



CITY COUNCIL
City of McLendon-Chisholm, Texas
Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2018

The City Council of the City of McLendon-Chisholm convened in Special Session on Thursday, December 20, 2018, at City Hall, 1371 West FM 550, McLendon-Chisholm, Texas, with the following members present:

Keith Short	Mayor
Adrienne Balkum	Council Member
Herman Larkin	Council Member
Scott Turnbull	Mayor Pro Tem
Jim Bloom	Council Member
James Herren	Absent

Staff Present: Lisa Palomba City Secretary

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Short called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to U.S. and Texas Flags.

3. Rules of Decorum. Mayor Short announced the Rules of Decorum are in place and are to be observed throughout the meeting.

4. Citizen Comments.

Mayor Short said there were no citizen comment cards submitted.

5. Appoint City Attorney.

Mayor Short introduced item 5. He stated his job is to recommend a City Attorney for appointment and bring that recommendation to City Council for their approval. There were five individuals/firms that applied. After a discussion with the law firm, the Mayor selected the Halla Law Firm based on the City's size and needs. He asked for a motion to appoint the Halla Law Firm.

Council Member Larkin moved to appoint the Halla Law Firm as the City Attorney.

Council Member Bloom seconded the motion.

The Mayor opened the floor for discussion. He explained how he eliminated firms. One firm that applied said they would be the main law firm and appoint another law firm for other needs. The Mayor believes the law firm the City hires should not hire-out the City's needs. Another individual he eliminated had a good resume, but not enough experience. Another firm, after checking references, did not have favorable reviews. Another firm had a great resume but is very expensive. The price concerned the Mayor.

The individual the Mayor selected enjoys working with small cities. He is available on Tuesday nights for meetings. He said they did have a website at one time, but in 2010 he shut his website down as he did work with another firm. This individual had better pricing and his references were positive as well.

Council Members discussed his pricing. Mayor Short said \$150/hour.

Council Member Bloom indicated he reached out to another council member from another city who spoke favorably of this individual. He liked the price structure as well.

Mayor Short stated that this individual has assisted in writing city ordinances as cities grow.

Council Member Larkin likes that this firm is located close by and he also had two citizens recommend this law firm.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull commented and was hesitant to hire the Halla Law Firm because he could not find his website on an internet search. He is still concerned that he does not have staff to assist him. Mayor Short said Halla Law is teamed with his wife who is also a practicing attorney. Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull preferred the firm out of Austin for several reasons, but believed the firm was too pricey. He sent an email to the firm and they said with a retainer, they would knock their price down to 10%- 4% of the cost so they are no longer the priciest option. He asked if Halla Law billed quarter hours or in tenths of an hour.

Mayor Short stated that Halla Law billed quarter hours.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull then presented a chart showing how quarter-hour billing can be more expensive than tenth-hour billing. He wants the Council to be aware of how this can affect pricing. He indicated the Austin firm has a City Planner on staff with a lower rate than what the City is now spending. He asked how many years' experience Halla Law had.

Council Member Balkum asked the Mayor if he forwarded her questions to the remaining law firms.

The Mayor replied that he had not. He indicated that was his decision.

Council Member Balkum commented that she would have appreciated having her questions answered.

The Mayor reminded Council Member Balkum that it is his decision to call or not to call firms.

Council Member Bloom asked Mayor Pro Tem about the retainer fee for the Austin firm. Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull said it was \$25,000 prepayment, but the return was 7% or more than what they currently get.

After discussion the Mayor called for a final vote on the motion that was made to accept Halla Law Firm as the City's lawyer.

A vote was cast and the motion carried with 3 in favor (the Mayor voted to break the tie), and 2 against (Balkum, Turnbull) (Herren, absent)

Council Member Balkum requested an Executive Session. Mayor Short indicated there was no need for an Executive Session.

Council Member Balkum would like to move into an Executive Session regarding the City Attorney.

Mayor Short stated there is no need for an Executive Session.

6. Executive Session.

Executive Session was not held.

7. Reconvene Regular Meeting.

Executive Session was not held.

8. Executive Session Action.

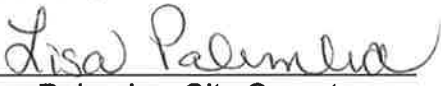
Executive Session was not held. No action was taken.

9. Adjourn.

Council Member Bloom requested the Mayor adjourn the meeting.


Mayor Short adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

ATTEST:



Lisa Palomba, City Secretary

APPROVED:



Keith Short, Mayor

