi has an open and transparent government. He found that to be another broken promise by the City of Novi. He said you are withholding documents that he has requested through FOIA by exercising attorney client privilege or stating they no longer exist. He wondered what the city had to hide regarding this ordinance. Obviously, there are some states substantial facts and those documents that could damage your lawsuit against his 104-year-old subdivision and other subdivisions that predated the ordinance that you have also sued. He stated the truth will set you free. Instead, you refuse to talk to him directly and hide behind the attorneys, a sure sign of the guilty. He highlights on the overhead projected the assessment map of Walled Lake Improvement Board for weed control. He said you can see out in the middle left is Lake while subdivision where he lives every resident of his subdivision are assessed fees for the lake weed control, but now the city is saying for this ordinance they are not allowed to use the lake. He said on the bottom of the map you can see the two city parks that front the lake, yet the city pays nothing to help with weed control. Then over on the bottom right and in all there are multiple homes close to the lake that are not assessed at all. He said when this Improvement Board was created, many years ago, it was recognized that his neighborhood had access to the lake and should be assessed, which he agreed with. He said now the city wants to change its mind and say they do not have lake access. Unfortunately, this is just more dishonesty and discrimination from the city leaders. He said as previously documented, the city attorney has empowered the neighbor who yelled over the fence to him and said "suey" three times, which means pig, and this is the person that Novi is relying on for their information.

**CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:**

**CM 23-06-069            Moved by Crawford, seconded by Thomas; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.**

- A.     Approve Minutes of:  
          May 22, 2023 - Regular Meeting
- B.     Approval of a resolution consolidating Precincts 4 & 6 and 20 & 21 for the August 8, 2023, election.
- C.     Approval to award a contract effective July 1, 2023 to Flock Safety, sole source provider, for the purchase of a stationary License Plate Reader (LPR) System in the amount of \$36,500 for the first year and \$30,000/year thereafter.
- D.     Approval to award engineering design services to AECOM for the 2023 Capital Preventative Maintenance program, in the amount of \$47,850.
- E.     Approval to award engineering design services to Spalding DeDecker for design of four pickleball courts and expanded parking at Meadowbrook Commons in the amount of \$57,268.47.



- F. Approval to award contract for Police and Fire Department uniforms to Allie Brothers, Inc., the lowest unit price bidder on a majority of the items, effective July 1, 2023 for an estimated annual amount of \$90,000 for a period of two (2) years, with three (3) renewal options in one (1) year increments. Contract also includes Police uniform upgrade during FY 2023-24 for a budgeted amount of \$90,000.
- G. Consideration of approval to award the contract to Nature Playscapes, a uniquely qualified company, for the construction of Northwest Park Playground, in the amount of \$99,968.21.
- H. Enter Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting of June 5, 2023 in the Council Annex to discuss property acquisition and the City Manager search.
- I. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1133

**Roll call vote on CM 23-06-069**

**Yeas: Casey, Crawford, Fischer, Smith,  
Thomas, Gatt, Staudt**

**Nays: None**

**MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

- 1. Approval to purchase a Zamboni 546 ice resurfer for the Novi Ice Arena from Zamboni Company USA, Inc., a sole source, in the amount of \$109,411.75.**

Interim City Manager Cardenas said this is one of our two Zambonis, we will sell the one that we currently have for a used purchase to some other ice rink in the United States, he said he was sure it will get sold. We will add this one to our fleet which is a very exciting purchase. Mayor Gatt wondered how long the Zamboni's last. Mr. Cardenas believed they had a lifespan of 10 to 15 years.

**CM 23-06-070**

**Moved by Crawford, seconded by Casey; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Approval to purchase a Zamboni 546 ice resurfer for the Novi Ice Arena from Zamboni Company USA, Inc., a sole source, in the amount of \$109,411.75.**

**Roll call vote on CM 23-06-070**

**Yeas: Crawford, Fischer, Smith, Thomas, Gatt,  
Staudt, Casey**

**Nays: None**

- 2. Consideration of approval to award engineering design services to OHM Advisors for the rehabilitation of Nine Mile Road from Meadowbrook Road to Haggerty Road, and of Meadowbrook Road from 10 Mile Road to 11 Mile Road, in the amount of \$277,529.**

Interim City Manager Cardenas stated that these are for next year's projects not this year, this is just setting the groundwork for next year's road program. Mayor Gatt thanked him for the update and said the orange cones will be around the next year also.

Member Fischer said he had a question for Interim City Manager Cardenas. He said he hears many times that these types of projects are not shared with the county and are not shared with the state and vice versa. He asked him if he could tell us a little bit about the planning process that goes into this and how that communication does take place. He said maybe it does not, maybe what he is hearing is correct, but every time he has talked with staff, it seems like there is some sort of communication that takes place. He asked him if he could elaborate as it relates to this project and 2024. Mr. Cardenas explained there is a lot of communication that transpires with our colleagues at the Road Commission Oakland County and the Great Lakes Water Authority. He said in the next week or so we will be meeting with the Road Commission about the next few years of projects with the managing director and other engineers from that crew. He said these projects are usually a couple years in advance and they are shared with all our partners. He said we want to engage our friends with the Great Lakes Water Authority to make sure that there is any kind of water, sewer or water work that is going to be taking place that they are made aware so if they have any planned projects, they can coincide with one another. He stated there are other communications that take place, but also there is Consumers Power as well. He said Consumers Power is currently on Taft Road doing that piping work prior to our roadwork as well. He said that is a good example of them coming in right before we get our project underway. He said the Great Lakes Water Authority, that is a lot of work that has emergency repairs just to make sure there is a loop installed, so that we do not have the water issues that we had the last couple of years where we have lost water. He mentioned most of the time these are all planned out, and we can coordinate with one another. He stated there is a lot of communication that takes place especially with our Road Commission and with MDOT who has their plans with I-96. He said there is some infrastructure underneath I-96 we coordinate with them as well to make sure that is transparent at the same time. He said there are a lot of moving parts with all our colleagues, and we have our friends from Farmington Hills to the north, Northville to the south. He said those individuals, those public works, directors, those engineers get together often to see what is going on so that we can try to coordinate as much as possible. Member Fischer thanked him for his response. He thought it was helpful. He said he knew the City has done a very good job. He said he was on the 2023 Road Facebook page, and he saw the City staff engaging and answering a lot of questions related to that. He also encouraged as that narrative is continued to be told, some information about the meetings that you have had with the State and the County, that story be told a little more in some of those settings.

**CM 23-06-071**

**Moved by Fischer, seconded by Casey; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Approval to award engineering design services to OHM Advisors for the rehabilitation of Nine Mile Road from Meadowbrook Road to Haggerty Road, and of Meadowbrook Road from 10 Mile Road to 11 Mile Road, in the amount of \$277,529.**

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked Interim City Manager Cardenas if we are considering putting any kind of engineering into crosswalks along that stretch. He said that is one area that there is a very long stretch of road. He said there are no sidewalks on the other side and people who want to walk on the sidewalks need to cross. He mentioned places within the City where we do have crossing areas, but he wanted to make sure that the subdivisions can benefit from the sidewalks on the other side of the road. He said if you could investigate that for the engineering, that would be greatly appreciated. Mr. Cardenas said he would certainly do that.

**Roll call vote on CM 23-06-071**

**Yeas: Fischer, Smith, Thomas, Gatt, Staudt,  
Casey, Crawford  
Nays: None**

**3. Consideration of Text Amendment 18.302 to update the standards for public schools, nonconforming uses of land, and other minor modifications. FIRST READING**

**CM 23-06-072**

**Moved by Fischer, seconded by Staudt; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Approval of Text Amendment 18.302 to update the standards for public schools, nonconforming uses of land, and other minor modifications, subject to modifications as determined necessary by the City Manager's Office or City Attorney's Office. This motion is made because the ordinance amendment addresses inconsistencies in the ordinance and facilitates the land swap between the City of Novi and the Novi Community School District. FIRST READING**

**Roll call vote on CM 23-06-072**

**Yeas: Smith, Thomas, Gatt, Staudt, Casey,  
Crawford, Fischer  
Nays: None**

**CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS FOR COUNCIL ACTION: None**

**AUDIENCE COMMENT:**

Joe Bertera, 130 Rexton, Novi said he was furthering his previous comments from all the meetings he has attempted before, let's start looking at more facts regarding the lakefront protection ordinance. He said in this case, he would be discussing South Pointe Condos built in 1991, only five years after the ordinance was passed. He said he was told verbally by a City official that South Pointe did not receive a variance on the Lakefront Protection Ordinance, yet here now these documents are just stated multiple times they were granted variances. He said on both provisions of the ordinance when it was built. He stated these types of high-density complexes are exactly what is talked about in the ordinance language regarding development. He stated just a few short years after the ordinance passage, they were granted variances. He wondered how it is fair that

something built in 1991 has more rights in a subdivision from 1920 when the ordinance was meant for future development, which was meant for height density, which is condos, mobile home parks, not only was this complex given variance in 1991 he said they were also granted additional variances in 2006, and as little as 10 years ago in 2013. He gave other examples of variances given to Windward Bay in 1990 and Harbor Cove in 1987, which was only a year after the ordinance was passed later. He said two additional complexes that the ordinance was designed to control, but they are allowed to build with approval to have docks and boats. He said looking further into the variance approvals for South Pointe Condos, it was stated by Gary Phillips, who was the broker for construction and later went on to be a planning commissioner. He said there are several docks that were more than 110 feet on Walled Lake, there are several docks that were probably more than 200 feet on the lake, and this was 33 years ago. He commented that the point being some areas of wildlife is very shallow and docks needed to be longer where you cannot navigate a boat. He said now under the documentation of one of the approvals for the longer dock at South Pointe Condos, due to shallow water. He stated in this communication, City Code Enforcement Officer, Maureen Underhill, who attacks his neighborhood constantly, Novi has no authority beyond the edge of the shore. Therefore, there have no ordinance governing length that came directly from your code enforcement officer. If Novi has no authority beyond the edge of the shore, this entire lawsuit is an overreach by the city and an opportunity for Novi city leaders to pound their chest on a power trip. He mentioned Sandstone which cost this city \$70 million dollars. He touched on the DEQ, he stated any questions about a dock, the DEQ officer from 2006 stated the dock is a seasonal structure, no permit is required, there is nothing from the DEQ to fall back on. He said even with all these facts, Novi leaders continue to push the agenda they want without any regard to Novi residents other than one person who lives on West Lake Drive.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS: None**

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES: None**

Mayor Gatt announced Council would enter Executive Session at 7:25 P.M. and they may or may not return to Regular Session.

Council returned to Regular Session at 8:24 P.M. Mayor Gatt called the meeting back to order.

Mayor Gatt said he would begin and that he was going to make a statement for the audience and for those of you still at home watching. He stated last year, just prior to the holidays, we were told by our City Manager, Mr. Pete Auger, that he was going to leave Novi and take a position somewhere else. He said we, as a City Council, were tasked with so many important jobs. He stated that he has heard it said so many times that the most important thing that we do here is approve the budget, and he thought that is true in most normal years. He stated in the years where we have to pick a new City Manager, that becomes the most important and the most arduous task for the City Council, because the City Manager runs the City on a day to day basis. He explained that the

City Manager is in charge of the budget and personnel. He said Council shows up for the meetings, and there are a lot of other stuff behind the scenes that they do, but the City Manager is here every day. He said he or she is responsible for everything that happens in the City on a 24/7 basis. He stated that choosing the City Manager became our most important thing that we were going to do in 2022 and 2023. He said as the mayor, he wanted the test to be professional. He wanted it to be exhaustive, it to be thorough, and he wanted it to be comprehensive. He did not want it to be rushed. He stated when the City Council first found out that we were going to have to find a new City Manager, they asked what is the process. He said having gone through it a couple of times now as a Councilmember, he knew that the first thing we would do is we would need help. He said they needed help with the professional company to help us search. Again, he said they are all part-time employees. He stated they could not ask the City Manager to search for a replacement, he was leaving us so we needed somebody that we could trust to go out and do the exhaustive professional thorough search that we required. He stated that both Director of Human Resources, Tia Gronlund Fox and Director of Communications, Sheryl Walsh-Molloy and other staff brought to us a few names of firms that wanted to help us find the City Manager. He said the audience may remember that we did interviews of a couple of companies and we chose who we thought was going to be the best and the most comprehensive company that we could hire to help us in this professional search for this professional City Manager that we needed to run the best city in the state, or maybe country, he said that without a smile on his face, because he knows it is true. He mentioned that we hired Slavin Management Consultants. He said they met with us; they met each individual City Councilmember. He said they wanted to know what he thought a City Manager should be, what kind of background they should have, what kind of education they should have, what strong point should we be looking for, so on and so forth. He stated they did not stop with the City Council they also interviewed key members of the staff. He said once they had a very good grasp of what the City of Novi is, and what we were looking for in a City Manager, they conducted a thorough nationwide search to find a City Manager. He said this all began around Thanksgiving time, it was right the holidays, and here we are the first week of June is almost over. He said just last week that City Council received a packet of resumes from candidates from around the country who wanted to come in and become the next City Manager in this great city. He said the City Council spent the last weekend and more going over every word that was written, every resume that was presented, a lot of research was done, a lot of time and effort went into it. He said they know the most important we can do is to find the best City Manager to run this great city. He stated we had 12 applicants that were presented to us, some very good, qualified people, but one person stood out. He said one person amongst the group stood out as being the best person that is best qualified to run the City of Novi. He said it is no secret that he should have stood out, because he has been with us for over a decade, he has worked through ups and downs in the economy, he knows the people, he knows the employees, he knows the public, he knows the businesses. He is involved in everything that is in the City of Novi, and his name is Victor Cardenas. He stated after the exhaustive search, it became obvious that we have the next City Manager sitting right to our left during our earlier City Council meeting, Victor Cardenas. He said he would open this up to the Council now and let them put their comments on the record. He said in his humble opinion, 20 years on the City Council

and a 48-year employee or a member of this community, he said he could tell you beyond the doubt that if we move forward and enter into negotiations with Mr. Cardenas to become our next City Manager, we will be doing the 67,000 plus residents in the City and all the businesses in this City and all the visitors in this City a great service.

Member Thomas said she wholeheartedly agreed with the Mayor's statements. She thought that it has been very clear over going through this large packet and she appreciated everyone who showed interest in our community. She stated after spending an exhaustive amount of time reading through a ton of documentation, she thought it was very clear that we have an excellent candidate here. She said it makes sense to have someone that is a known quantity, he is well respected in the community and heavily invested in our community, he is an excellent candidate.

Member Crawford concurred with the Mayor. He said from the very beginning that unless a superstar came to town, Victor Cardenas would be his choice for City Manager. He told people he looked at him as the heavyweight champ and you really must bring something to beat the heavyweight champ. He said even if you are on par with him, you still don't beat the champ and as far as he was concerned, Victor was and is the champ.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt stated that he had 16 years here, he has been fortunate to work with Clay Pearson who was an exceptional City Manager, and it was followed by Pete Auger who did a tremendous job of working with Victor to teach him everything he thought he knew about economic development, at least he hoped so. One common part of that was during our time looking for a City Manager before we hired Mr. Auger, we had Victor as our interim. He said we got to observe him for about eight or nine months, and at that time, he was not applying for the position. He said again, he is our interim City Manager, and he thought the transformation has been very noticeable to all of us and that he is clearly ready to go. He said he served on a lot of different committees where Victor was our staff liaison and he is always attentive, very thoughtful, always interested in coming up with the best solution for the city. He thought as having somebody who is your City Manager, who is always looking for the best solution for your city, you cannot do any better than that.

Member Smith agreed with the Mayor and was looking through the resumes that we did receive, Victor was head and shoulders, the best candidate having worked with him, he has been great with communication, he does care about the City. He is invested in the City, he lives here. He said he was a good person to work with, he did not realize how good because he did not have a lot of experience with City Managers. He thought he was a great candidate, and he was looking forward to working with him over the next two and a half years, assuming we can get all the contracts straightened out.

Member Casey said when we started this process, we all expected and knew that we would do our due diligence and look as widely as we could to make sure we found the right candidate that would lead our city going forward for the next handful of decades, hopefully. She thought through the process, what was clear to her was, we had that candidate sitting next to us, we had that candidate in our house. She said if you look at

Victor's history, watch is career growth, you look at his focus on personal development, and the things he has done, not the least of which are you know, studying at Harvard and studying at UVA and really building his craft and honing his skill. She believed his professional development has been top notch, he has history with the City, he is a strategic thinker, he is a good communicator, which is something that is so critical to sitting up there to those of us who sit up here. She thought that we were fortunate to have Victor from the beginning, she thought quite honestly, she knew much of what he did, but when you see it on paper, it is supremely impressive. She believed he is the right candidate to carry our city forward. He said on a personal note, she has been very fortunate in, being involved with the City to have been in a role where she was able to help bring one transformative leader into our community and she looked forward to this opportunity, hopefully to bring in a second one to carry the City forward into the future.

Member Fischer agreed. He loved going last, he liked to agree with everything everyone has said. He wanted to point out for the public, all of them watching is that we are at a point in the process where we would have to unmask any of the candidates. He said Member Crawford mentioned he was looking and wanted the opportunity for this search to give us a superstar, but the way that everything shook out, it was clear that we do not think that the resume showed that there was anyone that was going to be that superstar. He thought it would be unfair to ask people to come in a public session and interview in his conscience, he did not think they could rise to the level of Victor. He agreed with everything that was said about Victor and he will obviously be in support of that.

**CM 23-06-073            Moved by Fischer, seconded by Casey; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Approval to direct the Mayor and the City Attorney to offer Victor Cardenas the position of City Manager subject to negotiation of an employment contract to be brought back before City Council for consideration.**

**Roll call vote on CM 23-06-073**

**Yeas: Thomas, Gatt, Staudt, Casey,  
Crawford, Fischer, Smith  
Nays: None**

**ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:39 P.M.

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Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

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Robert J. Gatt, Mayor

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Transcribed by Deborah S. Aubry

Date approved: June 26, 2023