

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TRINIDAD CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

- Mayor Fulkerson called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Council members in attendance: Miller, Fulkerson, Baker. West – Absent.
- City Staff in attendance: City Manager Dan Berman, City Clerk Gabriel Adams.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion (Fulkerson/Baker) to approve the agenda as written. Passed 3-0.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:

Alan Grau – Trinidad

Attended the Planning Commission meeting last night. It was very frustrating. I've been asking for non-owner occupied VDU's to only be allowed in non-residential areas but I am being ignored. I would like to see a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and City Council. I've been told that the Coastal Commission would not approve my proposal. Is that true? Questioned the PC's role and made various criticisms of the staff and process.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA – None.

VIII. DISCUSSION/ACTION AGENDA:

1. Discussion/Decision to Appoint a new Councilmember to complete the remaining term through December 2018 left vacant by David Winnett's resignation.

The City has received (3) letters of interest from candidates willing to complete the remaining 2 ½ year term left vacant by the recent resignation of Councilmember David Winnett. The candidates are: **Doren Morgan, Susan Tissot, and Kathleen Lake.**

All three are Trinidad residents and eligible to serve the remaining term through December 2018.

The Council will interview the candidates. The interview will have (5) questions, to be scored. Additionally (2) summary items will be scored. The Council's scoring matrix has been prepared and provided to each candidate in advance of the meeting. Each candidate will be offered approximately 2 minutes per response. Scores will be tallied, Mayor Miller will announce the highest total, and second place if close. Then, a motion to appoint will be offered. After the meeting all scoring sheets will be in the public record.

As a reminder, (2) more seats will be up this November 2016. The nomination period will begin in July. Anyone not selected will be encouraged to apply for the upcoming full 4-year term positions.

Council clarification points included:

Fulkerson: This is not about question #5 regarding VDU's. The issues of this City are broad and vast. A majority vote of 3 is needed to appoint someone tonight. I'm personally only interested in hearing the strengths that each candidate brings to the table, nothing else.

Public comment included:

Barbara Wright – Trinidad

I support Doren Morgan. He is well qualified and will bring a well-balanced approach to the Council.

Pat Morales – Trinidad

I support Kathleen Lake. She's very active in City politics and her family is active in the community as well.

Susan Rotwein – Trinidad

I support Doren Morgan. He's well qualified, and I would like the Council to acknowledge approximately 20 letters of support for him that were sent to the City for consideration. I would also like to call to your attention that nearly the entire letter candidate Kathleen Lake wrote to you was copied from an application made to the Flagstaff Arizona City Council and therefore should be disqualified. (Copies of the letter were submitted to each Councilmember and to the Clerk for public record).

Interview Questions:

1. *What interests you about serving on the Trinidad City Council?*

Morgan: (Read from a prepared outline) Serving the people is the primary goal. The issues facing Trinidad extend beyond its city limits. We have a responsibility to serve the residents and tourists alike.

Tissot: Touched on her connection to Trinidad, and the experience she has to offer to the City in the role of Councilmember.

Lake: (Read from a prepared statement) She attends all meetings, volunteers, has a vast knowledge of city policies and local issues, engaged, and has a large network of friends and fellow activists. Change is good.

2. *What do you consider to be the most important attributes of an elected or appointed public official such as a City councilperson?*

Morgan: To have thick skin. This is not a popularity contest. It is tough to endure, but it takes a good listener with an open mind to find solutions and reach conclusions that are based on solid, financial and legal basis. Not based on feelings, but facts.

Tissot: Serving the public means to not have an agenda, and to serve the greater good. Hearing all sides of the issues. Transparency. Being a good listener.

Lake: (Read from a prepared statement) The public process can be time consuming. Lead by example. Establishing social connections. Informal linkages. Council will need to recognize many residents, not just a few. Put residents first.

3. *What are Trinidad's greatest assets?*

Lake: (Read from a prepared statement) Passionate residents, history, voluntary organizations; Garden Club, Civic Club, Lions Club, Land Trust, etc... Trinidad School, Post Office, Infrastructure, Economy – formal, informal, traditional.

Morgan: People are the greatest assets, good or bad. I'm proud to live here because there's nothing like it anywhere else. The natural beauty is one of the best assets. Volunteers.

Tissot: Agree with Morgan... the people, the location, and natural beauty provide opportunities to residents. The School, businesses, and the Mayberry feeling. It's truly a special community.

4. *Without offering solutions, what do you see as the top concerns of the City of Trinidad? Currently? Ten years from now?*

Morgan: Managing Trinidad's popularity without causing undue stress on our locals. Avoid legal conflicts. The Marijuana industry has a huge impact on local business and will have a rippling effect on the county over the next 10 years. We need to protect our residents. Tourism is a great asset to have. That's our job. Manage the town for the good of all the residents.

Tissot: People fall in love with Trinidad. It is one of the last frontiers. Balancing visitors and tourism with local needs. Affordable housing. Tsurai Village. Growth pressure. Public safety.

Lake: (Read from a prepared statement) 38% of housing on Ocean Avenue is vacation rentals. Balancing neighborhoods. Budget strategy. In-house City Planner. Public Safety. Budget unpredictability. Disaster planning and strategic planning. Building relationships by using existing assets.

5. The vacation rental, or VDU, issue is "hot" right now. Our VDU Ordinance started operating in August of 2015, and we have found many areas of "leakage" where unanticipated problems have arisen. The Council is planning revisions. Just now the Planning Commission is hearing public input & preparing recommendations for revisions. In June, July, and August we expect the Council to pass revisions, and send those on to the Coastal Commission for final approval. As a new Council person, how do you imagine dealing with this hotly debated issue?

Tissot: Dialog, patience, transparency and a welcoming process. Knowing when and where to compromise. Balancing quality of life and preserving the local nature of the town.

Lake: (Read from a prepared statement) Patience and dignity. The public is the client. Are the benefits at the resident's expense? Base decisions on facts. No one is expendable. When I joined the volunteer fire department I learned everything on my own. Consider the person before the condition.

Morgan: Have a VDU happy hour. We all want the same thing. Safe environment, revenues, etc. At first I thought that taking away someone's property right was bad, but as I listened to the conversations I realized that there are issues. I'm shocked that we're still dealing with it, frankly, because there are many other important issues that need to be addressed.

Summary Scores:

6. Synthesis of submitted documents (letters-of-interest and/or resume/CV)
7. Synthesis of the interview

Council took a ten-minute break to tally the scores.

Council comment included:

Miller: Presented the high score awarded to **Susan Tissot**, and invited her to join the Council by unanimous support from the Council.

Fulkerson: Liked the way Tissot responded to other applicant's statements, her long-term vision, and life experience. Thanked the other candidates.

Baker: Complimented Tissot on her years of Executive Director experience. Agreed with Fulkerson.

*Candidate **Kathleen Lake** noted her error in copying the content of her letter, stating she often cuts and pastes material into her documents, and apologized to the Council for her actions.*

Miller described Lake as a person of high integrity and asked that she consider running in the November election.

City Clerk Adams administered the Oath of Office to Tissot and she joined the Council for the next discussion item.

2. Continued Discussion/Decision regarding Resolution 2016-05; Calling for an election to propose extension of the sales tax increase.

City Manager Berman explained that edits were made to the Resolution as directed by Council at the May 10 meeting to emphasize that this is a "continued" extension, not a new one.

Public comment included:

Rocky Whitlow – Trinidad Area

Opposes the tax and the effects it has on those that live outside the city but share the zip code of 95570. Taxation without representation is not legal.

*Motion (Fulkerson/Baker) to approve Resolution 2016-05. **Passed 3-0.***

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting ended at 7:45pm.

Submitted by:

Gabriel Adams
City Clerk

Approved by:

Dwight Miller
Mayor