

HALSEY CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Halsey City Hall
773 W. 1st Street
Halsey, OR 97348
7:00 P.M.

Tuesday, August 18, 2009

The City Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The City Administrator took Roll Call.

Present: Mayor Marjean Cline, Council President Wade Doerfler, Councilor Eric Harless, Councilor Joan Mercier, Councilor Eldon Albertson, and Councilor Kathy Parker. Councilor Cynthia Choat was absent.

Also in attendance were Planning Commission Chairperson Betsy Barley and Planning Commissioner Mike Nokes. Commissioner Julie Smith was absent.

Review of Proposals for City Planner

John Morgan introduced himself as President of Morgan CPS and his associate **Richard Berger**, noting he would be serve as the lead planner for the City. Morgan stated that his family homestead was in Saddle Butte and that he and the Carlson's in Brownsville are cousins. Morgan indicated he was born and raised in Lebanon and based upon his background has a strong appreciation for smaller communities. Morgan stated the company has been in business since 2002 and specializes in working in small communities. Morgan reported there are two things considered in determining the qualifications of a City Planner which are (1) experience, and (2) attitude and philosophy. Morgan indicated their goals are to help build successful communities and help them prepare for the future. Morgan noted the important phrase in that statement was "successful". Morgan indicated their role as City planner would be to help define the future of the community as the community determines they want it. Morgan noted they have had experience dealing with the various agencies that work to undermine the goals of some communities. Morgan cited an example on how they are working with the City of Donald where the Thousand Friends of Oregon are in opposition to a land use proposal and Morgan is confident Donald will be successful with their help in fighting this agency. Morgan stated they work with four cities currently which are the City of Aumsville, the City of Donald, the City of Yamhill, and the City of Cascade Locks. Morgan noted they want to serve as part of the team of contractors which he presumed included the city engineer and city attorney. Morgan indicated they looked forward to working with city staff as well. Morgan stated they are interested in developing a partnership with mutual respect and assistance. Morgan added they are also mindful of budget issues impacting small cities in regard to planning. Morgan finalized his statements by noting he has a 30 year history of planning which includes training and teaching with the League of Oregon Cities. Berger stated he has been in Oregon for five years and with Morgan CPS for four years. Berger indicated he was the lead planner for the City of Aumsville and would be the lead planner for the City of Halsey as well. Berger said he enjoyed working with small towns and was excited about the opportunity to move further south, expressing he would enjoy the variety. Council President Doerfler asked if Morgan and Berger were the only two employees with Morgan responding affirmatively as they attempt to keep their overhead as low as possible. Council President Doerfler asked with their current clientele if they would be able to respond on short notice to any issue the City might have with Morgan responding affirmatively. Commissioner Barley asked if their company has assisted with finding grants for cities. Morgan replied they had worked on a Transportation and Growth Management grant for the City of Cascade Locks and they had also looked for funding opportunities for an update to one city's development code. Commissioner Nokes indicated the City is looking for continuity in hiring a planner as Satre Associates had been with them

for over ten years and did not want this process to be a revolving door. Commissioner Nokes asked, with the fact that they are working to keep their overhead low, was it a bit of a stretch for their company to travel this far south and handle the additional workload. Morgan indicated he worked with the Mid Willamette Valley Council of Governments and learned that consistent relationships were pretty much non-existent in that area and therefore his intention is to develop long term relationships. Morgan noted they were partly in-house planners for the City of Sheridan and the City of Dundee and when they were recently asked for more time Morgan stated they resigned from those cities because of wanting to develop and maintain their current relationships with smaller cities. The City Administrator asked Berger if there were set monthly or bimonthly planning meetings for the City of Aumsville. Berger responded there were but it is not always necessary for him to be in attendance. Berger asked if any major planning issues on the horizon. Mayor Cline stated that planning is pretty much feast or famine in the City. Commissioner Barley stated that industry is lacking in town and indicated that much of the planning would evolve around residential properties. Morgan asked about Council goals with Mayor Cline responding that at the moment it is a simple town and a City in search of an identity. Mayor Cline mentioned about the prison and mental health facility going in south of Junction City had potential impact on residential construction in the City of Halsey. Morgan responded that is where they have an advantage because there are two of them with the ability to work together during busier times. Mayor Cline stated that Halsey is unique because of the number of farmers in the area and the fact that they do not support any kind of UGB expansion. Morgan responded that Halsey reminds him of Yamhill and Donald and appears to be similar to St. Paul as well who they provided planning services for previously. The City Administrator asked who did their billing with Morgan again responding that they do their own billing to keep overhead low. The City Administrator asked how they itemized their statements with Berger responding each City has their own ideas regarding billing and they are willing to accommodate those types of requests. Berger asked the City Administrator if customers contact the planner directly or if they are referred by her or city staff. The City Administrator responded that in most cases she may speak with an individual and when the questions are beyond her comfort zone she will refer them to the city planner. The City Administrator commented she normally does not call or email when referring someone to the City Planner mostly in part to the long trusting relationship with Satre Associates however details about levels of communication could be worked out with the new planner. Morgan asked who the city engineering firm was and the city attorney for the City. After a brief discussion the interview ended.

Rich Catlin began by stating it was a pleasure for him to be here in Halsey. Catlin noted he had been a county planner for Benton County for 13 years and a planner for the City of Albany for 11 years. Catlin indicated he left the public sector to advance his career and because of some political issues. Catlin noted that he primarily left the City of Albany because he could not see any opportunity for advancement and has been in private practice for four years. Catlin indicated planning can be a dry subject and he has the ability to make it interesting. Catlin noted that he takes on projects from the beginning and manages it through the entire process to completion. Catlin stated he possesses the ability to put things on a human level and is a good listener; skills one needs in order to manage effectively. Catlin indicated his work load is fairly low as a result of the economy and he would be able to begin work immediately. Catlin addressed an item in the RFQ asking whether there were any conflicts of interest to which he responded he had represented John Powell in the past however Powell dropped his project due the fact that his property appears to be approximately 90% wetlands. Catlin stated he has had experience working on development codes and been involved in long range planning as well. Catlin said his strength is in his people skills noting he is a good listener when dealing with complex and conflicting situations, good at helping people understand things, and he is a problem solver. Catlin felt he is uniquely qualified because of this experience working in both the public and private sector and he has based his entire career in the mid Willamette valley.

Council President Doerfler asked if during his work with Benton County if he had any experience working with small towns. Catlin responded the staff at the County rotated around to work with cities such as Monroe and Philomath thus his experience includes those two cities. Catlin added that he helped with some planning for Alsea, although it is unincorporated, but he does understand the

problems unique to small towns. Commissioner Barley asked if his experience included reviewing house plans in relationship to the development code and if he had the knowledge to work with the various forms required for these types of review. Catlin responded that he has the ability to read plans to determine what they say as well as what they don't say. Commissioner Nokes asked if there were a planning issue is there anyone in his company available if he is unable to be reached. Catlin responded he is "the guy" and in that case he always is in possession of his cell phone. Mayor Cline noted the planning needs of the City are limited and very basic and the work tends to be either feast or famine. Mayor Cline indicated the prison and State mental health facility going in south of Junction City could potentially impact housing in Halsey however currently there is not a lot going on and asked how Catlin felt about being "on call" when there is not much to do. Catlin responded he was here to serve the needs of the City and was committed for the long term no matter the circumstances. Commissioner Nokes asked if Catlin had experience with goal setting with a Planning Commission to which Catlin responded affirmatively. With no more questions Catlin completed his interview.

Eric Adams was introduced to the governing body and the two commissioners and stated he was happy to be selected as a candidate for City Planner. Adams stated he has been in private practice for two years and prior to that he worked for the City of Corvallis. Adams indicated he is excellent in terms of communicating with others and therefore possesses the skill to communicate well with staff, the community, other agencies and the actual applicant. Adams stated the value he brings is his ability to communicate well and clearly, and his commitment to following through on any project to completion. Adams indicated he feels he brings a fresh approach to the planning process. Adams stated his perception is that the land use process is somewhat flexible and a person needs to recognize when things need to be adjusted such as an amendment to a development code.

Council President Doerfler expressed a concern for his lack of experience in working with small cities and the number of projects he has handled have been limited. Council President Doerfler asked, with his limited resources, did he feel capable of guiding a community of this size through the various projects it encounters and asked if he had any experience in grant writing. Adams responded he has not done a lot of grant writing but did assist with a grant application in Minnesota in regard to clean water. Commissioner Barley asked, with his limited work with a city, has he developed staff reports and their relationship to city and county codes. Adams responded he had given some thought to including a staff report in his SOQ, however most of the ones he drafted were with the City of Corvallis and were very extensive documents. Adams indicated in developing staff reports he coordinated with other departments and realized that would not be the case in a small city but nonetheless his background includes staff reports and findings of fact. Commissioner Nokes asked if Adams future goals would be to work for other small communities should he be successful in being selected for this position. Adams responded he has stayed local and intends to do so and has grown his practice to approximately 25 clients. However, Adams indicated he enjoys planning in the public sector and would look forward to working with the community to help shape it into what they would like it to look like. Mayor Cline stated the City had a long term relationship with the City Planner and much of the planning involves building permits, conditional use permits, etc. Mayor Cline noted that the prison and State mental facility in Junction City could spark some growth in Halsey in the next few years resulting in the review of several building permits. Adams responded he was comfortable with the workload and would make the City a priority and would be willing to either have fewer private clients or work into the early morning hours to complete whatever project was necessary. Adams noted another attribute a planner should possess is the ability to be comfortable when having to make uncomfortable decisions to which he responded he is fully capable of doing. Commissioner Nokes indicated the City may go for months with nothing to do and then there could be several things to do and how did he feel about that situation. Adams responded it did not scare him and reiterated he would make any City projects his top priority. The City Administrator asked if he had a "go to" guy if there were issues he was unsure of resolving with Adams responding there are at least two people he would use for backup if necessary. The City Administrator asked if he was responsible for his own billing to which he responded affirmatively. Adams asked the governing body and the commissioners if there were any long range plans with the response being not at this time. Adams asked if there was any

interest in GIS documents or GIS information with Commissioner Nokes responding the City currently receives information of this type free through the County. Mayor Cline acknowledged mention of Highway 99 and ODOT in his SOQ and stated the City faces a hardship in making Halsey a livable, walk able community because of the Highway. Adams responded that ODOT has a definite process in dealing with issues in order to move things through the State effectively however it is possible to borrow information from other locations to see what works for them and see if any of it can be adapted to this community. Concluding a short discussion Adams completed his interview.

Evaluate Applicants, Rank Applicants, Select Successful Applicant

It was the consensus of the governing body and the commissioners to rule out Rich Catlin as an applicant for the position. Commissioner Nokes expressed a concern for his hourly fee and Councilor Parker did not get the impression that he understood the needs of a small community. Council President Doerfler asked for the opinions of the commissioners and the City Administrator as they would be the ones working with the City Planner the most. Commissioner Barley indicated she liked the presentation of Morgan CPS but also thought that in hiring a younger applicant such as Eric it would give the City the ability to train someone how they liked. Commissioner Nokes stated he was conflicted between the first and third applicant. Commissioner Nokes stated Morgan CPS was very professional and he felt very comfortable with them. Councilor Harless noted Eric Adams was an inexperienced young guy but he was intrigued by his presentation although he was worried he may be more apt to leave depending upon opportunities and that the Morgan firm was more established. Mayor Cline stated that Adams had experience writing staff reports and he did have a connection with Devco Engineering. Councilor Parker noted that John Morgan is a member of some professional organizations therefore he has to stay on top of things. Commissioner Barley added that he teaches as well. Mayor Cline expressed a concern that perhaps the Morgan firm was a bit too much for the City and they gave the impression that they may be more inclined to propose things the City needs rather than help with the things the City needed. Councilor Mercier stated the Morgan firm is a bit more polished but agreed they are perhaps more than the City needs. Councilor Mercier thought that Adams was young and a bit hungry and would work hard. Mayor Cline reminded everyone of his statement that he would put Halsey ahead of other planning issues he was handling. Council President Doerfler felt that Adams was sincere and is kind of like an “old shoe that fits”. Mayor Cline liked the fact that he included some discussion about Highway 99 in his documentation and that he has an environmental background. Councilor Mercier stated he has the ability to grow with the City. Commissioner Barley reiterated he could be “brought up right” since he is young and ambitious. Mayor Cline agreed and expressed a concern that Morgan CPS has too much of an array of services. Councilor Harless stated his opinion is that an abundance of experience in planning does not matter and he has been in Adam’s shoes in terms of the last one being noticed because of his age or inexperience. Councilor Parker indicated Adams was very professional in his presentation and answers to questions. Commissioner Nokes stated he is fine with Adams and thought it would be acceptable having Morgan CPS as a backup should things perhaps not work out with Adams. Commissioner Barley agreed. A brief discussion ensued.

Council President Doerfler made a motion to accept Eric Adams as the new City Planner. Councilor Parker 2nd and the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Council President Doerfler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Councilor Parker 2nd and the motion carried unanimously.

Marjean Cline, Mayor

Judy Cleeton, City Administrator