

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

January 2, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Chelminiak, Deputy Mayor Robinson, and Councilmembers Lee, Nieuwenhuis, Robertson, Stokes, and Zahn

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., with Temporary Chair Stokes presiding.

2. Study Session

(a) Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Temporary Chair Stokes welcomed Jared Nieuwenhuis to the Council. He noted that Ms. Zahn joined the Council immediately after the election was certified in late November because she was filling an unexpired term.

Mr. Stokes recalled that he was selected on December 11 to serve as the temporary Chair for tonight's meeting. He said Bellevue has the Council-Manager form of government, and the Council elects its Mayor and Deputy Mayor every two years. The Mayor acts as the Council's presiding officer, represents the City in several forums, and performs a number of ceremonial roles. Mr. Stokes noted that, at the conclusion of the election of the Mayor, he or she will take the gavel and preside over the election of the Deputy Mayor.

Mr. Stokes said the Council decided on December 11 to use a written ballot process for tonight's election. The Council will vote on all nominees simultaneously instead of individually, and the results of the ballots will be tabulated and read aloud. Mr. Stokes said nominations do not require a second, and Councilmembers are allowed to nominate themselves for the position.

Councilmember Stokes invited nominations for Mayor. He said the voting process would be repeated until a majority vote is reached for an individual.

Councilmember Lee nominated Councilmember Chelminiak to serve as Mayor.

Mr. Stokes noted that, even with one nominee, Councilmembers still need to vote their ballots. The City Clerk distributed, collected, and tallied the ballots.

Mr. Stokes read the ballots, which unanimously elected Councilmember Chelminiak. Mr. Stokes declared Mr. Chelminiak as Mayor and congratulated him.

Councilmember Lee congratulated Mayor Chelminiak, noting that he has served on the Council with diligence, honor, and responsibility. Mr. Lee said he has worked with Mr. Chelminiak for a number of years, and he knows that Mayor Chelminiak will continue to serve the community well.

Mayor Chelminiak introduced the election of the Deputy Mayor, noting that he was aware of two Councilmembers wanting to offer nominations.

Councilmember Stokes nominated Councilmember Robinson to serve as Deputy Mayor.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis nominated Councilmember Robertson to serve as Deputy Mayor.

The City Clerk distributed, collected, and tallied the ballots. Mayor Chelminiak read the results of the votes:

Mayor Chelminiak and Councilmembers Robinson, Stokes, and Zahn voted for Ms. Robinson to serve as Deputy Mayor.

Councilmembers Lee, Nieuwenhuis, and Robertson voted for Ms. Robertson to serve as Deputy Mayor.

Mayor Chelminiak declared that Councilmember Robinson achieved the majority vote and would serve as Deputy Mayor.

Councilmember Lee said he appreciated the quality of Councilmembers and their ability to collaborate and come together for the benefit of the community. He said that all of the Councilmembers are qualified to serve as Mayor or Deputy Mayor. He said he enjoys working with Councilmember Robertson and he has learned a great deal from her. Councilmember Lee congratulated Councilmember Robinson for her well-deserved election to serve as Deputy Mayor. He welcomed Mr. Nieuwenhuis to the Council.

Deputy Mayor Robinson thanked Councilmember Stokes for his leadership over the past two years. She noted that Bellevue is designated as one of the most desirable places to live in the country, and its school district is rated as one of the best in the country. She said Bellevue attracts innovators, has excellent public safety, and was one of the finalists for the Georgetown University Energy Prize. Ms. Robinson thanked Mr. Stokes for guiding the Council through its many achievements over the past two years.

Councilmember Zahn said it was somewhat frustrating to nominate individuals and to vote without hearing statements from the nominees. She requested that the Council discuss the overall process before the next two-year election. Mayor Chelminiak suggested discussing the topic during the Council's annual retreat.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked Councilmember Stokes for his vision and leadership as Mayor and for representing Bellevue very well.

Councilmember Stokes said he appreciated the comments by his colleagues. He said serving as Mayor has been a great experience, and he is excited about Bellevue's future. He appreciated working with Mayor Chelminiak, noting that they share many of the same values and perspectives, while differing on certain issues as well. Councilmember Stokes said he is pleased that Mr. Chelminiak has the opportunity to serve as Mayor. Mr. Stokes said the Council is a great group that can accomplish a great deal by working together with the leadership of Mayor Chelminiak and Deputy Mayor Robinson.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked Councilmember Stokes for his service as Mayor. He said they met every Monday morning to prepare for the Council meetings and had a good working relationship with City staff. Mr. Chelminiak noted his desire to serve as Mayor due to the opportunity to work with this Council, staff, and the people who the Council serves. He thanked Council Executive Assistants Michelle Luce and Sandy Nunnelee for keeping the Council organized and functioning well. Mayor Chelminiak said the City has strong leadership in City Manager Brad Miyake, Deputy City Manager Kate Berens, Deputy City Manager Nathan McCommon, and Assistant City Manager Kyle Stannert. Mr. Chelminiak said all City staff contribute to the Council's success.

Mr. Chelminiak said he is grateful for the candid discussions with his colleagues over the years. While the role of Mayor carries certain authority in specific situations, it is the entire Council that drives the business of the elected leadership under the Council-Manager form of government. Mr. Chelminiak said his theme for the City Council is seven strong leaders taking their community forward. He highlighted the role and responsibilities of Councilmembers under the Council-Manager form of government. No individual Councilmember has any extraordinary power beyond those of the other members. All members are equal in establishing policy, voting, and other areas.

Mr. Chelminiak said the Council studies problems, reviews alternatives, and determines the best course through public policy. While individual members may disagree with the decision of the majority, a majority decision binds the Council to a course of action. Mayor Chelminiak said that, when Councilmembers are in alignment, the City does well with the County, neighboring cities, the region, and state and federal governments. He said Bellevue has a unique elected body, the East Bellevue Community Council (EBCC), and he looks forward to fostering an enhanced alignment between the Council and the EBCC.

Mayor Chelminiak said he took a walk in the snow to Downtown Park on Christmas morning, which was busy with other residents making snowmen and snow forts, and enjoying the park. He recalled that, at the recent celebration of the opening of the Inspiration Playground and the

completion of the circle at the park, the community was reminded of the original 4-3 Council vote that initiated the park. Despite the split vote, Councilmembers, City staff, and the community moved forward and worked together to create the gem of Bellevue's park system.

Mayor Chelminiak said he will strive to be fair, to build consensus, and to study and act on issues facing the City with respect for his fellow Councilmembers and the overall community.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for their work and support while he served as Mayor. He said City Manager Brad Miyake has an amazing ability to recruit, foster, and encourage well-qualified people. Mr. Stokes thanked Assistant City Manager Kyle Stannert and the Council's Executive Assistants, Michelle Luce and Sandy Nunnelee, for their work and collaboration.

At 6:33 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared a brief recess to provide an opportunity for taking photos. He noted that the Regular Session would begin shortly, instead of the usual 8:00 p.m. start time, as noted on the meeting agenda.

Kyle Stannert, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw