

MINUTES OF AN ORGANIZATION MEETING

BROOKLYN CITY COUNCIL

February 1, 2016

7:00 p.m.

Present: Debbie Tomusko
Kathy Pucci
Mary Albier
Kevin Tanski
Barb Paulitzky
Ron Van Kirk
Tony DeMarco

Absent: None

Pledge of Allegiance.

Interim President Van Kirk opened the floor for nominations for Council President.

MOTION by Tanski, second by Van Kirk to nominate Ron Van Kirk for Council President.

MOTION by Tomusko, second by DeMarco to nominate Kathy Pucci for Council President.

MOTION by Albier, second by Tomusko to nominate Tony DeMarco for Council President.

Int. Pres. Van Kirk called three more times for any other nominations then asked for the votes to be taken:

VOTES RESULTED:

For Ron Van Kirk for President of Council: Yes: Tanski, Paulitzky. Abstain: Van Kirk. No: Tomusko, Pucci, Albier, DeMarco. (MOTION FAILED)

For Kathy Pucci for President of Council: Yes: Tomusko, Albier, DeMarco. Abstain: Pucci. No: Tanski, Paulitzky, Van Kirk. (MOTION FAILED)

For Tony DeMarco for President of Council: Yes: Tomusko, Pucci, Albier. Abstain: DeMarco. No: Tanski, Paulitzky, Van Kirk. (MOTION FAILED)

Int. Pres. Van Kirk said there is still not a consensus for enough votes for Council President; and because no President was selected there will no nominations and vote for Pres. Pro-Tem either. Pursuant to the Law Director's e-mail, forwarded by the Council Clerk on Friday, Dir. Butler said that acting as Council President it is appropriate for him to appoint committees.

Standing Committees:

Finance (6:30 prior to Council mtg, unless otherwise posted):

Kathy Pucci, Ron Van Kirk, Barb Paulitzky

Public Works

Kevin Tanski, Tony DeMarco, Mary Albier

Public Safety & Environmental

Debbie Tomusko, Barb Paulitzky, Ron Van Kirk

Legislative Update: Tony DeMarco

Volunteer Fire Dependents Board: Kevin Tanski and Tony DeMarco

Fair Housing: Mary Albier

Sustainability: Kevin Tanski

Planning Comm. Rep: Kathy Pucci

Rec Bd. Rep: Kevin Tanski

Domestic Violence: Barb Paulitzky

Economic Development Comm. Rep: Kathy Pucci

Int. Pres. Van Kirk said this will serve as the final Organizational mtg. held in 2016, unless Councilmembers agree to change their votes; he won't continue holding the meetings, as it's the third time voted with the same results all times. The legal aspect of the situation was discussed, questions asked, questions answered. According to Dir. Butler's assessment, he will continue as Interim Council President. In the event he cannot attend a meeting, Council Rule 7 provides that the Council Clerk calls the meeting to order and the Councilmembers present choose a President for that meeting only. In the event the current Mayor must pass her duties onto the current Council President, Council will convene an Organization mtg. again and elect a new Council President. Though not ideal, there is a stalemate, and it's important to move on for the betterment of Brooklyn.

Councilwoman Balbier said shame on Council for being at a stalemate; it's doing Council and the city an injustice. She nominated Councilman DeMarco because we were at the same situation, because she thinks he has a wealth of financial knowledge, he has no agenda, and is for the betterment of the city.

Councilwoman Pucci thinks it's important if it's indicated there won't be another Organization mtg. that Council elects a Pro-Tem, and sees nothing precluding it from being done, and would like to hear from others. Int. Pres. Van Kirk said he already spoke to it. Councilwoman Balbier said she agrees. Councilman Tanski asked for the legal aspect on it again. Int. Pres. Van Kirk read from and quoted Law Dir. Butler that, "There is nothing in the Charter, Code or Council Rules that prohibit Council as part of its Organization for electing a President Pro-Tem for the 2016 term, notwithstanding the fact it has not yet elected a President. But nothing obliges Council to do so, because the current President Pro-Tem remains as the President Pro-Tem until his successor is elected, or he is re-elected to that office. Furthermore, Council may not elect a President Pro-Tem merely because Councilman Van Kirk is serving as Interim President. In otherwords, his office as Pro-Tem is not vacant merely because he serves as Interim President, and thus Council may not treat the Pro-Tem position as a defacto vacant one. It is most assuredly not vacant. Both the Presidency and the Presidency Pro-Tem are currently being served by the same person."

Councilwoman Tomusko wanted to echo Councilwoman Balbier's sentiment that it's incumbent on Council to try to come to a decision on this, to not be in a limbo position with our leadership being by default rather than voting. She thinks it's imperative to have the maximum amount of experience we can possibly get with a President because we have a new administration, and with all due respect it is Mayor Gallagher's first term as Mayor and it's a learning curve; so for balance of power and to best support her, we should have the best, most experienced, and most qualified person as President. So stresses everyone search their minds and if who they voted for is the best.

Councilwoman Pucci echoed they've been told by two Law Directors the language is clear that Council shall elect a President, and she takes it seriously. It's disappointing to end up, for a period, by default. Int. Pres. Van Kirk agreed and said if anyone wishes to change their vote he would hear that.

There being no further business, **MOTION** by Paulitzky, second by Tanski to adjourn. **VOTE RESULTED:**
To Adjourn: Yes: Tomusko, Pucci, Balbier, Tanski, Paulitzky, Van Kirk. No: DeMarco. **(ADJOURNED)**

Clerk of Council

President of Council