

ALDAN BOROUGH, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

Special Meeting for Consideration for Mayor

September 21, 2017

This is a special meeting of the Aldan Borough Council, held for the purposes of the consideration of the appointment of a qualified individual to the position of Mayor, in order to fill a vacancy. This meeting was specially advertised in the Delaware County Daily Times, pursuant to the Sunshine Law, on September 16, 2017. The Borough Council solicited applicants for the vacancy at its September Council meeting, in the September 16, 2017 newspaper advertisement and, on the Borough's website.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by Council President Harry Short.

ROLL CALL

Council members present: C. Maniaci; S. Urban; S. Oropollo; J. Connolly; S Durso; H Short

Council members absent: M. Corrigan

Officers present: J. McBlain, Solicitor; J. White, Borough Manager

Officers absent: P. Close, Engineer; P. Rankin, Treasurer

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

STATEMENT

The Borough received two applicants to fill the vacancy. Because there were multiple applicants, I appointed a committee that included Mr. White, Mr. McBlain and myself to conduct interviews and prepare a report to Council. I would now ask Mr. McBlain to present that report.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Aldan Borough Council Members
FROM: Harry Short, Council President
John White, Borough Manager
John McBlain, Esq., Borough Solicitor
RE: Report on Mayoral Applicants
Date: September 21, 2017

At the September Meeting of the Aldan Borough Council, Mayor Joseph Blackburn tendered his resignation due to the requirements that his employer, PECO, imposed for his new position as manager of external affairs for the Delaware County region. That resignation was accepted by Council, thus creating a vacancy in the office of Mayor. The Pennsylvania Borough Code requires Council to appoint a qualified individual to fill the vacancy within the month. For that reason, Council set a special meeting date of September 21, 2017 to consider filling the vacancy.

The public notice of the special meeting was advertised in the Delaware County Daily Times on September 16, 2017. That advertisement also advised that individuals interested in the appointment should provide a letter of interest to the Borough Manager. Notice of the meeting and a solicitation for the interested individuals to submit a letter of interest was also posted under the "Town Notices" section of the Aldan Borough website.

Two letters of interest were received. Nicole Wolverton of 214 Birchwood Road and Carmen Maniaci of 229 Priscilla Lane submitted letters of interest. Both are qualified electors and appear to have sufficient residency.

Because there were multiple applicants, President Short established a committee to interview the applicants and report to Council on the committee's findings. This serves as that report.

Both applicants were interviewed. The committee asked each applicant to make a general statement about why the individual desired to be appointed Mayor and state their qualifications. Each candidate was then asked five (5) identical questions about their proposed role as Mayor.

Ms. Wolverton, a 14 year resident, was a very pleasant person and thankful for the opportunity to be considered. She states that she has spent much of her work life engaged in the non-profit field and has developed divergent opinions and experiences along the way that she believes would be beneficial to Aldan. She believes her non-profit experience would be helpful to the Borough, especially in the areas of budgeting and grant applications.

Mr. Maniaci, a 19 year resident, has served as a member of the Borough Council and was elected in 2015. He states that the opportunity to serve as mayor is a chance to build on his civic involvement and have a leadership role in shaping Aldan's future. His public service on the Borough Council, his service in many community organizations, and his employment and experience as a small business owner would all be beneficial in a role as Mayor.

Each applicant was asked to respond to the following questions. The applicants' responses are summarized below.

QUESTION 1. As Mayor, you would have an oversight role for the police department. What is your opinion of the current staffing levels and command structure; and, what would you address over the next four years? What specific ideas would you implement over the next four years to improve the department.

Ms. Wolverton's responses:

She does not have information about the current staffing levels and command structure and would wish to study those areas more closely in order to form an opinion. She has two relatives are police officers in other states. She is confident that she would develop ideas that would be helpful.

Mr. Maniaci's responses:

He states that with the appointment of Sgt. Ziviello at the September meeting to the rank of sergeant, the command staff of a chief and two sergeants has been brought to its full complement; however, the chief has entered the Act 42 retirement program and one sergeant will also be eligible to retire beginning next year. He believes the most important issue over the next four years will be to replace any vacancies in the command staff and, if those vacancies are filled with current officers, replacing those officers. Since serving as a part-time officer is a qualification under the Civil Service Ordinance, it is important to have qualified part-time officers ready to move up the ranks.

He believes that training will be an important issue over the next four years. He wishes to explore training for the future command staff at the FBI Academy and having our police officers trained in the county's mental health crisis training program. He also believes that it is important to have Aldan representation in the county's drug task force.

QUESTION 2. As Mayor, your approval of the budget and tax levy ordinance would be required. What specific budget proposals or changes would you make to the 2018 budget? As some municipalities have implemented a local earned income tax to help offset the effect of real estate taxes, would you approve such a tax if passed by Council?

Ms. Wolverton's responses:

She has briefly reviewed the current 2017 Budget which is publicly available on the Borough's website but did not have any current suggestions for the 2018 budget without further examining the current budget. She did not have an opinion of the implementation of any income tax to offset real estate taxes. She would need to determine what taxes are currently levied by the Borough.

Mr. Maniaci's responses:

He states that with a new Borough Treasurer and new chair of the Finance Committee, we should use the development of the 2018 Budget to reexamine all revenue and spending line items and build the budget from a zero based foundation. He states while he supports property tax reform, he would not be in favor of an earned income tax under the current state laws. We need the state to reform the school real estate tax, since that is the overwhelming majority of all real estate taxes. He notes that should Aldan implement any local income tax, the William Penn School District could elect to take a portion, making the issue of local taxes even more difficult.

QUESTION 3. As Mayor, Aldan residents will contact you regarding Borough services. What proposals would you seek to implement regarding Borough services? Where would you look for funding for any services proposed?

Ms. Wolverton's responses:

She suggests transparency around public meetings as a Borough service. She would look into broadcasting or livestreaming meetings. There was no discussion paying the costs of same. She states she would like to speak with Borough residents about what services they would like. She states that, "I am perfectly happy with the services I have now. Council has done a very good job. I want for nothing in Aldan".

Mr. Maniaci's responses:

He recommends that the Borough explore implementing a leaf collection program in the fall. While in prior years the costs have been prohibitive for having a separate program, he believes that in the current environment the savings the Borough may experience by removing leaves from the residential trash stream would pay for a new program. He also recommends a transition from the current streetlights to LED lighting technology. Again, the energy savings experienced by the Borough would substantially offset the cost of the installation of the LED lights. He would seek grant funding to make up any shortfalls for both of these initiatives. He points out that both initiatives would make the Borough more environmentally-friendly and sustainable.

QUESTION 4. As Mayor, you would interact with our state and federal legislators on local policy issues to advocate for Aldan's interests and for funding. What type of relationship do you have with our federal and state legislators? What specific issues would you wish to advocate to Aldan's legislators?

Ms. Wolverton's responses:

She states that while she has not yet met Sen. McGarrigle or Rep. Santora, she has written them letters on issues in the past. She has contacts with others in state government. She identified "gerrymandering" as an issue she would like to advocate.

Mr. Maniaci's responses:

He states that he has a good working relationship with Congressman Meehan, Sen. McGarrigle and Rep. Santora, having worked with them on election matters and with them at local forums and on constituent issues. HE identified as an advocacy issue the legislation sponsored by Rep. Meehan and Sen. McGarrigle that would deny Section 8 housing payments to landlords who are delinquent on property taxes. He identifies that he would advocate to the legislators on issues affecting our properties and making sure that our housing stock is protected and maintained.

QUESTION 5. Many residents view the Mayor as the face of our community. Having a relationship with our residents is an integral part of the job. Describe your relationship with our residents. What Aldan community or civic organizations have you been involved with to build relationships?

Ms. Wolverton's responses:

She states that she has a good relationship with many of the neighbors on her block and points to the example that they all help each other shovel snow. Although she has been a resident for 14 years she has not been a part of any Aldan community or civic organizations, other than her political party's committee. She was previously from Philadelphia and states that she has been involved in organizations in that area, especially a dragon boat team. Those other commitments have prevented her from becoming involved locally but she views the opportunity to become mayor as an opportunity to become involved in Aldan.

Mr. Maniaci's responses:

He states that since he came with his family to Aldan, he has been involved in various community and civic organizations. As the father of two children, he volunteered as a coach for both the Girls Club and the Boys Club over the years. He became very involved with the basketball program and served as the commissioner of the basketball league in Aldan, which includes 14 teams from Aldan and 12 teams from other local municipalities. He and his family have been active members of the Aldan Swim Club, where his Jean, serves on the Board. He has volunteered as an official for the Aldan Swim Team meets for many years. He became a member of the Aldan Boosters Civic Association and has participated in that organization's activities from time to time.

He has operated a small business on a part time basis providing "moon bounces" for events and parties. He has donated his equipment and time to such Aldan activities as the Boys and Girls Clubs' Activity Day and the 4th of July Celebration.

His children have attended a local parochial school and high school and he has been an active parent volunteer in their schools and athletic activities and an active member of his church parish.

In addition to these activities in Aldan, he has been a leader in one for the string band organizations in the Delaware Valley are. He has been the Chairman of the Board of the Avalon String Band and currently is the elected Captain of the Avalon String Band.

In addition to the report, letters of interest and resumes of both candidates were distributed by Mr. White to members of Council for their review.

Having received the report, it would be in order for any member of Council to present a Resolution appointing one of these individuals, or any other qualified resident, to fill the vacancy.

Councilwoman Urban made a Resolution #2017-11 to appoint Councilman Maniaci as Mayor of the Borough of Aldan, seconded by Councilman Connolly and unanimously approved. Before the vote there was an opportunity for public comment and there were none.

Mayor Maniaci resigned as a member of council in order to take seat as mayor effective immediately. Councilman Durso made a motion to appoint Carmen as Mayor, seconded by Councilman Oropollo and unanimously approved.

Honorable Judge Kelly Micozzie gave Oath of Office to Mayor Carmen Maniaci.

Mayor Carmen Maniaci thanked everyone for coming out and electing him as Mayor. Mr. Maniaci also thanked his opponent Ms. Nicole Wolverton and the council members.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Councilwoman Urban and seconded by Councilman Oropollo, unanimously approved, the special meeting for Consideration for Mayor was adjourned at 7:23 pm.

ATTEST

Lauren Cavanagh
Asst. Borough Secretary