

**POLSON CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL – CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
MONDAY, February 9, 2009, 5:30 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE: CITY COMMISSIONERS: Bruce Agrella, Jim Sohm, Jules Clavadetscher, Mike Lies, Elsa Duford present. Commissioner Fred Funke absent. Mayor Lou Marchello present. City Attorney/Acting City Manager James Raymond absent.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Lou Marchello called the meeting to order and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA: Motion made by Commissioner Clavadetscher, seconded by Commissioner Agrella, to approve the proposed agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND APPROVED STEPPED CITY MANAGER COMPENSATION PACKAGES: Mayor Marchello referenced the material presented to Council prepared by City staff at the request of Acting City Manager James Raymond. The reports included a City manager comparison chart of compensation paid by Belgrade, Columbia Falls, Lewistown, Livingston and Whitefish. The information was prepared Ardrene Sarracino through phone interviews. A current year expenditure budget detail for the City manager position, and a City manager benefit package detail with salary ranges from low to high with associated costs for next year's budget. Commissioners noted that some of the cities have resort tax revenue and are larger cities with more revenue than Polson. **Motion made by Commissioner Clavadetscher to approve the stepped City Manager compensation packages as presented with \$60,000 for low, \$70,000 for medium and \$80,000 for high wages, depending on their qualifications and experience. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sohm.** Commissioner Lies said he preferred to increase the medium and high steps by \$7,500 each, making them \$60,000 for low, \$67,500 for medium and \$75,000 for high. Commissioner Clavadetscher replied that is not a big difference but feels that since some City department heads are earning close to \$60,000 and there should be more of a spread between theirs and the city manager's wages. He noted that the City's revenues increased since fiscal year 07-08 when Jay Henry's base salary was determined, although expenses have also increased. Commissioner Duford felt that even a few thousand dollars could make a difference. Commissioner Sohm expressed his concern that we have to provide a competitive wage. He understands that the concern is because of the economy right now but it is temporary and it will recover as it has in the past. At this time there is no basis for reducing the original offer of \$65,000 to \$85,000 except to give more leeway and keep the cost within the budget. Commissioner Duford stated that starting at a lower salary would allow more room to give raises in the future. Commissioner Sohm replied that the low, medium and high salary range starts at a lower amount. The commissioners could decide that they don't want the highest experience but want someone with less experience and education but someone who would stay for a longer term. He prepared a guide for each salary range which would eliminate extensive negotiating time and the salary and benefits for each candidate will be very clear from the start. The search committee will meet to compile the input from the commission and the search committee on his preliminary proposal and will present their recommendations at the February 18th City Commission meeting. **Motion to approve the stepped City Manager compensation packages as presented with \$60,000 for low, \$70,000 for medium and \$80,000 for high wages, depending on their qualifications and experience carried unanimously.**

SEARCH COMMITTEE TO RECOMMEND TIME SCHEDULE TO HIRE CITY MANAGER: Mayor Marchello noted that Lois Hart, Chairman of the Search Committee has resigned due to health issues. Jim Sohm has provided draft recommendations for the time schedule to hire a city manager and is asking the city commissioners and the search committee to provide comments in writing. The search committee will meet to prepare a final recommendation to the City Commission at the next meeting. It will specify that there is no salary range but three salaries depending on qualifications, consisting of low, medium and high. When an offer is made to a particular candidate they will be asked to fax back a binding agreement that they will take the job if the city commission approves their hire. This follows the transition plan and the process is streamlined with three weeks for advertising , two weeks dead time and seven weeks total. These details enhance Resolution #974 Section 5 which has been adopted by the City Commission. It describes in more detail the search committee's role utilizing the City's website to provide detailed information including benefits with qualifications for the low, medium and high salary ranges. Commissioner Clavadetscher asked that they clarify Don Seten's status as a candidate under this agenda item and give the mayor direction to proceed with another interview. Commissioner Lies asked if these salary ranges would keep them from paying someone \$65,000 if they deserve it. Commissioner Sohm replied that they could pay whatever the Commission decided but the negotiating would be eliminated and having three salary ranges is good to streamline the process. Commissioner Sohm clarified that Don Seten was never disqualified and the pay range was \$65,000 to \$85,000. During the interviews he misrepresented himself through miscommunication and has now made a decision that he does want to be a city manager and not continue with his private business. The Commissioners expressed their interest in arranging another interview but would not pay his travel expenses for a second interview. Commissioner Duford suggested a conference call instead of having him incur the cost. Commissioner Clavadetscher and Sohm felt that they would prefer to interview him in person but would agree to a phone interview. **Motion made by Commissioner Sohm, to give Don Seten another opportunity to interview as soon as possible. The salary offer would be \$70,000 with standard benefits. Motion seconded by Commissioner Clavadetscher. Motion amended by Commissioner Sohm to include that the interview would be at Don Seten's expense. Motion to amend was seconded by Commissioner Clavadetscher. The motion to amend was carried unanimously. The amended motion was carried unanimously.** Commissioner Lies questioned the City Manager Budget Information handout. City Clerk Aggi Loeser clarified that the balance of budget remaining should have stated for May and June and the calculations are for the correct number of months.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC NOT ON THE AGENDA: Mayor Marchello asked for public comments. Not public comments were made.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Lou Marchello, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Aggi G. Loeser, City Clerk