

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2014 AT 7:00 P.M.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – NOVI CIVIC CENTER – 45175 TEN MILE ROAD**

**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, Markham, Mutch, Wrobel

**ALSO PRESENT:** Thomas Schultz, City Attorney

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**CM 14-11-176 Moved by Wrobel, seconded by Casey; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:**

**To approve the Agenda as presented.**

**Roll call vote on CM 14-11-176**                      **Yeas: Staudt, Casey, Markham, Mutch,  
Wrobel, Gatt**  
**Nays: None**

**PURPOSE OF THE SPECIAL MEETING**

1. Interview candidates for open Council vacancy
  - a. Lowell Sprague

Mr. Sprague said he has had a long time interest in public service. He has worked in the health care industry, both for profit and non-profit. Currently, he works for a non-profit organization. He has experience with lots of growth and mergers. Budget for the organization is about 4 times the City's budget. He is a CPA. He is the president of a real estate company that does a lot of medical office development. He has Planning Commission experience in Novi and also worked on Master Plan for City of Novi. His interests are continuing economic development and management for the City. Member Casey asked what he thought were the 2 or 3 top Council responsibilities and how does his background and qualifications fit those responsibilities. He answered, along with traditional responsibilities, public safety and the budget by setting strategic direction. He thought Council was also responsible for high quality City services for all residents. He said it was apparent his finance career makes him qualified for the position. Member Mutch asked what the City's biggest challenge is over the next 3-5 years. Mr. Sprague said maintaining financial integrity and traffic issues at the west end of the City. He thought improvements to the City such as the completion of the ring road would be significant. Park improvements and pathway improvements should

continue. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt thanked him and noted he was familiar with his qualifications. Mr. Wrobel asked if he thought tax abatements should be used in attracting new business. Mr. Sprague said Novi is in an enviable position but there is a rationale for having tax abatements that could benefit the City. They should have them time limited, some revenue coming to the City, and revenues sufficient to cover costs. They need to add some type of additional jobs, and contain a claw back provision. Member Markham asked, from his business experience, what makes a community a good place to come to. Mr. Sprague thought basic public services, good infrastructure, ways for employees to get to us, visibility, and the ability to have an environment to make it financially viable. Mayor Gatt thanked him for coming out and stated every candidate is the epitome of what Novi means.

b. Matthew Mosteiko

He said he has a strong military background, he said he has set policy. He was deployed to Iraq, led soldiers in Iraq and Korea. He has leadership training and experience. The common worker in Novi is an office worker. He does a lot of outreach for members of Oakland County with safety issues such as weather safety, public safety, etc. He does use all the public services of the City including bike paths, walking paths, library, etc. He felt he could relate to citizens and could be a good voice for the residents. Member Mutch asked what were the attributes that brought him to Novi and how would they factor into the work he would like to accomplish. Mr. Mosteiko grew up in Detroit area and thought highly of Novi with commerce, parks, location, and central to other family members and work. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked about his association with candidates during an election. Mr. Mosteiko said a person has to decide their views of everything on the ballot. Obtaining a better knowledge of all candidates was important to him. Member Staudt hoped he would come back and serve in some future capacity. Member Wrobel asked his opinion of parks programs. Mr. Mosteiko thought the current state of the parks is great and it is improving such as Pavilion Shore Park and Lakeshore Park. He thought cost free activities such as exercise, jogging or yoga in the park should be offered to engage Novi residents. He felt not all resident were familiar with what was available. Member Markham, asked as a relatively new family in Novi, what he and his family would like to see offered. He said more activity, expanding media at the library and entertaining more businesses that are more family friendly. Member Casey asked what was the biggest challenge for a new person on Council and how would he solve it. Mr. Mosteiko said the integration with everyone as he sees them as a well-oiled machine. His first inquiry would be about the processes. Mayor Gatt thanked him for his service to our Country. He said the City needs people like him to come forward for other boards and commissions. He has a bright future in the City.

c. Rickie Ibe

Mr. Ibe applauded all the other applicants who have come forward. He sits on the ZBA, and is an attorney that practices in immigration, criminal and business litigation for small and mid-size corporations. He has been confronted with tough decisions while trying civil and criminal cases. He felt the Council could use someone with his expertise and knowledge. His goal is that Novi remains a vibrant and welcoming place for residents and businesses. We are only as good as the people and the City is strategically located with much diversity, cultures and religion. No problems exist because of good Council and residents. Public safety is outstanding. His goal would be to have better emergency preparedness. With so many international people, he wondered if we were prepared for such an emergency? He has lived here for 8 years. He doesn't sit on the sidelines. He wants to be a part of the community. No job is too big or too small for him. He will do everything to make sure Novi remains a vibrant place to be. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked what he learned as a candidate for Council that would prepare him for this. Mr. Ibe said he may not have done as much outreach as he should have done. He would also hold town hall meetings to gauge what the people of the City want or need. Given that opportunity again, he would do a better job. Member Wrobel asked what experiences or skills from ZBA would be beneficial to him as a Council member. Mr. Ibe answered the experience of balancing interests of both business and residents. Member Markham asked if there were certain areas that come up more often. Mr. Ibe said signs and signage were the items most often addressed. There were other ways that business can attract new customers. Otherwise, things are working. Member Casey asked was there a time when he made a decision that was unpopular. He cited a case where he made a choice to have an interview that was publicized. It wasn't popular or the best decision, but strategically, he felt it was the best way to attract attention to achieve a goal. His client was originally against it, but it worked. Member Mutch asked, looking ahead, what were the biggest challenges. Mr. Ibe said because there are other communities nearby that are also attractive, we need to focus on retaining what we have. Mayor Gatt thanked him for interviewing.

d. Doreen Poupard

Ms. Poupard said she has lived in Novi for 9-1/2 years. One of her goals was to connect Fox Run into the community. There is a great wealth of knowledge within the 1,000 residents who live at Fox Run. Her background is in education. She was the Assistant Superintendent in the Ann Arbor schools. The longer she is here, she recognizes the wide diversity. She would like to see Council engage in deep visioning and long range planning. What is it the city needs to become based on the strengths it already has. While serving on Charter Review Committee, she has become aware of ways to make communication available. This is an opportunity to give back to the community.

Member Wrobel greatly appreciated her input on Charter Review Committee. He asked what additional things Novi could do for senior citizens that we currently do not do. Ms. Poupard answered openness. You need to provide opportunities but not necessarily do for citizens and to facilitate means for senior citizens to do more. She felt some were just sitting on a wealth of knowledge. Member Markham asked what Novi wants to be. She noted Fox Run is the highest voting precinct and what lessons could we learn to drive up voting percentages in other places. Ms. Poupard answered part is the age where they believe it is their duty to vote and important to vote because they've been given much. Their political awareness committee seeks candidate information to share. They have in-house television to keep people informed. Member Casey asked what she thought would be the biggest challenge for a new person on Council. Ms. Poupard said that one can learn in multiple ways. She is a good listener and asks questions. Member Mutch asked about her concerns for environment. Ms. Poupard feels they are stewards of the environment. It is good they are building again. The City is present all the time to build and protect the wetlands. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt noted the respect and gratitude of the residents at Fox Run is very touching. He asked what characteristic doesn't fit. Ms. Poupard said smugness is not a good characteristic. She thought honesty and admitting what was tried and did or didn't work is also good to hear. Speaking one's mind is something seniors always value. Mayor Gatt noted like Doreen suggested, a City in Japan, is planning for the next 100 years so long range visioning was needed.

e. Michael Meyer

Mr. Meyer said he has been a Novi resident for 33 years and an educator for 40 years, school board for 12 years, 4 years on ZBA, and 6 years on Planning Commission. Novi Schools were recognized by the Wall Street Journal and they ranked Novi Schools in the top 20 out of 17,600 school districts. A delegation came from China and he noted that he was aware of how important it was to view their business card and in the same vein; he hoped that others would realize that he would need assistance in the capacity of Council member. He is also a dreamer and idealist. In that way, he needs help keeping his feet on the ground. He was complimented by students in encouraging them to think. Member Markham asked where he thought they still have work to do. Mr. Meyer answered more should be done to reach out to the young. He thought Council could encourage them to vote. Member Casey asked if he has made an unpopular decision. Mr. Meyer answered while on the Planning Commission, there was a fence issue that was very well done eventually, but he spoke up about it originally. Member Mutch noted that he has served on the boards, which have diverging views. He asked what he saw were the challenges of the school board and the Council. He felt there should be a much greater collaborative effort. Schools are part of the equation. The City does a great part with the diversity. Communication is so important and to really listen to one another without already having the answer. Mayor Pro Tem

Staudt asked him what his strengths were that got him elected as a school board member and what prevented him from the City Council position. Mr. Meyer mentioned he was originally a youth minister and worked with seniors at Holy Family. Once they liked him, it stayed in their brain. Regarding the Council position, he didn't have good financial support. He is also an honest man. Member Wrobel noted he is a pillar of Novi. He also remembered the fence and tree issue. He asked what we are missing in the master plan now. Mr. Meyer said we can always grow and what he would like to see is a group of people getting together in the downtown area with a sense of comradery. However, at the library, and the park, those gatherings are great. It seems like there is still something missing. He noted we have to find other ways to truly make the downtown a downtown. Mayor Gatt thanked him for serving the community.

f. Charles Staab

Mr. Staab said has lived here since 1980 and originally picked Novi because of its ruralness. He was very involved in Jaycees and then involved in the City. He was on a curbside recycling committee that was first defeated, but then approved. He was on the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission, as well as, the Parks Foundation. He believed this would be a great fit for him with his ability to get results. Member Casey asked if he has made an unpopular decision. Mr. Staab said he was a champion of the aquatic facility. That was an initiative that went down soundly. Also, he pushed for the golf course question in north Novi. Also, he helped initiate the Tim Pope play structure that was erected at ITC Sports Park. Member Mutch asked, as a longtime resident of the City, what has the City done right and where could we improve. Member Staab believed the City has a superior police, fire and DPS, with a financial infrastructure with 18-22% margin. He would like to see a trail system started because they have money earmarked in the foundation and to develop our downtown area where Mongolian BBQ is located. He believed it should be developed as a magnet for gathering for retail and pleasure. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said they have served together on the Parks Commission. He noted that Mr. Staab has been instrumental in the Parks Foundation and appreciated all his efforts. Member Wrobel asked what he believed was the role of the Council member in the City. Mr. Staab said he thought it is to listen intently to the citizens of the City and then process it. Also, a member needs to be an ambassador. Member Markham asked that because of his service on the Parks Commission, what he thought would be the next big need and if it would be a Recreation Center or pool. What would he like to see? Mr. Staab would like to see the expansion of services for senior citizens as the population ages out. We need to look at the walking trails as a resource for naming rights money. He's always been a champion of Community Sports Park. In the past months, they've been looking at cooperative ideas. Ideally, he would like to see another recreation center but timing is everything. Mayor Gatt thanked him for all his service.

g. Bob Copes

Mr. Copes said he has been a 20 year resident. He's led teams and shares a vision of growth and opportunity for the City. What distinguishes him is the multi-cultural exposure of his youth. Member Mutch asked him what were the key challenges facing the City over the next 3-5 years. Mr. Copes answered that economic conditions have improved so greatly that we need to keep infrastructure in place or ahead of where it is today. We have some traffic issues. We've also talked about tax abatements. We need to continue to promote Novi as a city of choice. He thought we need to bring in employment beyond retail and fast food and the City needs industrial growth. That is a competitive marketplace where we compete against cities here and in other states. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked about his background in business and how it would assist Council as one of its colleagues. Mr. Copes grew up in a small town in Illinois, then being thrust into a situation overseas for 4 years positioned him to go into the work world that served him well. He has spent many years in customer service and product support for the construction industry, sales, and customer service. He became a contractor for an automotive manufacturer managing non-core business assets for a corporation in Michigan. Member Wrobel asked what programs we don't provide that we should. Mr. Copes envies Canton and their activities center called the Summit. We need one of those here. Member Markham asked what we could do to link these diverse groups to our community and to each other. Also, are there other opportunities exist throughout the City. Mr. Copes said it's one word and that is to listen. Member Casey asked what he thought was the key things of a Council member. Mr. Copes said there is a responsibility to listen, then formulate a strategy to deliver. He would do it by developing a buy in, layout a set of facts, and plant some seeds. Mayor Gatt thanked him for interviewing.

h. Colleen Crossey

Ms. Crossey said the last volunteer job she had was running for County Commissioner. She received 40% of the votes. She moved to Novi because of the schools. Novi has so many good things going on, why choose. It has culture, retail, library, schools, etc. It can be known for all of them. She lives near Rotary Park and a bonus is seeing deer in her backyard. She is a social worker and problem solver. She is a member of the Beautification Commission and presented the idea to invite businesses to attend River Day. She thought those working River Day might be customers for those businesses. She brings a broad based experience. She has a certificate in labor and industrial relations. She figures out what barriers there are to success. One role of Council is to craft a balanced budget. She wanted to note a program that has services for small businesses. Also she would like to make it easier for small businesses to get customers. She learned the library has this information. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt had no questions. Member Wrobel asked what her position was on the use of tax abatements. Ms.

Crossey said it is great to attract new business but was not a fan of tax abatements. If our tax system is not friendly to business, then we should change that. Also some businesses have said it doesn't provide a level playing field. She would like to see smaller businesses become bigger businesses. Member Markham said she had already answered her question but what could be done to promote small business. Ms. Crossey thought it was time for public transportation for customers and for employees to get to work. Member Casey asked what would be the biggest challenge for a new person on Council. Ms. Crossey thought a new Council member would have to hit the ground running. She is analytical thinker, attention to details, and some homework that is ongoing. Member Mutch asked about what concerns she had heard while campaigning. Ms. Crossey said there was some concern about Beck Road and the trucks going through there along with the speed. Also she met an IT professional going back into the work force who needed some assistance and Colleen handed out her business card asking if she could do something to help the residents. She also connected with a lot of people on LinkedIn so she can see where their expertise is and how that would help. Mayor Gatt thanked her for volunteering her services.

Council recessed at 8:53 p.m. for a 10 minute break.

Council reconvened at 9:03

2. Discussion and/or vote regarding Council vacancy

City Clerk Cornelius provided the results of balloting: Doreen Poupard is the candidate who received the four votes required.

**ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 P.M.

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Robert J. Gatt, Mayor

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Maryanne Cornelius, City Clerk

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Transcribed by Jane Keller

Date approved: November 24, 2014