

MINUTES
EAGLE MOUNTAIN CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

November 2, 2006

Eagle Mountain City Council Chambers, 1650 East Stagecoach Run, Eagle Mountain, Utah 84005

7:00 P.M. SPECIAL SESSION – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

In the absence of Mayor Pro Tem Linn Strouse, City Recorder Gina Peterson called the special meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. Sergeant Mark Binks led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONDUCTING: Councilmember David Blackburn (elected Chair of the meeting)

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Councilmembers David Blackburn, Heather Jackson, Vincent Liddiard, and David Liffereth.

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Gina Peterson, City Recorder; Mark Binks, Sergeant; and Peter Quittner, Deputy.

Councilmember Liddiard **moved** that Mr. Blackburn be appointed chairman for the remainder of the meeting. Councilmember Jackson **seconded**. Councilmembers voting yes: David Blackburn, Heather Jackson, Vincent Liddiard, David Liffereth. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Minutes reported verbatim.

Councilmember Blackburn: We've called this special meeting because of what's going on with the city. We know, as a Council, that there's a lot that is happening. We want it to be a very smooth transition in light of Mayor Olsen's resignation, and in the process of getting a new mayor – we're still accepting applications, by the way – the Council has appointed Linn Strouse to be the Mayor Pro Tem. We did it with the intentions and understanding that it would be a very smooth and, ideally, undisrupted process; kind of a "don't rock the boat" mentality. Council's been getting a little bit of feedback. Good efforts and intentions, I think, are intended in all areas, but we as a Council wanted to get some feedback from staff how things could be improved, the things that they're experiencing, and get feedback directly from them. So what we'll do is, I understand that we've got several individuals among the staff that have been asked to be spokespeople, representatives of the staff, so that we don't have everyone coming up to the mike. And so I would like to open the meeting with a request that they come up and give their presentations.

Peter Spencer: My name is Peter Spencer and I currently am the Planning Director for Eagle Mountain City. And on behalf of the staff, of course, a lot of things have happened in the last few days and the last few months. I would like to say that I represent all of the staff, but I probably couldn't. I think I can say that I represent the vast majority of staff in some of the sentiments that I may say and some of the questions that I may ask. First of all, I want to acknowledge each one of you and your honorable position which you hold. We recognize that each one of you have been elected by the citizens of Eagle Mountain and we respect that. We are grateful for the things that you do and the time you put in, such as tonight, in calling this special meeting, leaving your homes and coming here to listen to us and some of our concerns and hopefully resolve some of the issues that we've been having in the city.

First of all, let me just say, on behalf of staff, we love Eagle Mountain. We love working here. This city really is amazing. To think about how fast it's growing and the things that are going on right now. There's a lot, a lot, of wonderful things going on and we're proud to be here. And I think, I think you're going to be hearing tonight emotional people who are very interested on what goes on in the city. If you had a staff here that didn't love the city as much as they do, this many wouldn't be here tonight, perhaps. We wouldn't be here tonight voicing our opinions, voicing our thoughts, our feelings, our hopes and our expectations. I think the reason that you have such vocal city staff is because we care so much about how this city progresses. And we appreciate your consideration in working with us. Now we don't want to make a mountain out of a molehill. The city's doing fine. We understand that we've got great city staff, we've got great leadership, but we do want to say a few things tonight, and so today work went fine, everything's good, but there are some things we want to express to the City Council.

First of all, let me just say that there are three of us tonight that are representatives of staff. We'll each take a turn. Hopefully, it's not gonna take too long, but we would invite all staff to come forward to express their views if they're not spoken by one of us. So just be aware, after we're done, there might be some people that have additional questions or concerns, and by all means, please stand up and voice those.

I want to start off by asking some questions, and it's unfortunate that Mayor Strouse is not present. Most of these questions are directed to her. But I'll just go ahead down the list and ask those questions and, for what's applicable to the City Council, we would expect and hope for a direct and concise, honest answer. These questions that I'll be asking, pretty much, are just questions that we've had in the past and as of the last couple days that, so far, we haven't really felt that we've received a clear answer, and as far as we're concerned, we feel like we deserve it. So let me just go down. The first question on the list is, we've received some different emails and some different information, who on the City Council currently is in support of eliminating the Chief of Staff position and replacing it with a City Administration position? This is your decision, but we're curious. We want to know who is in support of what? I would invite each one of you . . . Let's do this, maybe, if I can be so bold.

Councilmember Liddiard: In the decorum of things, it might be best that you to make all of the comments you want to make, and hear from everyone here, and then allow us to make some comments.

Peter Spencer: If that's what you'd like to do. That's fine. I was hoping we could get some dialog, but if that's how you prefer to do it, then you have a list of the questions there, so . . .

Councilmember Lifferth: I'll defer to the chairman of the meeting, Mr. Blackburn.

Councilmember Blackburn: Thanks. I think, let's go through that. Why don't you ask your questions and we'll make notes, along the same lines as what you . . .

Peter Spencer: Great. That's fine. The first question is, yes, who is in support of eliminating the Chief of Staff position and replacing it with the City Administrator position? Number two, who on the City Council is currently in support of making the Mayor position taken from full time to part time? Who on the City Council was contacted and who voiced support to demote Mike Wren from both Chief of Staff/Public Works Director to his paid administrative leave, currently? Who was contacted and who voiced support? Who on the City Council, if any, was in support of having that decision done yesterday, at this point in time, at this difficult point in time? Who was in support of that? Who was

knowledgeable and who was in support of that? Was the decision to make the change yesterday completely Mayor Strouse's decision? Was Mike Wren ever informed of this possible decision, or was this a surprise to him? And why not, why were there other options not, first of all, were there other options delivered to him, perhaps negotiating a different type of position for him, a promotion of some type, or changing of responsibilities, rather than saying, from what we understand, "take the Public Works Director position or take a hike"? That's how the staff have heard it today.

You know, we as staff are always expected to have proper justification and information, detailed information, brought before the City Council at all times. As staff, we would expect the same from City Council and from whoever is the Mayor at the time. What is the justification for this decision? In what ways, if any, was Mike not meeting the expectations of his current position of Chief of Staff and Public Works Director? Was there ever any consideration to involve City staff in the possible decision-making changes from full-time Mayor/part-time Mayor, Chief of Staff/City Administrator? Were there any talks about involving staff? As far as I know, staff was not involved. And a big question, I think, is why couldn't, why could not have this decision, perhaps it was the best decision, why could not have this been postponed? This decision could have happened a month from now, four months from now, six months. If it's necessary, it's necessary. You're the decision makers, you make those tough decisions, and we support you, but why was this decision made now, when the city is going through such turmoil and such lack of leadership? Mayor Strouse has indicated that there's a lot of reasons why this decision was made, many of which, for some reason or another, she cannot explain, due to some personnel confidentiality reasons, and I understand that, you know, I support that, but when can we expect the full reasons for this decision? And then finally, other than perhaps, hopefully, hiring new staff which we direly need, will any other staff changes be made during this temporary pro tem mayor time period? You know, staff, we were told one thing and, holy cow, something else happened.

And then, I guess, finally, what is Mike Wren's current position? Is he still the Chief of Staff today or has that position been officially eliminated, as of today or yesterday? There may be some other questions, and I invite other City staff to please come forward. I'm sure that wasn't an exhaustive, I mean, it was a long list, but I'm sure there's other questions and I'd invite staff to come forward. We appreciate those answers and, perhaps later on in the meeting, when you choose to address those answers, I mean, obviously, we don't want to put you on the spot. This is the first time you've seen them. We want to give you time to digest it and come up with how you feel, but it would be nice to maybe go down the list and just, because I mean, I think it is important for staff and for citizens to know where each one of you stand on these issues. And rather than maybe going into a long explanation about who knows what, just give us the facts. And then later on, give us all the details that you feel we need to know. Finally, I'll just mention the other two presentations we have tonight from staff. Another one is, we're going to be talking about how much the staff support, respect and love Mike Wren as a supervisor, as a Chief of Staff and as a Public Works Director. Then you're going to hear tonight about how much we support him, how much he has done while he's been here and how disappointed we are in the decision that was made. And finally, we'll also discuss how as staff, in order to do our jobs, in order for us to have faith and support the leadership of the city, we expect change in the Mayor Pro Tem position.

Councilmember Blackburn: Would others on the Council like to answer the questions for Peter Spencer right now?

Councilmember Lifferth: Point of order, I guess. It may be more appropriate if we were to get this in an email and we could respond in writing. This could be a very time-consuming thing to go through.

Councilmember Blackburn: I agree, but at the same time, the reason we're here is because these questions and employee concerns need to be addressed today.

Councilmember Jackson: I'm prepared to answer. I'm prepared to answer now or after we hear the discussion. It matters not to me, but I think we need to answer. That's why we called the meeting. We called the meeting to have a discussion, to have a discussion, and a discussion, to me, means we will go back and forth and we talk about this. Now, I understand, because we're in a large meeting, that we do have to follow the typical rules that we deal with, and so we need to take the time, let everybody make their presentation, and then respond. So, I'd be willing to say, let's respond, each of us, now, and then we'll get the next person up. I know we may be here a long time, you guys, and we apologize for that, but, you know, it's what we need to do.

Councilmember Liddiard: I'd rather get everything. Let's hear all, everything. Let's get all of the questions and then I'd be thrilled to chat and go over all these things, but I'd kind of like to hear the rest of what everybody else has to say.

Councilmember Blackburn: We have the advantage, in this case, of the questions that you've given to us just before your presentation, so let's let Adam and Ifo, I guess, make their presentation, then we'll go through and give answers.

Peter Spencer: We purposely tried to write the questions to be more or less yes or no answers, and so, hopefully, it doesn't take too long. I mean, that's why we wrote it like that, so it's not a long explanation going on about who knows what, but just yes or no questions.

Councilmember Blackburn: We thank you for that.

Peter Spencer: Thank you.

Adam Ferre: Council members, my name's Adam Ferre. I'm the Energy Division Manager for Eagle Mountain City.

Gina Peterson: Adam, can you lean into the microphone there?

Councilmember Jackson: Adam, you could hold it up to your mouth if it's easier. We try to have Ifo do that when it's his turn, because he's so tall.

Adam Ferre: I'm here representing staff on, from what we understand. I want you guys and Council members to be, know clear we love this city. We are here for the long haul. We are here as a team, as qualified professionals and we can do our jobs competently. We are able to do our jobs. We are hindered in the situation that we're in today. The city's working great. We're putting out a hundred building permits a month. We are setting records. This has happened for a reason. It just didn't happen overnight. It's because of staff, City Council members and everything else that come together and work together. And a big part of this was, is Mike Wren. He come in, he gave staff the opportunity to do their jobs, to not hold back, to be able to move forward, and let us do our jobs. Not to bring up the past or anything, but he let us as paid professionals do our jobs, and in my opinion the work has shown. Building permits are being made, families are moving out here, houses are going up as we speak. I think this has been done because of staff, I think it's been done because of Mr. Wren. He's come in here and let us do that. I feel, and staff feels that we need questions answered.

When the going gets tough, the tough get going, we were told today by Mayor Strouse. The tough is here. Somebody's missing. We as staff with Mike Wren, he was able to answer the hard questions that nobody would answer. Yea, it's OK to be gruff, occasionally. If I do something wrong, I want to be told, "You need to do it this way." I don't think people should feel offended by being told, you know, how things should function. And that was one thing. He was always here for a vision. We're here for a vision. We're here because we want to proceed, move forward and make things happen. This is a great place, and I want everybody to know this. This is one of the best places to live, the best places to work. I have a vested interest. I've worked for the city since 1999 and these employees have done the same. They've been out here and worked hard to build this place. Yeah, we have growing pains, that's normal, you know. And it's normal to have bumps in the road. But you know what, let's look at what we have achieved in the last year. It's phenomenal.

I do have a question to the staff. We are concerned. If Mr. Wren is not wanted no longer or if he has the opportunity to come back and work for Eagle Mountain City. If he wants to come back and work for Eagle Mountain City, where will his position be held? We need somebody that will be willing to ask the tough questions. He was willing to do it. We need somebody that's willing to let us do our jobs and deal with the Council, so we don't have to be here on a Thursday night away from our families and you away from your families and, you know, it's not that hard. We just need to put away our personal agendas and just, let's look at the vision why we're here. You guys, I commend you and staff commend you for volunteering your time. I mean, it's tough, but that's what we like. We like the challenge. This is a great, a great challenge. I just want you guys to know, because of Mike, staff is here, they respect him, they love him, because he lets us do our job. There's no hindrances.

If we need it, I've never had one supervisor ask, when I go and ask, "Is this a want list, is this a need list, and is it a viable product that taxpayers should be paying for? Or if it's a want list, you know what, let's put that away." He has, I've never had anybody ask that, concerned about how we spend the taxpayers' dollars, as far as a supervisor. That's what we need. We need somebody that is here for the taxpayers, and here for the developers, here for us as staff.

Now, what position this puts us in as staff is, you know, the information that Mike and all the department heads have talked to Mike, "Let's move forward, let's get it on the agendas," has come to a stop. Now we're back to square one. Who's gonna take these? Where's the information at? We need to get the ball rolling and keep it rolling. We need to be able to sign plats. We need to be able to answer the questions for developers and residents and staff members. We are here for one person, one people, for the residents. That's who we're here for. We work for the residents. I don't work for anybody else except the residents and that's why I'm here. We need to give them what they deserve as taxpayers. We need to give them a stable city and a stable place to live and not be one bit embarrassed about where they live. Our vision, Mike's vision and staff's vision is, let's move forward, let's keep going, let's build homes, let's do what we need to do. We love this place. It's a great place to work. We want to know what we can resolve tonight to get an answer. I appreciate your time. Thank you.

[Applause]

Councilmember Blackburn: Ladies and gentlemen, I know there's a lot of feeling about what's being said, but let's do try to keep it professional, please.

Ifo Pili: I'll just disconnect the mike, if that's OK. Can you hear me? Honorable members of the City Council, I echo the words of Peter and Adam. I'm grateful for the time that you've taken to hear us out, to listen to the staff. It shows your commitment to not only the staff but to the entire city of Eagle Mountain. If I can first have, before I go on with what I was asked to say by the staff, if I could have the staff just stand up, all employees of Eagle Mountain City, would you stand up? Thank you. I first want to applaud the employees here. They've really put their necks out on the limb. They've risked their job security. They all have families to support. They believe it is this important for them to all show up tonight to sign this document, this letter that was drafted recommending change and expressing their sentiments.

I was asked by the staff to make a recommendation to the City Council that we would, an official recommendation, that would make a change in the Mayor Pro Tem. Before I go into the reasons why a little further, I do want to say that I, too, believe that Eagle Mountain is something special. Whether you believe in the Almighty or not there is something divine and there's something special about this place. And for that reason I believe that you are on the City Council for a reason. I believe the staff and the people here that have made it their life's endeavor to serve this community are here for a reason.

I appreciate Mayor Strouse. I appreciate her willingness to serve. She hasn't been paid, she is not getting paid for what she's done. Neither have any of you. However, from a standpoint of necessity and for the common interests of the community, we believe this change is necessary. Whether there are reasons for relieving Mike of his duties, whether there are reasons for some of the changes that have taken place, we believe that this is necessary. And it's evident by how much support we have by our staff here. These are the people in the trenches. These are the people that shovel our sewers, jackhammer our potholes. These are the people that deliver services to us.

I'm a resident of Eagle Mountain. My wish is that every one of the residents here in Eagle Mountain can rub shoulders with these fine servants. And if it's a request that comes from them, I urge you to consider that request, to take it seriously. While we all love Mike and we all recognize the things he has done for the city, we also believe that it's necessary for him to be here. We've all been sold on the vision that he has of this city. We believe that there's pure intentions in what he tries to accomplish. Personally, I'm sold. That's why I've taken this job here in Eagle Mountain. Because I'm sold on the vision and I'm sold on something special here. Again, I urge you to consider that. I also, I'd like to present this letter that was drafted by staff. This represents the majority of staff, all who are present today. There was an overwhelming response to sign this document. If I can hand it to you.

Councilmember Lifferth: Could you read what it says?

Councilmember Blackburn: "Dear Honorable City Council: We, as concerned employees of this city, feel it is necessary to present our sentiments regarding recent changes to the responsibilities held by Mike Wren. In the midst of political turmoil and opposition, we have held Mike Wren to be the most stabilizing force within our staff. While we have managed press forward with resolve in spite of constant change in leadership, it has become increasingly difficult to not only maintain morale, but overall confidence in our current leadership. We feel that the decision to relieve Mike Wren of his responsibilities as Chief of Staff is not only detrimental to the city and current residents, but to the daily functions of the city. City staff is concerned that no legitimate reasons have been given for the abrupt changes in Mr. Wren's duties, and there appears to be ulterior motives in such changes. Such disturbances affect the perception of the city, not only current and potential residents, but builders, developers and other government entities. We as a staff stand together hoping our concerns are heard

and addressed by the current City Council. Signed, the following. The pages are all the same, but they're signed by employees.

Ifo Pili: This change that we're recommending may increase the political turbulence that we have been facing, but we believe that political expediency shouldn't prevail over what's necessary for the common interest of the community. And we believe this is in the common interest of the community, that we will be able to get things done if there is change. We also together, as a management analyst, I know when we make our recommendations we like to make it precise and specific. We've also come together as a staff to make a consensus, I mean to make a recommendation, that we would ask Heather Jackson to step in that change as Mayor Pro Tem. We feel that, again, this change is necessary, and that we will be better off as a city because of it. Thank you.

Councilmember Blackburn: Thank you. Were there any other employees who feel that their sentiments weren't voiced and would like to come up and make their own questions or comments and statements to the Council?

Angela Cox: I definitely echo the concerns that were brought up today, however, I just wanted to say there's been issues in the City staff with trust and . . .

Councilmember Blackburn: Would you state your name? I mean, this is a Recorder-type deal.

[Laughter]

Angela Cox: Yeah, I should know that. I'm Angela Cox, City employee. I see Mike to be a very transparent person. He says it like it is. City staff has trusted him. Everyone has voiced the amount of trust they had for him, and I think that is something that is very important right now for City staff, is to have somebody they can trust and that they feel is there standing for them. And not only for City staff, but the city needs to see the trust in the city offices. These walls need to be transparent for the citizens to see, and so that's just something I wanted to add. Thank you.

Councilmember Blackburn: Are there any other employees? Hearing or seeing none I will open the podium and comments for residents.

Loreen Cole: Lori Cole. I'm up here all the time. You guys know it. I had real reservations when they rehired Mike because of previous, but I have seen such a change under his hand. Getting rid of him is the biggest mistake the City's done. I think that her not being able to come up with any reasons behind it is inexcusable. Keeping the citizens and the staff in the dark is not the right way to go, and I tend to lean toward the rest of the staff's agreement with dismissing her and appointing Heather Jackson as our new Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilmember Blackburn: If I could just clarify, Mr. Wren has not been terminated. He's been put on a leave of absence. Regrettably, that's being interpreted as being fired. So, if I can just let everybody know, it's kind of a standard procedure when things are in question that people are put on leave of absence. So he is not terminated. He is still an employee. So please understand that.

Councilmember Liddiard: Mr. Blackburn, can I add one other piece of clarification?

Councilmember Blackburn: Go ahead.

Councilmember Liddiard: Because there is not a full council represented today, and this action took place earlier, it's deemed, well, let's cut it to the chase: we can't make any decision tonight, because there's not a full Council here. So, that may come as a surprise to some of you. Some of you may have realized that, or not. But, simply we can't take any action on this item because it's considered a reconsideration, and without the full Council here, we can't take a vote.

Darren Jones: I am a resident here in the City Center. My name is Darren Jones, over here on Heritage. I am very concerned, greatly concerned about the atmosphere that is in our governing body. There has been seven counts of felonious actions been brought against our former mayor, Brian Olsen. He wasn't alone in what he was doing in terms of his daily duties. There is an open investigation, and we need to keep that in mind and take that into consideration. When these type of situations are arising with City government, if it's a situation to clear names or what have you, what we need to do is to be sure, for the residents of Eagle Mountain, because they deserve it, to be sure that any type of situation that is erroneous or even criminal would be rooted out, taken care of and seen as if it's not going to be happening again. So what we need to do as a Council, and my recommendation, is to keep Mayor Pro Tem Strouse in for the duration until November 14th, until another mayor is appointed for the duration of the next year. Thank you.

Peter Spencer: To clarify what you said, Councilmember Liddiard, because there's not a full quorum, there can't be a change done to Mike Wren's status or there can't be a new decision on a new Mayor Pro Tem?

Councilmember Blackburn: That's correct.

Peter Spencer: Both?

Councilmember Blackburn: That's correct. The standing actions of the Mayor Pro Tem, is the mayor of the city. Her signature, at this point, is law in the city for ordinances that come before her at this point in time, so her actions as chief of the city stand. Are there any more comments or question from public or employees?

Kurry Lewis: We had a meeting earlier for the employees. All I was going to say is, I told Heather Jackson . . . Kurry Lewis. If we could, if it's a pro tem or something, it's a short-term thing, if they could not have as much power, where it has to go through the Council or something, instead of having to have a big to-do like this. I mean, it would solve a lot of problems if everybody got together and actually did it instead of just one person, you're gone, and then, you know, paid administrative leave or whatever you guys want to call, but put something into the records or something to where they can't do or have so much power coming in for such a short time. Thank you.

Councilmember Blackburn: Thank you. Last chance. Going once, going twice. OK, we as a Council, then, will go ahead and respond to the questions that have been put before us. Go ahead, Mr. Liddiard.

Councilmember Liddiard: I'll go first. Couple of interesting things here. We get the grand total of \$325 a month in compensation. Thought I'd toss that out. Power of Mayor Pro Tem is the most politically powerful position in the City. That's why, under State statute, it's limited in its livelihood of existence to a period of thirty days. But, the powers vested into the Mayor Pro Tem are somewhat guaranteed by

the State Constitution and there isn't a lot that this body can do to manipulate and do that, aside from having meetings like this one.

I'm going to run through some questions here and make some comments, but kind of start with what Peter provided here on some of these things. I'll kind of start with kind of the whole City Administrator kind of thing. We kind of ended up in this really weird position of Chief of Staff. Under the rules who can be hired and fired, the City Council holds the ability to hire and fire the City Treasurer, the City Recorder and the City Administrator. One of the reasons why I voted against the budget that was proposed was that it was included as a Chief of Staff rather than a City Administrator. A City Administrator is hired and fired by the City Council. We would have avoided this issue if Mike had been hired as a City Administrator. We wouldn't be here right now. We'd be watching my son's football game. Anyway, so that's why I think that is an important thing to address, as far as a City Administrator versus a City Chief of Staff. I think we need to have a City Administrator because that lessens the political turmoil for that position. Now, I'm not saying that's Mike Wren or not Mike Wren. I'm just saying we really ought to have a City Administrator, as opposed to a Chief of Staff.

And there was a question on who was contacted, etc. And I'll try to breeze through these real quick, since they're supposed to be yes or no questions. I had no idea that this was happening and did not support the whole issue of putting someone on paid administrative leave. I think the general intention of, and what's been brought up here, is that a Mayor Pro Tem is supposed to just kind of stay the course, duck and cover, use whatever similes you want to put in there, but simply, to kind of keep the things afloat until there's an interim Mayor appointed. And that kind of answers a lot of the other questions that are in there. I knew there was some strife between Ms. Strouse and Mr. Wren, but I found out from talking to Mr. Blackburn after the fact.

There are other questions here that are questions I can't answer, but I think they're good questions. It really kind of sucks that we're here. It seems that a roll of toilet paper and the Mayor have about the same life expectancy here, so it becomes, you know, the fact that we're even here. We had called a special session earlier and there were some comments made to us of "how dare we?" And now, here we are again, doing the same thing. What kind of precedent do you set if you change the Mayor's salary? Well, what kind of precedent do you set if you jerk around the Mayor Pro Tem?

The fact that we're even here is sad. The fact that we're here and it's going to be such a public thing is even worse. I think it's necessary to be here, and I'm here to support the City staff and residents because I think it's the right thing to do, but jiminy, it just breaks my heart that we are going through this again. You know, it's just such a hard thing to kind of have to feel like we're wading through all this kind of stuff. At one point or another, I've disagreed with everybody here on the Council, but in their heart of hearts, everybody wants to do what's right. They want to do what's in the best interests of the city. And really, you know, hey what, we may not always get along great, but the idea of being able to sit and counsel together. You have an opportunity to talk, you have an opportunity to exchange ideas, and whether you agree with them or not, that things can move forward.

Obviously, we have a system that is supposed to be in place to allow things to move forward. I believe in that system, I believe in the process of democracy. I believe in the Constitution that provides us some basic abilities of being able to have representation. And the difficulties we have are usually from people who feel they're not being represented adequately, which will be played out on a very large scale this coming Tuesday. Everyone will have an opportunity to, as the ads say, you know, leave your mark, leave your fingerprint. And that's an important part of this process.

I think it's important that, as Council members, we are in tune and hear what is going on at the Council level from the City staff, from the residents. It can be somewhat of an arduous process to have you come to a Council meeting to provide that. There are some staff members that I know very well and talk to them and hear from them and am made better aware. The communication of all this is really key. Unfortunately, I don't think there are a lot of really easy answers and I regret that we're even here in this kind of situation, because it certainly was not anticipated by me and it was regrettable that we're here doing this and having to deal with the repercussions of it all. I struggle with what to say other than, "I'm sorry. Here we go again." Hopefully, we can kind of all hold our breath for maybe a couple more weeks. I don't have any sage advice to soothe things, to make things better or anything. I have grown to respect Mr. Wren and what he has done. It is obvious that he has brought some important, significant things to the city, and I hope that he continues to participate. It's obvious the kinds of impact that he's had here.

I will also say when we came here to elect a Mayor Pro Tem to fill the vacancy, I voted against the person that was proposed. I will continue to say, "Hey, if we've got to go out and get a Mayor Pro Tem, I am going to be true and say it's going to be Mr. Blackburn. He's got some fantastic experience as a Council member, some longevity, some breadth, some experience and some understanding of the Public Works area and I think the ability to take a much more broad-scoped view of things, and to be able to move more even-handedly through decisions and listening to different, various perspectives and moving forward in a more cohesive manner. If there were a vote today, that would be my vote. We're not going to have that opportunity. But there you go.

If I can help, if I can do something, if I can answer questions, there is a question here about the Mayor being full-time or part time. I guess that will play out in the days to come. Irregardless of whether the Mayor is full time or part time, the key to success for the Mayor position here is one of coordination, one of communication. I've been under the Mayor Pro Tem thing here. I was Mayor Pro Tem and went very much through the hot seat. I don't need to do that one again. You know, it can be a difficult thing. My heart goes out to Ms. Strouse. It's not a fun thing. I have disagreed with her very strongly on many things, and I don't envy the position that she's in now. I have some empathy towards her in that regard. It's not fun for you, it's not fun for me, and it sure doesn't seem to be fun for her. That's not a solution, but my heart breaks, my heart breaks for you, for the other Council members, for Linn, for Mike, for the residents who are going to go to work tomorrow and go this, "Oh, I know, I know, I know." My prayers are with you, each of you. And I hope that the next thirteen days can pass by smoothly, can pass by quickly and that somebody still, after going through and hearing all this, still is interested in being that knight in shining armor, and putting on the greaves and grabbing the sword and, you know, doing what needs to be done to be able to lead a charge, to be an example, be an example of forthrightness, of integrity and of leadership and of communication.

Councilmember Blackburn: Mr. Lifferth, do you want to go next?

Councilmember Lifferth: I would like to echo many of the sentiments that Councilmember Liddiard has shared with you this evening. And I would like to take this opportunity to apologize for any role that I've had in conflict on the Council. I do know that everyone here has the same desire that I do, that we have, that we have the best city that we can, that we do what's best for the city, and I apologize.

OK, now I'll quickly go through the list of questions that Peter Spencer provided to us. You know, I don't have my mind made up on the Chief of Staff vs. City Administration position. I actually think that

needs to be left up to the Mayor and allow them to be the executive and do what they think is best for the city. I think that's the kind of thing that a mayoral candidate should run for before they go into office so people know what they're planning to do and that people vote for that platform if that's what they would like to do.

Number two, I have been supportive of a full-time Mayor in the past. I served as a full-time Mayor. I made that sacrifice to do that for the city. I was not contacted nor have I voiced support to demote Mike Wren as Chief of Staff or Public Works Director. I was not in support of that decision that was made yesterday. I was not aware of that decision that was made yesterday until I got a phone call from Mike Wren last night with that information. It took me by surprise. I don't know whose decision it was, and so I can't say if it was completely Mayor Pro Tem Strouse's or not.

Number [inaudible]. I appreciate listening to the staff. I appreciate their courage. You know, just the reason that we had a couple of staff members that came forward, that were whistleblowers, that were aware of something that was inappropriate and I applaud their courage. I don't know what Mike was informed of, so I can't answer that question. I think it is appropriate that the Council justifies all of their votes, both to the staff and to the residents, and that not explaining a vote is irresponsible.

Question number ten is, in what ways was Mike not meeting expectations? And, you know, I'm not here every day. I'm here frequently in the offices and it's been my observation that Mike has been a stand-up guy, that he is, as someone said, a very transparent, very honest, and, I did not know him at all, I'd met him before, but I did not have any relationship with him before he was hired as the Chief of Staff. So I basically got to know him in the time that I've served on the Council and he has earned my respect.

I can't answer this question because I don't know if any alternatives were considered. I don't know if any staff was involved, so I can't answer these questions. I do think that a decision like this is serious enough that it should have been left up to whoever is the Mayor, whoever is selected to be the Mayor for the remaining thirteen or fourteen months. And I don't think there's any reason why it needed to happen now. I'm not aware, maybe there's something that is the case. I have not been made aware of anything that would justify that. I don't know if a full explanation will ever be made. Apparently, there are some employment issues and I have not been apprised so I cannot comment. And I don't know if there are any other staff changes that will be made.

I do want to say that I have appreciated Councilmember and Mayor Pro Tem Strouse's service to the community over the years. She has been involved in doing many good things for the city. She's earned my respect and I appreciate her willingness to serve in this capacity, but at this time I do think it would be best if we had someone else that could step into that position and ride out the next two weeks and make sure the business of the city is conducted as it is supposed to. Thank you.

Councilmember Jackson: I guess that means I'm next. OK, I'll start at the top of the list. I was not in support of eliminating the Chief of Staff and replacing it with the City Administrator. At this point, I feel that what was done was done in a way to save the city money. It, to me, gives a way for us to, instead of having a heavy position in Public Works, a heavy position as chief administrator, we've combined that into having less money required to pay an individual that is doing a stellar job. I think that allows us the opportunity to grow and expand. We have money that we could spend on improving your salaries as City employees. You guys work yourselves. You're constantly working. You're doing

what we need to get this city to continue to move forward. I have nothing but utmost respect for each and every one of you.

When I ran my campaign, I ran in support of a full-time Mayor. I still think we need a full-time Mayor. We just need to find the right one. As Vincent says, that knight in shining armor. I sure hope he shows up. Or her. But we need somebody with broad shoulders and somebody strong and ready to carry the weight and the load of this city, because it's a big one.

As far as who was contacted and voiced any support on the situation with Mike Wren, I was not contacted in any way. No phone calls, no messages, no voice mails, no emails, no nothing. And I have to make some further comment because we did have a meeting here earlier with City staff, and during that meeting I was witness to Mayor Strouse making a comment to City staff saying that the majority of the Council was in support of the decision she made to put Mike Wren on administrative leave. You've heard from two, you're hearing from a third. Three is the majority of the Council. And so I have to say that she incorrectly stated that in that meeting with the staff. And I want you to know that it pains me to say that. But I will be nothing but honest with all of you as employees of the City and residents of the city and as people that need to know the truth always. So, you've heard at least three of us didn't know of it. And based on conversations I've had with Mr. Blackburn, I won't put words in his mouth, I'm sure he will answer it, but I would tend to agree he wasn't aware, as well.

OK, as far as Mike Wren being informed, I don't believe so. I have an email from Mike Wren he sent to as many of the Council members as he could, based on memorizing email addresses, and I'd like to quote a little bit of that right here: "David" (I believe this is David Blackburn he's referring to) "in the letter about the request that you provide a response to Linn's comments" was that you, or was that you, Mr. Lifferth? OK, I apologize, Mr. Lifferth, then, so this section says, "Further, David, you request that I provide a response to Linn's comments. She asked me to sign a letter that stated I have been disruptive to the staff and uncooperative with the City business. I understand that today she told the staff that I have been insubordinate. Since there are no details, I find it difficult to respond. Yesterday morning I asked her, privately in her office, if she could tell me why she's been so rude toward me and she had no answer. I would prefer to have some concrete complaint to which I could respond, but I have no specific complaint. For that reason, my response must be very general. On her first morning in the office, her first words to me were hostile and angry. It got better in the next few days, but only in public. Privately, she still spoke to me in hostility. She would not include me in meetings that she arranged with staff and visitors. Staff often felt confused as to how to respond, knowing that her direction and questions were often incongruent with normal office procedures. After a week of that kind of rude treatment, I asked her privately why she was being so harsh to me. She had no response, except to place me on leave for being disruptive to the staff. It is my opinion and the opinion of the vast majority of the staff that she is the disruptive one. There are dozens of upset City employees who have confirmed that fact."

Seeing you all here tonight, I have to agree that Mr. Wren is correct in that statement. Back to the list of questions, let's see. I still have not had any conversations from Mayor Strouse other than the brief interface we had in our meeting earlier today. So I don't know of any justifications. I don't know of any way that Mr. Wren was not meeting expectations. In my opinion in front of what I've seen, and clearly I'm not in the office every day. But I do talk to staff probably every other day. Various members of the staff that I have spoken with. It's certainly not one specific employee ever, but several members of staff, and you all speak very highly of Mike and always have.

Why couldn't this have been postponed? No idea. It seems to me that, I agree, it should have been taken care of by a Mayor that's been appointed. It was our understanding that Mayor Pro Tem is, you know, just somebody to steady the ship and keep us on a straight course and not to rock the boat. And we're rocking the boat. It's my understanding that staff was told that no changes would be made to staff, except maybe to increase staff. As far as any staff changes, you know, we're not in power here. The Mayor is. You've heard us say that. As far as the Council goes, we don't have the power right now. The Mayor does have power to hire, to fire and to move forward. If it were up to me, absolutely no changes would be made until we appoint a Mayor.

Let's see here. I don't know what can be done to get an answer to the questions. I don't know if you will ever have a good explanation as to why this was done. I wish you would. I would love to hear it myself. I appreciate the comments being made about walls being transparent and it being necessary for Mike to be with the City, as I agree with those, as well. Communication should always be crystal clear. And then, couple comments that were just interesting from our meeting earlier that I appreciated and wanted to quote a couple of City employees. Comments that were made were, "You've cut the head off the chicken. The bottom still runs around but it doesn't know what's going on." As the analogy made of having Mike put on administrative leave, because he's your head. And he's the guy that's telling you what to do, what's right, what's appropriate, and what things need to happen first, in what order to get things done and to keep us moving.

You guys have accomplished more in this year than ever in the history of this city. Something must be doing that. And the other thing that was said, and Kurry Lewis was the one that actually made that comment. I have to give him credit, because I thought it was impressive. The other thing that was said was, you know, that the ball is moving in the right direction but it keeps getting stuck in the gutter. We know that, we've been through nine mayors in ten years in Eagle Mountain. I don't know why. I only hope that we get that knight in shining armor to keep us moving the way we need to be moving. I would hope it's somebody that's willing to get in there and do the job, and then even run for reelection, because we need some consistency. And I know that the City of Eagle Mountain has some incredible people that could do this job, that the staff would respond to and that would keep us moving the way we need to.

I apologize for my tears. This has been a really, really hard thing for me. I know what you guys are going through. I've heard from all of you, and I can't do anything to change it right now. And I gotta tell you, that hurts me a lot, because I didn't sign up to not get things done. I signed up to do a job here, and to work for the residents of this city, and to work for you and to keep us moving, keep us growing, get the things done we need, get us the roads we want, get us the businesses we so desire out here and we deserve. So when I have to say right now that I can't get it done for you, it hurts me. Thank you.

Councilmember Blackburn: We're here this evening as a predicament of changing city leadership. Mayor Olsen did a lot of good while he was here. He stepped aside and some other things are going on. The Council, as a body, met just a few days ago, and with the intent of furthering good. We looked at all of us here and said, "Who has the time, the energy to be able to be here," in what we felt was a pretty easy thing to do. We've got professionals on staff, and we expected the ball to be rolling quite easily, quite quickly. And we didn't expect there to be too much rocking of the boat. I do want to pay a thanks to everybody who has served on the Council as Mayor, as Mayor Pro Tem, to all of our staff. We know it's, there's oftentimes not a whole lot of thanks that comes around. So I do want to thank Linn for her ability to sacrifice and give of her time, her effort, her energy, her focus and her drive. Honestly, I think you'll all admit that she's got that in spades, OK?

In the process of the news and what the city is still going through, Linn to her benefit and to ours has been looking for other potential problems. And from what we have gotten as some preliminary feedback, there are some other issues that are going to come up. The Council, as a full Council, will be working on that. But, obviously, in a city this size, it's pretty hard not to rock the boat. I am very appreciative that you're all here tonight for Mike Wren, just for one person. And I would think that we have the caliber of staff here that you would be here for anyone, not just Mike Wren. In the process of things, and on a different track, the position of Chief of Staff or City Administrator, or several other positions within the city, can be determined by the Mayor at any time, so keep that, file it away. Things can, could change at any point in time, but our expectation as a Council, my personal expectation would be that there would be no change during this time of transition, and Mayor Linn Strouse serving as Mayor Pro Tem.

In regards to the questions, who on the City Council is in support of eliminating Chief of Staff and replacing it with a city administration position? We have had a City Administrator. We have had a Chief of Staff. They both have some great qualities. Question is which position would help communicate between the City and the legislative part of the City. That decision for me has not yet been made up. I did not have any part of what's transpired here. I'm still looking at the pros and cons of things. It's a very difficult call, but I have not made up that decision yet. In regards to the full-time or part-time Mayor position, we are a very unique city in the sense that we are a city, we're a power company, we're a water company, we've got a pretty big load for anybody to bear. And I know the position of a Mayor is a very difficult one.

We have professionals that are running each particular department. I'm not an accountant, I'm not a power company executive. I'm not any other sort of executive, and regardless of the Mayor being part time or full time, they still need to rely on the professionals running each of those particular departments. We've had part-time Mayors. We've had full-time Mayors. The timing, the ability for them to keep at it, both sides have had some failures. I am not certain on either one. As my colleagues have mentioned, we need somebody who's going to be here, somebody who'll give their all and be committed to the city, regardless of being full time or part time.

In regards to the present situation with Mr. Mike Wren, I was not noticed prior to it occurring. I was not in support of that prior to it being done yesterday. I am still not in support. Who knew the decision was happening? None of us. Do we regret our decision? We're here tonight. There's business on the table. It will be addressed. Was Mike ever informed of the possible decision? I don't think so. Staff expecting to have proper justification from the City Council. Staff will get justification in the business that pertains to them. That's all I can say. I mean, be honest: there's information that Council goes through that does pertain to you and we will freely and openly share that with you. The stuff that doesn't entitle, that anybody is not entitled to, whether residents or employees, there is, there is a line there. But we should always be able to justify, as a public official, what's been going on.

In what ways was Mike not meeting expectations? I do not know. Was an alternative staffing arrangement ever considered? It's being considered, in the sense that the question that the Council's brought before, the Mayor before of a question of Chief of Staff or city administration. Pertaining to Mike immediately at this point, no. Number thirteen, that's a very lucky question, unlucky in this case, excuse me. Why couldn't this decision have been postponed? It should have been postponed. It shouldn't have happened at this point. You know, we asked Linn, the expectation of Linn, the expectation of any one of us serving as City Council/Pro Tem, would be not to rock the boat, and I think

we can all see the waves. Full explanation will be forthcoming, I suppose and hope, when Ms. Strouse is available.

In all of this I hope, want and expect all of us to be professional, staff, Council. That's our job, so let's do it. As it's been mentioned, because we don't have a full quorum here, we cannot act, other than what we're doing here. We're taking your opinion and we're letting it be known. I think Councilmember Strouse and Mayor Pro Tem Strouse has also gotten that message. We're waiting for information. As we have that information, it'll be made public to you, in the due, proper course of time. Mr. Wren has been put on administrative leave at this point for a period of two weeks. That was done at Mayor Strouse's discretion. I think we're going to be reviewing that, giving some counsel or receiving some feedback from her and see if that's appropriate, but we're working through that.

As part of the City business that the Council's been looking forward to is addressing and dealing with the employee Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual. One thing that I have heard, what we're seeing here tonight, Ifo, you made a comment saying employees are risking their job security to be here tonight. I would hope that is the farthest thing from your minds for being here. Employees should always be welcome to state anything. Talk to your managers, talk to your directors, talk to the Council. That's what we're here for. If you guys don't tell us, we don't know. That's one of the reasons why we're here. We did not know what was going on. So thank you for telling us.

As to the position of Mayor Pro Tem for the course of the next two weeks, Linn is still the Mayor until we have a meeting and she says, or we say all together, that someone else is the Mayor Pro Tem. Until that point in time, the call is still out. We do want a current resident of Eagle Mountain, having lived here for 365 days consecutively, eighteen years and older, male or female doesn't matter. The City is accepting applications. We've got a great staff. We've got a great Council. Pays about \$70,000. Applications are being taken until the 9th. Is there anything else that anyone wants to bring up right now?

Councilmember Jackson: Mr. Blackburn.

Councilmember Blackburn: Yes.

Councilmember Jackson: Just a couple other little comments. When we had our meeting about appointing a Mayor Pro Tem, like Mr. Liddiard said, I was one of the two that voted no. I find it interesting that through this whole turmoil that we have been experiencing as a city, that some of the things that were being talked about about Mayor Olsen were lack of communication issues. It saddens me that one of the people that talked about that the most was Mayor Strouse and she chose not to communicate with the Council. I would have thought she would have learned from the experience with Mayor Olsen how to properly communicate with the Council. So I just want that said on the record, because it's inappropriate that the Mayor not communicate with the Council.

So I hope any of you that are out there that are looking to put your name in the hat, you better be prepared to talk to the Council. That means you pick up the phone and you call. You tell us what's going on. That means that you, you know, you talk about what the needs of the city are. You listen the employees and you talk about the budgeting items. The budgeting items that were talked about, I'm assuming that's what Adam was discussing: the want list, the need list and what's a viable option. That's a good way to approach the budget and we need to be doing that in the future. So anybody that's

interested in being the Mayor, I hope you know what you're getting yourself into, but we need you. We really, really need you. Thank you.

Councilmember Lifferth: I just have a thought. I don't know what the procedure would be for this, but in light of the fact that we have seem to have four Council members that are concerned enough about this to be at the meeting, I would suspect that if Councilmember Strouse had been here tonight, that we may have made a change. Is there any possibility that we, as a Council, could take some sort of recommendation as the Council to Mayor Strouse that she does step aside for the benefit of the city, and that someone else, so that the four of us would call on her to do for the benefit of the city. Is there any interest in making some kind of a non-binding motion?

Councilmember Blackburn: Honestly, other than her being here, I don't know, other than request of friends and co-Council, that that would hold much in the way of weight or teeth.

Councilmember Lifferth: That's all it would be, just a request from fellow Council members.

Councilmember Blackburn: I think our presence and the comments made here tonight are a pretty meeting, or statement, and I think we can probably address that with her personally after the meeting. In the course of business, the City is still operating. We expect it to operate. The things that need to happen will happen and are happening. So again, to staff, please take it back to your coworkers that are not here: business as usual, please. We apologize for the disruption, for the comments. We're all trying to be as transparent as possible.

Councilmember Liddiard: Before you sum up, I'll even let you do the adjourn motion stuff, even though I like to be the guy.

Councilmember Blackburn: Go ahead.

Councilmember Liddiard: Since we are following the reverse order back through, I'll add this little comment. If you like having a guy look the Mayor in the eye and say, "Hang it in your, ear, you're dead wrong, you know, don't be stupid." There's a name for that person, that Chief of Staff person. There's a moniker for it. It's called City Administrator. Because the hire and fire takes place from the City Council. And that's part of the reason why I've made the comments I've had, in regards to a city administrative person, because sometimes they need to do that. They say, "Hey, Mayor, you know, I really appreciate all the great things you're doing, but don't do that. That's not good." Anyway, I was going to say something else, too. Can't remember what it was now. Must not have been important.

Councilmember Jackson: Mr. Blackburn.

Councilmember Blackburn: Yes.

Councilmember Jackson: Mr. Liddiard has intrigued me, so I'm going to throw a question out there. If Mike Wren were to put in for City Administrator, would that be something you would be interested in?

Councilmember Liddiard: Let's not prevaricate about the bush.

Councilmember Jackson: I never like to beat around the bush.

Councilmember Liddiard: I'm not going to answer that question, only for this reason. I'd like to put out, and let's go through a process that's open, that says, "Look, let's get everybody to say, 'Hey, let's open a position as City Administrator.' Let's encourage Mr. Wren to apply for it and see what applications come back." I think in the due process it would be unfair to say, "Yeah, others need not apply." I think it would be appropriate to consider all comers in that regard. Would I encourage him to apply for the job? Of course I would.

And, you know, I'll kind of go back to what I said before. Linn, bless her heart, what a tough position for her to be in, and yet, you know what, I would not have said, "Hey, that's a great idea." In fact, last night I talked with Linn, and I said, "Look, you know, why don't you call Mike back? Let's at least, my opinion is, any way that we can get Mr. Wren back in the City is better than not having him here. And I suggested, "Look, at least call him back and say, 'Hey, you're still the Public Works administrator.'" Get him back here and have you do that. I suggested that she do something, an olive branch getting him back in some regard. I also asked her a little bit before 1:00 today to make sure that she contacted each one of you Council members. I called her on her cell phone and talked with her for a little bit.

In the end, gee, I really wish all this had never, ever happened. We're obviously still dealing with the aftershocks, tremors, repercussions of the vacancy created in the office of the Mayor. None of this has been good. And then some people have personally really suffered and Mr. Wren's one of them, and that's regrettable, because he was doing a good job, and I'd like to see him back here doing that. So, how to fix that, I don't know. Mr. Blackburn was talking about what's left to us and he was kind of rolling that sum up of, you know, don't give up, don't lose faith. And I think that's true. Where does that leave us? I think in the Council of friendship, we'll have opportunities to visit one with another and kind of see what can be done to move forward in maybe a little less public poke in an eye. So, does that answer your question?

Councilmember Jackson: I think as best as you can, so that's all right.

Councilmember Liddiard: Ask a silly, you know, ask a politician, get a political answer, you know.

Councilmember Jackson: Yeah.

Councilmember Liddiard: You know, sometimes I've heard that asking a voter how they feel about politicians is like asking a fire hydrant how they feel about dogs.

Councilmember Jackson: Good point. My one last comment that I just wanted to make was that I really appreciate your support as staff. It flatters me greatly that you would request that I be Mayor Pro Tem. And know that, if asked to do that, I would step forward and do it.

Councilmember Blackburn: That was item number one on the agenda. Item number two, we've, we're not able to address or deal with at this point in time, so . . .

Councilmember Liddiard: Move to adjourn!

Peter Spencer: I hate it when people do that. I'm sorry.

Councilmember Blackburn: He's out of order, but we'll allow it.

Peter Spencer: Thank you very much. I just wanted to say one more thing, on behalf of staff . . .

Gina Peterson: Peter, is that microphone on?

Peter Spencer: Is it not on? Sorry. Myself, personally, this has been, I feel, the best City Council meeting I've ever been to.

Councilmember Liddiard: You should stick around.

Peter Spencer: I just wanted to express our gratitude to the City Council for listening, taking the time to listen, to come early, to come this meeting and to listen to us. I think it says a lot. And I think, as staff through this whole experience, to be honest with you, I feel that we are more unified today than we were yesterday, I think we're more unified today than we were two weeks ago, four months ago, and I just wanted to say that. And another quick thing, you know, Mayor Strouse, she's in a tough position. And I wanted to say a few things on her behalf. I think, as far as staff's concerned, this has been kind of escalating over the past months, and unfortunately, a decision that she might have made on a whim or, you know, whatever may be, that she felt was best, in my mind was kind of the straw that broke the camel's back. And so I wouldn't want, in any way, to paint her as a bad person. I mean, she stood here today in that meeting with us and she spoke very strongly about her passion and her love of Eagle Mountain and her support for us as staff and I felt it. And so I think she has done a wonderful job and she will still do a wonderful job. I just think it's unfortunate that, basically, that straw that broke the camel's back brought us all here today, and even though we haven't necessarily accomplished the two things we were hoping to accomplish, I feel that we have accomplished a lot and I just wanted to share that with you. I think I can say it on behalf of staff. So, thanks again.

Councilmember Blackburn: Thank you.

Councilmember Liddiard: Move to adjourn.

Councilmember Blackburn: Done.

Councilmember Liddiard: My wife sent me a text message. My son won his football game.

Councilmember Blackburn: Thanks for coming.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Liddiard **moved** to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm.