



**CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 16, 2019**

SUBJECT: Appointments to Boards and Commissions.

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Interviews for Boards and Commissions were held Monday, December 9th; interviews by the Commission Interview Committee were held Thursday, December 5th. Attached are the Mayor and Council ballots for appointments to Boards and Commissions, Council interview memo, interview draft minutes, candidates' applications, and current Booklet List.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Appointments to Boards and Commissions.



COMMISSION INTERVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI
Commission Interview Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 05, 2019 | 7:00 P.M.
Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center | 45175 Ten Mile Road
(248) 347-0456

Member Casey called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Council Members Casey, Breen, Fischer

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Member Casey welcomed the candidates and thanked them for volunteering. She then explained that the appointment process has changed, and that further changes to this Committee may be necessary. She explained that the candidates being interviewed at the Council meeting on December 9th would look different from their interviews, but not to worry. Member Casey continued, saying that each applicant would have the opportunity to introduce themselves, and each Committee member would have the opportunity to ask them one question. Member Casey explained that no decisions would be made this evening, and that appointments will occur at the December 16th Council meeting.

APPLICANTS FOR BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:

1. Brenda Anderson- Election Commission, Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee- Absent
2. Julie Argonis- Election Commission, Historical Commission

Ms. Argonis began by saying that she had two kids that went through the Novi school system, and that she's very invested in Novi, particularly through the school system. She said that she's been involved in her kids' classrooms, Girl Scout troops, and marching band, and got a little taste of getting involved through the school board. Ms. Argonis explained that she worked on strategic planning and was a building development participant where she enjoyed insight into the operations of the school system. Professionally, she's been employed for 15 years with the Mars Agency in Southfield and would bring marketing, advertising, public speaking, and research strategy experience; things that can be put to good use by Novi to help with the strategic vision.

Member Breen thanked Ms. Argonis for coming out, and stated that they'd previously spoken a few times through strategic planning for the schools. Member Breen continued, saying she was excited for that plan to happen, and that she was interested in how Ms. Argonis would apply her background to the vision of the Historical Commission. Ms. Argonis stated that her research and communication skills would be helpful, and that she knows how to research and understand what historical sites are, what their value is, and how to articulate

that to the community at large through press releases and social media sites to garner support.

Member Fischer thanked Ms. Argonis for volunteering, and asked her to walk the Committee through her logic of ranking the boards and commissions, and what drew her to them. Ms. Argonis said that it was a matter of personal preference, that she had experience with news and reporting, specifically with local government. She explained that she has a deep love of communication, government processes, and reporting on those processes. She stated that Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services was her second choice because she feels it has so much potential, and she's interested in the discovery and exploration of a community center. She said that she's interested in history, and finding connections to the past, present, and future.

Member Casey thanked Ms. Argonis for coming out, and explained that she's very familiar with the Mars Agency. She asked Ms. Argonis what opportunities the City had to better communicate with residents. Ms. Argonis said that anyone involved in the media is experiencing a change- change in the idea of mass communication, how to communicate in a broad way that will benefit the most people in the most efficient way. She said that based on her background, she would be able to contribute to the exploration of new modes of communication.

3. Lynne Fuller- Board of Review

Ms. Fuller began by stating that she's currently on the Board of Review as alternate and was applying for the full/permanent member position. She said that her background was in real estate- she started in college, and is now a real estate appraiser. She explained that people tend to bring appraisals to Board of Review, and with her experience, she can figure out what information is useful, and what's not. Ms. Fuller said that it's going well with other members, and would like to be appointed to the full member position.

Member Fischer thanked Ms. Fuller for her service, and said that he loves hearing the level of expertise. He asked Ms. Fuller how Council can assist the Board of Review with its goals. Ms. Fuller responded that she's found that some people don't understand the Board of Review, and what it's for. She said it's important to disseminate information- residents want to dispute taxes, but that's not what Board of Review is for; it's for taxable value, which people don't understand. Member Fischer said that he agreed completely and appreciated her response. Ms. Fuller said that people aren't prepared, and that's a huge disservice to them.

Member Breen thanked Ms. Fuller for serving, and asked what the Board could do better to help people understand the process. Ms. Fuller said that it's challenging to teach the constituents what they can do; it's a more cerebral process. She continued, saying that you have to bring in data at a higher level than other boards; you need to do research, understand sales, and the timeframe. She explained that a lot of people assume that it's March to March for sales, but it's typically December to December or September to September.

Ms. Fuller said that Nextdoor is helpful, as well as Instagram. She also emails Nathan [Mueller, Community Relations], which is a really good way of getting info out there, but it's hard to choose who needs what.

Member Casey thanked Ms. Fuller, and said that she'd already answered her question, but she was curious if there was something that surprised Ms. Fuller, something unexpected? Ms. Fuller replied that she was overwhelmed with how many people came in unprepared, even commercial clients that had no data, which was surprising.

4. Priya Gurumurthy- Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee- Absent
5. Kim Nice- Historical Commission

Ms. Nice stated she's been a Novi resident for 16 years, had left due to a job transfer, and couldn't wait to come back. She's been a member of the Historical Commission for 3 years, and had been a volunteer the nine months before. She said that she works GK Riker & Associates doing consulting part time, and has been working on a lot of projects with the Commission for the past three years. Ms. Nice continued, saying in 2017 she was appointed as treasurer, and she's also served eight years on her subdivision board, both as secretary and treasurer. She said that the work on the Historical Commission is much more rewarding and appreciated; however, there's lot more we can do. She said the Commission has accomplished a lot of goals, including the Veteran's Wreath Program, which was amazing.

Member Breen thanked Ms. Nice for serving, and said that we appreciate everything she's done. Member Breen continued, saying that Ms. Nice's application indicated the Historical Commission has already added 2 members, but that she also wanted to add a Friends of Historical Commission; do we need more permanent members and what would Friends of the Historical Commission do that the Commission itself couldn't do? Ms. Nice responded that members don't always have the time to do the deep dive into projects, but if there were a Friends of the Historical Commission or volunteers, they could execute programs in a more timely manner. Ms. Nice explained that some may not want to dedicate the time every month. She said that as treasurer, she has to take care of all the financial information and finds herself at the library about 15-20 hours a week. Ms. Nice said the Historical Commission did all of the research for the 50th Anniversary calendar, everyone pitched in, and it was great. She continued, saying that sometimes there are some older residents who are interested but may not have time to serve, and she'd like people that can go to Fox Run or Meadowbrook Commons to talk to residents on a casual basis to find more history or artifacts. Ms. Nice said there are a lot of issues with communication as other candidates have mentioned. She said we have a lot of presence on social media, but there's a huge age group that has a lot of history that isn't on social media, and we need to do better reaching out in that manner to cover all the bases. Ms. Nice said that they're lucky for library resources, but that it's difficult to get to people to come in and participate, if they had volunteers it could help

them. She stated that they have a lot of events, and that she travels a lot with Kathy Crawford, which takes a lot of time. She said it would be great if we had more volunteers. Ms. Nice they currently have one volunteer who lives in Milford, right on the border, so she can't be a member, but has volunteered for five years which has been great. She said they could use more people, that the Library has Friends of Library which has their own programs, and that the more we can build the better.

Member Fischer thanked Ms. Nice for all she's done to support this Commission and that her passion shows through. Member Fischer asked her why she moved away from Novi, and why she was glad to come back. Ms. Nice said that she moved to Rochester Hills for work and later moved back to area. She spent time in Plymouth but didn't care for it. Ms. Nice said that she likes the schools, likes the community, said that it's growing, and there are lots of things to be proud of. She said that they have a great location and that she likes seeing the growth. She was here before the big growth spurt, and feels the City is on track with the Master Plan, and does a great job with bringing businesses in. Ms. Nice said that for the 50th Anniversary, the City interviewed businesses that have been here for 50+ years, which was very interesting.

Member Casey said that she had no question, but had it really only been 3 years that Ms. Nice was a member? Member Casey continued, saying it was great that she is so engaged and so involved, and that Ms. Nice was one of the members who really helped to turn around the Historical Commission. Member Casey said that adding a couple bodies helped, but that they were really fortunate with the applicants and appointments, which have all done a great job.

6. Pam Superfisky- Election Commission

Ms. Superfisky began by saying she's lived in Novi for 47 years, and has raised four kids here. She said that she's been active in the schools, including serving as PTO president, running a bond issue that was looking for school improvement. Ms. Superfisky said that she was also active in her church and more active in the City now that her kids have grown and moved on. She said that she's enjoyed serving on the Election Commission and would like to be reappointed.

Member Fischer explained that he was very familiar with Ms. Superfisky and that he graduated with her kids. He said that he's interviewed her for the Commission before, and had no questions. Member Fischer then thanked Ms. Superfisky for her long time service to our community.

Member Breen thanked Ms. Superfisky for her work on new precinct map, because she didn't imagine it was an easy task. Ms. Superfisky said that she appreciated Council moving forward and approving the boundaries. Member Breen asked Ms. Superfisky if there was anything the City can do to get the word out as far as these precinct and polling changes go, or changes to voting in general with the passing of Prop 3, to make sure people have the opportunity they need to exercise their right to vote. Ms. Superfisky said that she thought that

information would be going out, as far as new precincts and how they've changed. She said that she hoped there'd be reasons for the changes. She explained that Novi has four school districts, plus Schoolcraft College, which is important because all of those ballots are different. She said that what we're working toward is each precinct having just one school district, making it easier for election inspectors. Ms. Superfisky continued, saying that our voting system is just so smooth and goes so well because of the City Clerk and staff, they check all of the machines before the election, and there's a lot that goes into it. She said they make it run very smoothly.

Member Casey explained that she and Ms. Superfisky had many conversations across this table and she feels like she has a good handle on who Ms. Superfisky is and the skills that she brings. Member Casey said that she's grateful Ms. Superfisky is interested in the Election Commission, because not a lot of others have expressed interest in it. Member Casey asked Ms. Superfisky if there was anything that has surprised her while serving on the Election Commission. Ms. Superfisky replied that for all these years, she had no idea that not all election inspectors aren't all from our city. Ms. Superfisky explained that they look at the number of Democrats and Republicans, and look over the numbers to make sure there's enough inspectors for each precinct, but she had no idea how many people come from other communities to work our elections because our Clerk's Office runs things so smoothly and everything is done so well. Ms. Superfisky said that her fellow commissioner, who also works at the County Election Board told her how well-respected Novi is. She said it's a real pleasure to be a part of it, and that it's easy to serve since it's not a once a month meeting, but she can still give back to her community and get involved.

7. Mary Angela Winter- Election Commission- Withdrew Application Prior to Interviews

Member Casey then asked the Committee for closing remarks. Member Breen stated that there are only a few spots open across all of the boards and commissions, and almost all of them are re-applicants and we had a real dearth of new applicants. She continued, saying that for those not appointed, she wanted to encourage them to keep applying, because they need more people to step up and volunteer. Member Breen also stated that she sincerely hoped that we can find a way to expand our boards and commissions and increase citizen involvement because the last few years we've had so many applicants. She said that one man, who would be interviewed on Monday, had been before Council twice already. Member Breen said it's hard to encourage people to keep applying when there's nothing available, but if you're not selected, please keep applying or contact any one of us for volunteer opportunities.

From the audience, Ms. Nice said that she had a question. She said that the Historical Commission allowed volunteers, and she wondered what other boards and commissions allowed volunteers. The Committee determined that the Beautification Commission, Historical Commission, Library Board, and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services likely allowed volunteers.

There was a brief conversation regarding other ways to volunteer and get involved in the City, such as the Ambassador Academy and CERT. There was a brief discussion regarding adding more members to Boards and Commissions. Member Casey remarked that it was unusual to have this kind of interaction during a meeting, and asked Member Fischer if he had any closing comments. Member Fischer replied that he had none. Member Casey again thanked the applicants for their time.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 P.M.

Transcribed by Dawn Spaulding