

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
AMES CONFERENCE BOARD**

**AMES, IOWA**

**JULY 27, 2021**

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CONFERENCE BOARD**

The Special Meeting of the Ames Conference Board was called to order by Chairman John Haila at 6:00 p.m. on July 27, 2021. Present from the Ames City Council were Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Rachel Junck, and David Martin. Linda Murken, Lisa Heddens, and Latifah Faisal represented the Story County Board of Supervisors. Council Member Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen was absent. Ames Community School Board, Nevada School Board, United Community School Board, and Gilbert School Board Community were not represented.

Mayor Haila announced that the City is working from an Amended Agenda and part of the Amended Agenda included a Special Meeting of the Ames Conference Board.

**DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS TO HIRE A NEW AMES CITY ASSESSOR:** Mayor Haila stated that the Conference Board had received a letter of resignation from Brenda Nelson, City Assessor. He wanted to review the process that the Conference Board will need to go through to appoint a new City Assessor. It was mentioned that the City Assessor is tasked with appointing a Deputy Assessor and that had not happened before the resignation of Ms. Nelson. Per *Iowa Code*, the City Clerk automatically becomes the Acting City Assessor. In discussions with City Administration, Diane Voss, City Clerk, has the authority to appoint/ask someone to assist her. Staff is going through the process of asking Assistant City Manager Deb Schildroth to provide some administrative oversight. The work will continue in the City Assessor's office, as it was previously, and no work will be done by Ms. Schildroth other than being a point of contact for minor administrative duties.

The Mayor mentioned that while Ms. Nelson was present she had been looking for ways to continue to strengthen and make improvements to the Assessor Department. It had become apparent that this would be a great opportunity for the Conference Board to request an independent entity to come in and look over the office. He commented that he and Ms. Schildroth contacted the Department of Revenue and found an individual who has done the type of assessments that the City Assessor needs. Mayor Haila wanted to be clear that staff does not anticipate or expect to find anything that is untoward, but will be more of what opportunities there are for improvements. He wanted to bring to the Board's attention and ask permission to invite the Department of Revenue to review procedures on site.

Council Member Betcher inquired how long the assessment may take. The Mayor stated that the Iowa Department of Revenue's office indicated that the review itself would take a couple of days. He hopes that the Report from the Department of Revenue could be shared with potential applicants to explain what the City is expecting.

Story County Supervisor Lisa Heddens asked how long it would be before a representative from the

Department of Revenue could come do its review. It was being anticipated that someone from the Department of Revenue would be arriving in mid-August, and it is the hope that by the end of August there would be a Report available to show the Conference Board.

Per *Iowa Code* there needs to be an Examining Board in place. The Examining Board is made up of three individuals; one appointed by City Council, one appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and one appointed by the School Boards. The Examining Board's duties are to procure a list of eligible candidates for the Assessor's position from the Department of Revenue and to handle any employment issues within the Assessor's office. The Examining Board will handle procuring resumes, potentially going through and doing some solicitations, and hearing personnel issues. It was mentioned that it is preferred that a candidate for the Examining Board have some human relations background. Mayor Haila notified the Board that any candidate for the Examining Board must live within the Ames City limits. The Mayor will reach out to the School Boards about appointing someone. There may be a few special meetings of the Conference Board needed in the near future to approve appointees.

Mayor Haila stated that the *Iowa Code* states that within seven days of the Assessor resigning, the Examining Board is to request a list. He had spoken to the Department of Revenue to let them know that the City of Ames would like to have the review done before starting the process of looking for a new Assessor and the Department of Revenue understood. The Mayor mentioned that there was no penalty for not following the seven days; however, he wanted the Conference Board to be aware of what the Code stated.

Lastly, there is a Mini Board (City Council representative, Board of Supervisor Representative, and each School Board has a representative for a total of six members), which is a subcommittee of the Conference Board. The Mayor would like to empower the Mini Board to receive the Report from the Department of Revenue, discuss the findings, and then report back to the Conference Board.

The Mayor stated the City is going to be aggressive in seeking a City Assessor. He noted that during the last recruitment there, was a small applicant pool to choose from.

**CONFERENCE BOARD COMMENTS:** Story County Supervisor Heddens explained that tonight's Agenda was combined with the Regular City Council Agenda and to find the Conference Board Agenda someone would have to do some digging in order to find it as it was not listed anywhere. She asked to keep those separate to help locate the Agenda easier.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Corrieri to adjourn the Ames Conference Board meeting at 6:14 p.m.

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