

**CITY OF BUENA VISTA
ORGANIZATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
January 2, 2020**

The City Council for the City of Buena Vista met for an Organizational Council Meeting on Thursday, January 2, 2020, at 8:00 a.m. in Council Chambers (2039 Sycamore Avenue).

Council Members Present: Mayor Bill Fitzgerald
Melvin Henson Cheryl Hickman
Tyson Cooper Danny Staton
Lisa Clark Stanley Coffey

Members Absent: None.

Mayor Fitzgerald opened the meeting by requesting that everyone stand and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Stanley Coffey delivered the opening prayer.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Motion was made by Council Member Clark to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice-Mayor Cooper, carried by Council.

APPOINTMENT OF CLERK OF COUNCIL:

Motion was made by Council Member Clark to re-appoint Dawn Wheeler as Clerk of Council, seconded by Councilman Henson.

Ms. Wheeler polled Council as follows:

	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Mayor Fitzgerald	X		X		
Melvin Henson	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Tyson Cooper	X		X		
Cheryl Hickman	X		X		
Lisa Clark	X		X		
Danny Staton	X		X		
Stanley Coffey	X		X		

APPOINTMENT OF CITY ATTORNEY:

Motion was made by Council Member Clark to re-appoint Brian Kearney as City Attorney, seconded by Councilman Staton.

Ms. Wheeler polled Council as follows:

	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Mayor Fitzgerald	X		X		
Melvin Henson	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Tyson Cooper	X		X		
Cheryl Hickman	X		X		
Lisa Clark	X		X		
Danny Staton	X		X		
Stanley Coffey	X		X		

APPOINTMENT OF CITY MANAGER:

Motion was made by Council Member Clark to re-appoint Jay Scudder as City Manager, seconded by Vice-Mayor Cooper.

Ms. Wheeler polled Council as follows:

	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Mayor Fitzgerald	X			X	
Melvin Henson	X			X	
Vice-Mayor Tyson Cooper	X		X		
Cheryl Hickman	X			X	
Lisa Clark	X		X		
Danny Staton	X			X	
Stanley Coffey	X			X	

ELECTION OF VICE-MAYOR:

Mayor Fitzgerald started the discussion by stating that Vice-Mayor Cooper has been a lot of help to him. He opined that you are only as good as the people you surround yourself with. He said that where he has weaknesses, Vice-Mayor Cooper has strengths. He opined it would be a big benefit if Council would re-appoint Tyson as Vice-Mayor.

Councilman Coffey nominated Council Member Clark for Vice-Mayor, seconded by Council Member Hickman.

Mayor Fitzgerald stated that he really needs someone he can work with and continue to bring in business to the City like they have been doing. He opined it is very important to have a Vice-Mayor that you can work with. Mayor Fitzgerald said if Council would look at the record for the past 2 years, there has been a lot of work that both he and Vice-Mayor Cooper have done to bring in new businesses. He opined it would be a shame to mess that up.

Council Member Hickman opined it is important to have diversity also. She said that sometimes you can work so well with someone that you cannot see the elephant in the room. She opined that due to the 2nd Amendment situation she feels it is important to have someone diverse so that it is not one particular idea that has the floor.

Vice-Mayor Cooper asked Council Member Hickman what particular issue she was addressing.

Council Member Hickman said she would not go into specifics because she did not want to. She feels there should be diversity on Council.

Mayor Fitzgerald said that he personally worked with the Republican party concerning the 2nd Amendment for a sanctuary City.

Council Member Clark stated that she had some private conversations with Jennifer Brown, and she was not pleased with how the 2nd Amendment was handled.

Mayor Fitzgerald opined if things don't go along like they have been during the past 2 years, the Vice-Mayor will get the blame from the public.

Council Member Clark said there is one thing that needs to be clarified and be really concise about. That is a Vice-Mayor has no other authority above any of the other Council members. The Mayor really does not either except to run the Council meetings. She said she would be happy to serve as Vice-Mayor and would also approve of Vice-Mayor Cooper being the Vice-Mayor. She opined that Vice-Mayor Cooper has a lot of strengths and qualities that she does not have. She opined the thing they need to build on as a Council is that Council is working together, and they are not separate entities. She is not concerned about the Vice-Mayor holding that together, but she is concerned about the leader of the Council being the one holding everyone together. Council Member Clark said if she had to pick someone to be her right hand, it would be a hard choice. She opined that everyone sitting around the circle have specific talents and skills that we rely on. There must be underlying trust.

Mayor Fitzgerald said if Council would let him have Tyson as his Vice-Mayor for the next two years, he would not run for re-election.

Council Member Clark stated this is not about deals it is about what is best for Council.

Councilman Coffey said his nomination was not personal. He opined it is time for a change.

Council Member Hickman said that she does not have anything against Vice-Mayor Cooper. She opined there were other members of Council that had different feelings about the 2nd Amendment and their feelings were ignored. She opined they need to have someone who will listen to the entire Council and make intelligent decisions based on facts.

Ms. Wheeler polled Council as follows:

	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Mayor Fitzgerald	X			X	
Melvin Henson	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Tyson Cooper	X		X		
Cheryl Hickman	X		X		
Lisa Clark	X		X		
Danny Staton	X		X		
Stanley Coffey	X		X		

Mr. Kearney stated that before we leave, you will need to have an acting City Manager. You did not re-appoint the City Manager, you cannot go without having a City Manager. This is something that will have to be done very quickly because you will have to have somebody sign contracts and all sorts of stuff that a City Manager has to do.

Mayor Fitzgerald wanted to know if this was something that they could discuss tonight.

Mr. Kearney said that he thinks you can add it as an agenda item based upon what happened today.

Mr. Scudder stated that he believed under the Charter the Chief of Police became acting City Manager..

Mr. Kearney said he did not know under the Charter if it was the Chief of Police automatically or Clerk of Council, but you will have to decide what you want to do with that.

Vice-Mayor Clark wanted to know if that was something they could do now.

Mr. Kearney stated again that he does not know what the Charter says but he can find out.

Councilman Henson said that one time they appointed Dawn as Interim City Manager.

Mr. Kearney said Council did that right before Jay was hired.

Councilman Coffey wanted to know if they could do someone like Dawn as interim until they can find someone.

Councilman Henson said or search for an interim.

Mr. Kearney said they can do that if they wanted to talk to Dawn, they could certainly do that. You have done that before Jay was hired and before Jack Gross came as interim.

Councilman Henson said he will say she did a fantastic job while she was there.
 Mr. Kearney said you legally need somebody with that title.
 Vice-Mayor Clark wanted to know if it was ok if they talk about process now because she is like swimming over here.
 Mr. Kearney said yes. The Charter talks about you have to have a City Manager. You have to appoint somebody; either the previous manager remains until you appoint somebody, or you go to the Charter; whether it is the Chief of Police or the Clerk of Council. He said he does not know off the top of his head, but he will research it and let Council know by this afternoon.
 Councilman Coffey wanted to know if today they could make a motion for Dawn to serve as Interim City Manager until we get a City Manager.
 Mr. Kearney said that they could, but they might want to talk to her about it either now or this evening. You will need a City Manager.
 Mr. Scudder said they could have him stay on for a while.
 Mr. Kearney said they could have Jay stay on as City Manager.
 Mayor Fitzgerald said he could stay until they do the interview. He asked Council if they would be fine with that.
 Vice-Mayor Clark said she would be more comfortable with that until they have time to set up the process and interviews.
 Mr. Kearney said the process will not be done overnight.
 Vice-Mayor Clark opined it is a long process.
 Mr. Kearney said if they wanted to appoint Jay as the Interim City Manager until further notice that would be fine.
 Mayor Fitzgerald stated they need a motion and a second to appoint Jay as Interim City Manager until further notice.
 Vice-Mayor Clark motioned to appoint Mr. Scudder as Interim City Manager until further notice, seconded by Councilman Staton.
 Ms. Wheeler polled Council as follows:

	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Mayor Fitzgerald	X		X		
Melvin Henson	X			X	
Vice-Mayor Tyson Cooper	X		X		
Cheryl Hickman	X		X		
Lisa Clark	X		X		
Danny Staton	X		X		
Stanley Coffey	X		X		

ADJORNMENT: There being no further business, Mayor Fitzgerald adjourned the meeting.

Bill Fitzgerald, Mayor

Dawn M. Wheeler, Clerk of Council