

01/04/2023

County Supervisor Vacancy Committee

9:30 a.m.

County Auditor Eric Van Lancker introduced himself and thanked everyone for joining the meeting. He introduced the other committee members, County Treasurer Dustin Johnson and County Recorder Scott Judd. He thanked everyone for the interest in the position, as the committee received eight qualified applicants. Van Lancker thanked Judd for spending the time scheduling all the interview sessions. He asked the committee how they would like to proceed with the appointment to the Board of Supervisors.

Johnson said he commends the leaders from a diverse background who are interested in the position and appreciates their interest.

Judd said he also feels the same, as those interested do come from a diverse background. He thanked Tom Determann for his eight years of service the county. He feels there was a lot of interest in mental health, homelessness and substance abuse.

Van Lancker encouraged all applicants to stay interested in the county issues.

The committee agreed to proceed with nominating their selection individually.

Van Lancker said he would nominate Mike Brown. He found Brown to have great enthusiasm to do the position. Brown's entire career was in public service and he wants to continue that. Van Lancker said he has seen Brown in action and he gets along with everyone. He said Brown's position with the City of Clinton and his experience with issues and budgets are off the charts, which is invaluable to the County.

Johnson said he would nominate Steve Cundiff. Cundiff has 30 years of experience with the County has been on the front line with mental health and substance abuse issues. His experience in these areas are what the county can benefit from.

Judd said his nomination was about enthusiasm and desire to take on a challenge. His nomination was for Erin George. He said she does not have the experience in public service but could really add another perspective to many of the issues the county faces.

Van Lancker opened the discussion on how they would like to proceed with having three different nominations. He asked the committee members who would be comfortable with going to their number 2 ranked candidate.

Judd recommended discussing the number two candidate. He feels Stacey Bussie is his next best choice for the position, with his county experience.

Johnson said Bussie was his number two candidate. He was impressed with him being a steady humble person with a commitment to the county. Bussie has a track record of relationship building which would help the county in this position.

Van Lancker said Bussie as his number two candidate.

Johnson said that left them in a quandary. Van Lancker said that the individuals' mentioned earlier were in his top four.

Judd said there could be a motion to appoint number two candidate. He said the committee could proceed with that if they were all in agreement.

Judd presented a motion to fill the Board of Supervisor vacancy with Stacey Bussie.

Johnson then asked about discussing their choices in closed session. Van Lancker said that the reasons for a closed session would not qualify for a closed session under Iowa code. Johnson said he would not change from his first choice.

Van Lancker said that Bussie would be a fantastic candidate. He suggested that the committee members give their top three choices to possible work down to a single choice unless the members felt they could not get to that point.

Johnson said he has received a lot of phone calls and emails in support of his candidate. Van Lancker said he has received positive contacts for Mike Brown.

Judd said Brown could lead the way with his experience.

Johnson said the committee should look at the larger issues that the county is up against and the they have qualified candidates to choose from that have public service, law enforcement and an understanding of the challenges our county faces. Their background experience is important.

Judd commented that all the candidates previously discussed fall into that category.

Johnson asked if there is an opportunity for each of the four candidates to speak if they would like to.

Van Lancker said all four candidates were available, attending the meeting in person or on-line through Zoom. He asked them each to speak for three minutes, starting with Brown.

Brown spoke and expressed his interest in the position. He stated that he had has interest the Supervisor position and spent six months campaigning for this seat. He said he had a wonderful time talking to residents and where supportive of my candidacy. He said he would be very honored and excited to serve on the board and bring fresh ideas and fresh perspective. Brown said his temperament is to bring stability to the board and would be honored to have the committees vote.

Cundiff thanked the committee for its hard work and the tough decision they have to make. He explained his interest in the position during the past year. He said he called each one of the committee members and told them that he was interested in the position at the time Determann was elected to the House seat. That shows that he did not just make the decision now to seek the position. Cundiff said he decided to run for this position because he sees this county is declining and to make a change, he needed to get involved. He knows that mental health and substance abuse are huge issues and need to be focused on. He said he is very passionate about those issues and has worked with the county for more than 30 years. He shared that he began working on his election to this position for the last year or so.

George said she is the outlier and has not worked directly in public service. She said her driving force is her desire to be in public service and do what she can to help make things better. She said she is a hard worker honest and not afraid to take on challenging tasks. George said that after she was interviewed for the position, it really made her realize that she wanted the position. She said she is involved with community events, school functions and is aware of county concerns and issues. She would be honored for the committees support for her for this position.

Bussie talked about his interest in the position since October. He said he had spoken with former County Supervisors Shawn Hamerlinck after his retirement from his position in the Sheriff's Office and they discussed public service. He said he was asked to come back to the county and serve in his current position in security/bailiff. He feels the county does have a lot of issues with mental health and drug abuse just like other counties. Bussie said he is a humble person, anything he does he does at 100%. He said that he would commit 100% to the supervisor position.

Van Lancker said he feels that his decision would be between George and Bussie. Judd said he agrees with the choice between George and Bussie. Johnson said he will stick with Cundiff and Bussie.

Judd ask if there should be a discussion on presenting a motion to appoint Bussie to fill the supervisor vacancy position. Van Lancker asked if the committee wanted to continue with that motion. Judd said the discussion on that motion can stop and he would like to discuss an appointment of Erin George.

Johnson said he had a great discussion with George. He said that when the city does well, the county does well so she has the passion to put into the position. He said he feels that public service is not easy to step into. Johnson said it is hard to say how a person will perform until they are in the position, but he felt that George was someone who is willing to take on the challenge.

Van Lancker said he has worked with George and her thoughtfulness and dedication to her responsibilities was an asset. He said she is a business owner and knows what is needed to get the job done. He said she talked about her go-getting spirit to do this job even though she has minimal experience at the government level. He said that her minimal experience was not bad because she can provide a different perspective and look outside the box. Van Lancker said they had a good discussion about budgets. He believes that George can do that and he is willing to support her.

Judd concurred with everything said about George. He said he had a great interview session with her. He knows the risk of bringing in someone without public service experience however George has the commitment and he can see her qualities shine. Judd said George is very appropriate choice.

MOTION by Judd to appoint Erin George to fill the vacant position on the Board of Supervisors.

ROLL CALL:

Van Lancker: Yes

Johnson: No

Judd: Yes

Motion Carried.

Van Lancker thanked everyone attending and the committee members for their time and effort.

The committee spoke with George to determine a time she would be available to take the oath of office.

Van Lancker adjourned the meeting at 9:37 a.m.