



Called City Commission Meeting Highlights

Friday, August 6, 2010

Mayor and City Commission Offer City Manager Position to Ben South

At a called meeting of the Paducah Board of Commissioners beginning at 7:30 a.m. on August 6, Commissioners interviewed individually in closed session the four candidates for the position of city manager. After the interviews and after discussion, the Mayor and Commission unanimously decided to offer the city manager position to Ben South of Canon City, Colorado. The offer is pursuant to an agreement on a compensation package.

In making the offer to South, Mayor Bill Paxton, said, "We are pleased to make you an offer to be our city manager. You are unanimously our number one selection." In accepting the offer, South said, "I am very honored and very pleased. I can't tell you what an unanimous decision means." The City Commission then voiced their support of South. Commissioner Richard Abraham said, "People position themselves for opportunities, and you have done that. You have a lot of initiative." Commissioner Carol Gault said, "All indicators show you are our guy. So make us proud." Commissioner Gayle Kaler voiced her support of South's interest in the arts. South said, "It truly is a passion of mine." Commissioner Gerald Watkins said, "You are an overachiever. You are very personable and easy to talk to. We all think you are the total package, and we think you will love Paducah." South ended his discussion with the Mayor and Commission by saying, "I'm so excited I get to come here and be part of this community."

The Commission plans to introduce an ordinance at its August 10 regularly scheduled meeting for a contract with Ben South. Also on Tuesday, the Commission hopes to announce a general timeline of when South would be able to report to work.

Ben South is currently the President and CEO of Breakthrough Innovations, LLC in Canon City, Colorado. He is an attorney who focuses on local government issues. South's experience includes a military background in the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army Reserve and more than a decade as an attorney and municipal consultant. He also has more than 15 years of experience in Westminster, Colorado holding positions including Assistant City Manager.

Prior to today's interview with the City Commission, South spent Thursday, talking with City Directors and staff, touring City facilities, meeting the public at a reception at City Hall, and enjoying dinner with the elected officials and several community partners. He arrived in Paducah on Tuesday to tour the community on his own.

On April 9, 2010, the Mayor and Commission approved a contract between the City and Paducah and Mercer Group, Inc. to perform the city manager executive search. Jim Mercer personally conducted the search for the City and participated in the interview sessions. Jim Zumwalt resigned as Paducah's City Manager on March 2, 2010. Jonathan Perkins is serving as Interim City Manager.

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