

**MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**Caucus Room, Belize City Council**

**April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**10:00 a.m.**

Present at the meeting were the following:

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|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Mr. Bernard Wagner      | <b>Mayor</b>        |
| 2. Mr. Allan Pollard Jr.   | <b>Deputy Mayor</b> |
| 3. Mr. Eluide Miller       | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 4. Ms. Kaya Cattouse       | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 5. Mr. Evan Thompson       | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 6. Mr. Edmund Kwan         | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 7. Mr. Javier Castellanos  | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 8. Mrs. Stephanie Hamilton | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 9. Mr. Malcolm Nunez       | <b>Councillor</b>   |
| 10. Mr. Dorian Usher       | <b>Councillor</b>   |

**Absent with apologies:**

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 11. Mr. Sherwin Garcia | <b>Councillor</b> |
|------------------------|-------------------|

Mr. Albert Vaughan	<b>City Administrator</b>
Ms. Carissa Casanova	<b>Administrative Manager, Office of the Mayor</b>

**Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:16 AM.**

## **1.0 Belize National Prayer**

1.1 Mayor Wagner led all, who were present, in reciting the National Prayer of Belize.

1.2 Those present then observed a moment of silence to honour the life of Hon. Michael Espat.

## **2.0 Welcome Remarks**

2.1 Mayor Wagner thanked those present for being in attendance and observed that the agenda for the meeting was full. The Mayor then noted that at this point, the Councillors have already become acquainted with their respective departments.

2.2 Mayor Wagner then explained that the recent training session, held with the Ministry of Local Government, was productive. He further stated that the training was a welcome opportunity to meet with the Ministry of Local Government, who provided a report on the Council's performance over the last year.

2.3 The Mayor noted that Belize City is one of the better-performing Councils, as its financial spending is in line with industry standards. He added that thirty-five cents (\$0.35) of every dollar earned is spent on staff remuneration, with the remainder being spent on development (streets, garbage, drainage, etc).

2.4 The Mayor advised that the Council will continue with its infrastructure development plans; as the Hurricane season draws near, the focus needs to be on drainage. He further explained that while streets were being constructed and rehabilitated, the drains were addressed, however, they must now be maintained.

2.5 Mayor Wagner then commended Councillor Thompson for being proactive, and resourceful, and for being on the ground, managing the work. He advised that it's all about balancing what the people elect you to do and leading by example.

2.6 The Mayor then commended the team and said that there will always be challenges, but they must know when to move on and do the work of the people. If three years are wasted when they should have been doing the work of the people, there will be no recourse for them. He advised that as a Council, they must ensure that they are working constructively to accomplish the people's work.

2.7 Mayor Wagner advised that things are fast within the Council, he expressed that the Council was devastated at the passing of the City Administrator, but they must move quickly to regain a sense of stability.

2.8 Mayor Wagner added that the key positions of Finance Director and Revenue

Manager were left vacant before the election, and need to be filled. The interviewing panel has the responsibility of filling these vacancies.

2.9 Mayor Wagner then explained that the Council is blessed to have Albert Vaughan working with them. He is an individual with a high caliber of experience, a strong value system, and integrity working with us. Mr. Vaughan has a history of working with various organizations and working within the organizational structure.

2.10 Mayor Wagner again welcomed those present at the session and shared his anticipation for a productive meeting.

**Councillor Cattouse arrived at 10:30**

**Councillor Castellanos arrived at 10:32 am.**

### **3.0 Ratification of the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes**

3.1 “4.26” change to “but we are currently not getting value for money”

3.2 “4.41” addition of “to identify areas that may need strengthening, and to implement a rotational system.”

3.3 Councillor Kwan moved for the minutes to be accepted. Seconded by Councillor Hamilton.

### **4.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

4.4 Councillor Miller inquired about the progress being made at the parking lot and was advised that the electrical arm is now in the country, but has not yet been installed. An electrical connection to the security booth is still needed.

4.2 Fees for the facility have yet to be determined, there are approximately 36 parking spaces available.

4.3 Mr. Vaughan mentioned that he scheduled a meeting with the vendors at Digi Park who are in arrears to determine a way for them to become current.

4.4 Councillor Thompson asked if there is a vetting process in place for the vendors. Mayor Wagner explained that there is an application process. He further advised that when a booth becomes vacant prospective tenants apply, and sometimes they come with a recommendation. Council management recommends whether or not the vendors would be a good fit. Once the Council approves the application, it goes back to the revenue manager. The differences in fees for booth rentals depend on the location, for example, vendors on Mahogany St. pay \$1.00 per day, while those at Digi Park pay \$250.00 monthly.

4.5 Mayor Wagner explained that some vendors may not be versed in managing a business, so they need to be made aware of what it might entail, starting with the application process. The lease agreement is clear as to what is required, but the Council is very lenient.

4.6 Mr. Vaughan indicated that he will try to schedule a meeting with BEL, to address all our electrical issues. The Stop lights at North Front St. and Hyde's Lane are connected; however, one meeting will be scheduled to address all other concerns.

4.7 Mr. Vaughan then explained that the Union met last Friday regarding the CBA, so the Council is waiting on a response from them. Mr. Vaughan further advised that he would contact Mr. Neil to follow up.

4.8 In respect of the manifesto, Mr. Vaughan advised that a copy would be presented to the managers.

4.9 Mayor Wagner advised that the manifesto was prepared after the budgeting cycle so expectations may need to be adjusted in terms of what new initiatives can be executed this year.

4.10 Mr. Vaughan then acknowledged that the training suggested by the Deputy is very important and will help the Council to move along.

4.11 Councillor Hamilton recommended that a training and development plan be created for the year.

4.12 Councillor Cattouse inquired if the property tax flat rate for senior citizens was discussed at the Mayor's Association. Mayor Wagner advised that the matter had not yet been discussed.

## **5.0 Announcements by the Mayor**

5.1 Mayor Wagner advised that the concreting work at the end of Albert St. is nearing completion. In line with this, a meeting was held to discuss plans for the rehabilitation of Isaiah Morter Plaza. Planned upgrades for the area include the installation of a metal fence, seating area, solar lights, and greening areas.

5.2 Mayor Wagner further explained that much of Belize City's heritage is in this vicinity. The St. John's Cathedral, Yarborough Cemetery, the government house, and some commerce are located in the area.

5.3 Mayor Wagner further described plans for the Albert Night Festival to be held in the area and said that the Council would be working with stakeholders in the area to accomplish the rehabilitation.

5.4 Mayor Wanger noted that the Collet Night Festival would be held on May 11, 2024. He explained that it was initially scheduled to take place in the Fort George constituency, but they have indicated that they would like to reschedule for later in the year.

5.5 Mayor Wagner further advised that both the Collet and Albert communities did not have community festivals last year, so they would be first on the list this year.

5.6 The Mayor announced that the Council has received a general warrant from Prime Minister about how the Council's money is to be spent. He then described the various budget lines and explained that money is only spent depending on the cash flow, which is dependent on how efficient the Council has been in collecting trade, liquor, and traffic fees.

5.7 Mayor Wagner expressed that managing the Council's finances has been a constant struggle, but they have been able to do it for the past six (6) years, and he believes they can continue to do so.

5.8 Mayor Wagner again explained that approval was granted for the Council to spend in specific areas, and spending must be in accordance with the approved budget. He added that only the Mayor can move from one line to another in consultation with the Ministry of Local Government.

5.9 Mayor Wagner advised that adjustments for the Councillors' stipends were not budgeted for but will be taken to the Ministry of Local Government for consideration and a request will be made for the adjustment to be retroactive.

5.10 Mayor Wagner then explained that he had requested assistance from the Prime Minister in paving the street behind the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital, and advised that the prospects for the approval of this request seem very good.

5.11 Mayor Wagner then presented plans for the Swing Bridge. He explained that the bridge would be retrofitted for foot traffic only and that the construction of a new bridge, at a different location was being proposed. With this plan in place, the Swing Bridge could then be used as a heritage site.

5.12 Mayor Wagner noted that the City Planner and her team created a proposed bridge model, which has been shared with the Prime Minister, who is looking forward to the project.

5.13 Councillor Kwan asked what would happen to the sailboats that normally park anchor just outside the bridge.

5.14 Councillor Miller stated that the Swing Bridge adds character to Belize City and that keeping the swing bridge preserves history that would otherwise be lost if it is demolished.

5.15 Mayor Wagner then announced that he would be meeting with a group from the Netherlands, for the construction of a boardwalk. He explained that they have the technology, to build a floating boardwalk that will have a marina for the sailboats.

5.16 Mayor Wagner also shared that he would be representing the Council at a United Cities and Local Government conference from May 27-30<sup>th</sup> in Antigua & Barbuda.

5.17 Mayor Wagner added that the Council has been working to establish a sister-city relationship with the City of Miramar. He stated that at this point, all that's left is to sign the agreement, which had been delayed due to the deletion. The signing has been rescheduled for late July.

5.18 The official launch of the E-mobility project is scheduled for July. The proposed route has been discussed, and construction for the charging depot, and office building are underway.

5.19 Mayor Wagner then advised that the team was meeting to finalize the details of the project. He noted that the buses were being wrapped and that the EU decided which company would be used to conduct the wrapping.

## **6.0 General Updates from the City Administrator**

6.1 Mr. Vaughan advised that he would be ensuring that each Councillor is aware of the vacancies within the Council so that if they are aware of qualified people to fill these posts, they may make recommendations.

6.2 Mr. Vaughan advised that RJB Construction has called concerning Lottie Waight St., and it seems that they are moving along quickly with the repairs.

6.3 Mr. Vaughan explained that he is trying to see how best to accommodate the numerous social assistance requests coming in, especially where it concerns the Council's cash flow.

6.4 Regarding the Collet Night Festival, Mr. Vaughan noted that the area is popular among tourists and suggested that the Council could look for ways to get NICH and BTB involved. He advised that a meeting was scheduled with a representative from BTB in the coming week.

6.5 Regarding the pending Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Mr. Vaughan advised that he will be following up with the Christian Workers' Union to see how quickly they would be able to respond.

6.6 Mayor Wagner expressed that there will never be a perfect CBA document, and advised that the people negotiating on each side will need to compromise. The document should be one that will satisfy the current needs of the workers.

6.7 Mayor Wagner further advised that three years from now, the terms of the agreement will need to be renegotiated. The issue being faced is that the CWU is not willing to accept references to the General Administrative Rule (GAR) in the CBA. Mayor Wagner resolved to work along with the union and explained that the Council and the Union should not view each other as adversaries.

6.8 The Mayor stated that salient points were taken from the GAR and included in the CBA. Mayor Wanger then noted that where the GAR and CBA contradict the Labor Law, the law takes precedence.

6.9 Mr. Vaughan advised that a public announcement would be issued, and proper sensitization would take place before the stoplight at the intersection of North Front St. and Hyde's Lane would be turned on.

6.10 Mr. Vaughan then advised that the City Administrator's door is always open, and encouraged the Councilors to visit if they ever required clarity on a certain matter. He added that they should work together and share ideas that could help the progress of the Council.

6.11 Mr. Vaughan assured the Councillors that he would keep them informed.

6.12 Concerning the stoplights, Councillor Miller recommended that things be done differently in terms of sensitization. He requested that traffic personnel go into the school and do a presentation about traffic safety and include how the stop light should be used.

6.13 Mr. Vaughan advised that in the case of booth rentals and other arrangements where there is a contract in place, the contract needs to be enforced. Mr. Vaughan explained that he intends to meet with the vendors to discuss their agreements and get the team to enforce them.

6.14 Mayor Wagner advised that the respective managers have to be held accountable. They can't expect to get an annual bonus when their compliance ratios are not up to standard. The Mayor further added that the Council must look at how evaluations are done, and how end-of-year bonuses are awarded.

## **7.0 Notices**

7.1 Councillor Cattouse noted that there is a lot of construction happening across the city, and she had issues navigating. There is no signage in place. She advised that when there is street construction taking place, signs should be erected to notify motorists that there is construction ahead. This will ensure that drivers don't make it to the construction zone before having to turn around and find another route.

7.2 In line with Councillor Cattouse's recommendation, Mr. Vaughan then explained a potential solution to lessen the instances of broken windshields. He suggested signs that indicate that the Sanitation team is working in the area could be erected, warning people that they may not want to traverse or park in the area.

7.3 Councillor Thompson advised that he paid a visit to the market and was advised that a vendor took over the booth from someone else who had been in arrears of about \$13,000.00. At present there is only a \$1,500.00 balance remaining on the arrears, and they will be current on the rent. The vendor advised that someone broke into their shop and stole some products. To avoid this type of situation from occurring again, the vendor installed some shutters on the booth without informing the Council and is now requesting an offset on the outstanding rent.

7.4 Mayor Wagner advised Councillor Thompson that the City Engineer is to certify the works and determine an estimated value, using that information, an offset can be done through the market manager, and the revenue team.

## **8.0 Questions**

No matters were tabled.

## **9.0 Petitions**

**No matters were tabled.**

## **10.0 Presentation of Reports from Councillors**

10.1 Councillor Nunez shared that the Programs department has started to prepare for the Council's summer events. They have started to meet with stakeholders to seek contributions that would lessen the financial burden on the Council. Councillor Nunez committed to providing updates as the department progresses in this area.

10.2 Councillor Kwan advised that the issuing of traffic tickets will commence for non-compliance with the seatbelt legislation. He noted that the Council had asked for a period of sensitization to be carried out concerning penalties for not wearing seatbelts and the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving.



10.3 Councillor Kwan further advised that the Enforcement Department is conducting consultations for the implementation of alternate parking on Faber's Rd.

10.4 Councillor Cattouse stated that she met with the Sanitation Staff. The meeting lasted for two hours, and the staff were able to voice their concerns and receive responses from her and the manager.

10.5 Councillor Cattouse explained that storage of their equipment while on duty, especially at the Council's facilities is an area of concern. She advised that she would be scheduling a meeting, including HR, to try and address these issues. Agenda items for this meeting will include the grid system, and the need to hire more manpower.

10.6 Councillor Cattouse further advised that drain-digging operations are well underway. The work is not only being carried out by the Sanitation Department but all the other cleaning crews on the ground.

10.7 Councillor Cattouse noted that the Council's Family Fun Day was a success. The first portion of the event engaged about 150 children with special needs. Organizations represented include Autism Belize, Stella Maris School, and Special Olympics Belize.

10.8 The Autism Walk also saw strong participation from the Council.

10.9 A GIS meeting was held with a private consultant to set up the proposed grid system.

10.10 Councillor Miller advised that the MIS Department has implemented an internet system, to boost cyber security. The finance department has received new monitors; staffing continues to be an issue but is currently being addressed.

10.11 The MIS Department is working on upcoming development projects, including working with the PR Department to launch a revamped website for the Council, and the development of a smartphone application. They have been meeting with prospective developers, with other meetings to be scheduled.

10.12 The Traffic Administrative Department is working to digitize traffic records, as well as the vehicle inspection process.

10.13 Councillor Miller then shared that in respect to the LED Unit, there is a need for change in the dynamics of BCAP. The Council has engaged with Beltraide to help in evaluating the outcomes of participants from cohorts 1-6. Their efforts will determine whether or not follow-up is required.

10.14 Councillor Miller further expressed his hope that funds would be able to be allocated to the initiative. He noted that new applications are being accepted but those who have business plans are being prioritized.

10.15 Fitness nooks are being installed in the park in Belama Phase 2 behind the police station.

10.16 Councillor Miller then explained that a traffic management committee meeting was held and that he would be working to have a street naming committee meeting arranged. Additionally, the Traffic Department is seeing improved revenues, as they are now able to process services via WhatsApp and Ekyash payments.

10.17 The relocation of the records room is in the works, and employees will be working overtime and on weekends to get the department's files up to date. The Council can then plan for the removal of files and include it in the budget for the upcoming year.

10.18 The purchase of a new printer to be used for the issuing of driver's licenses is being planned, the new printer is to provide additional safety features to the driver's licenses.

10.19 Requests for information from the Traffic Department have been prevalent, there is an associated fee for these requests, which has helped with revenue generation. In light of the recent energy issues, the department is requesting that a generator be installed so as not to hamper productivity when there is a power outage.

10.20 Councillor Hamilton advised that she has been working to come up with a formalized work plan in respect of her Diaspora Relations portfolio. She explained that a meeting would be scheduled to determine the Council's goals under that portfolio.

10.21 The Council has been invited to attend the Belize Diaspora Summit. Councillor Hamilton suggested that this was an opportunity for the city to be represented and for it to address any needs of Belizeans living in the diaspora. Brochures with the Council's various services are being prepared.

10.22 Councillor Hamilton further advised that a budget and work plan for the trip will be prepared.

10.23 Councillor Castellanos explained that he met with members of the planning department, and with CEMO and their respective stakeholders.

10.24 Deputy Pollard advised that he is trying to meet weekly with the works department to plan, report, and schedule their work as it has been spontaneous. There will always be emergency scenarios, but it is important to stay up to date with the scheduled work. So far making schedules for the various teams has been working.

10.25 The department has also been working to finish the fitness nooks for all the parks that have been listed. The manhole covers project is continuing, with the manholes on New Rd. being replaced and retrofitted.

10.26 Concerning the work at the Parking Lot, Deputy Pollard reported that the hot mixing had been completed, and thirty-six (36) parking spaces had been identified and painted, despite there being issues with the paint.

10.27 The Works department is behind schedule in terms of patching streets as there have been issues with the truck. The team has gotten better, but equipment has always been an issue. The department is struggling in terms of a dump truck and light utility vehicles which is recommended for patching.

10.28 Deputy Mayor Pollard then advised the Council that the walkway/ride-way on Seashore Drive is being addressed, and the rehabilitation of Ceasar Ridge Rd. and Albert St. is ongoing. A request is being made for communication channels to be opened between the City Engineer and all contractors so that the Council is aware of what is happening.

10.29 The Works Department has also been assisting with the watering of plants. This assignment significantly hinders the department since it takes about 4 hours, and 3 crew members to water the plants daily. At present, one of the trucks assigned to patching is being used. Additionally, there is only one (1) mechanic on Staff for the Council's entire fleet. Deputy Pollard advised that the Council needs to look at how best a new mechanic can be recruited.

10.30 Deputy Pollard suggested that students who are receiving training from various institutions such as the University of Belize and ITVET can be recruited as trainees, in this manner they will be able to apply their training.

10.31 Deputy Pollard then advised that the crew working in the vicinity of Thirsty Thursday had already repaired the culvert, and the manhole outside the tourist village, but the work was hindered when two drunk persons stepped into the wet cement causing the need for the work to be redone.

10.32 Deputy Pollard then concluded his report by restating that the Works Department is being hindered due to their equipment being down for repairs regularly.

10.33 Mr. Vaughan then requested a meeting with Deputy Mayor Pollard to further discuss the matters raised. He suggested that in terms of recruitment, salary might be an issue.

10.34 Mr. Vaughan noted that he would like to schedule a meeting with the various undertakers. He explained that at a recently scheduled funeral, the undertakers had made no arrangements for the burial to take place at the Cemetery, but commended the cemetery manager for quickly addressing the situation although it was not the Council's responsibility.

**11.0 Request for leave to move the adjournment of the Council on a definite matter of urgent public importance.**

11.1 No matters were tabled.

**12.0 Motions by Mayor & Councilors**

12.1 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve an employment contract for a period of three (3) years between the Council and Ms. Carla Patnett, to carry out the duties of City Planner. Seconded by Councillor Kwan.

12.2 Mayor Wagner advised that Ms. Patnett formally expressed interest in continuing her employment at the Council, and has been working to recertify the Building Unit. MOTION PASSED.

12.3 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve an employment contract for a period of three (3) years between the Council and Mr. Floyd Williams, to carry out the duties of City Engineer.

12.4 Deputy Pollard noted that in renewing Mr. Williams' previous contract, there were questions regarding his performance. He then asked if Mr. Williams has shown improvement as it relates to his deliverables.

12.5 Mayor Wagner advised that he has seen improvements, and added that Mr. Williams ensured that relevant contracts were in place for all the streets being rehabilitated, that he supervised the quality of work, and spent extensive hours on the respective projects given the magnitude of the work.

12.6 Mayor Wagner further stated that Mr. Williams has proven himself, even though the Council has raised its expectations to a much higher level than it was before. Mr. Williams has also had to adapt, and as with any change, hiccups are to be expected. However, the bottom line is that the Council delivered on infrastructure development plans. Mayor Wagner concluded his remarks by stating that Mr. Williams is an integral part of the team, and the Council will be able to get the best out of him. MOTION PASSED.

12.7 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve an employment contract for a period of one (1) year between the Council and Mr. Neil Hall, to carry out the duties of E-Transit Network Startup Coordinator. Seconded by Councillor Miller.

12.8 Mayor Wagner explained the Council's ambition to scale up its E-mobility efforts, which is being viewed as a future revenue earner for the city. He advised that persons who are at the Council in the next 10-15 years will be the ones to see the returns on this investment. Mayor Wagner further added that the management structure of the initiative utilizing the special-purpose vehicles is being structured by the Council's attorney.

12.9 Mayor Wagner then advised that the city would retain 51% ownership of the current model, and once the data is compiled, a public/private partnership arrangement could be made which would allow current bus owners to partner with the Council. The bus owners' routes would be considered their capital; this is an integral part of the sustainable financial model of the Council.

12.10 Councillor Miller asked if there are any plans in place for Mr. Hall, following his engagement with UNDP.

12.11 Mayor Wagner advised that necessary measures are in place to allow for continuity once the project ends, once that happens the Council would be able to discuss a more long-term arrangement. MOTION PASSED.

12.12 In introducing the next motion Mayor Wagner explained that the passing of the previous City Administrator, Ms. Stephanie Lindo, left the Council with a void that needed to be filled. Mayor Wagner further advised that Councillors cannot serve in the executive arm of the Council while still being integral to its administration. The only elected member who is also a full-time employee of the Council is the Mayor, who has the responsibility of ensuring that the proper personnel are in place to ensure the optimum running of the Council.

12.13 Mayor Wagner then advised that three individuals applied and were interviewed for the post of City Administrator. The interviewing panel consisted of senior administrative personnel from within the Council, including the Director of Administration, the Sr. Finance Manager, and the HR Manager. The Mayor added that the Council has never been a one-man show, and assured the Councillors that he has the ability to rebuild the team; it's what he does well.

12.14 Mayor Wagner further assured the Councillors that in appointing a new City Administrator, he acted in full respect of the Belize City Council Act. Furthermore, he acted on the recommendation of the interviewing panel and as such, is seeking ratification from the Council members.

12.15 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve an employment contract between the Council and Mr. Albert Vaughan, for a period of three years, to carry out the duties of City Administrator. Seconded by Councillor Miller.

12.16 Deputy Mayor Pollard shared his appreciation for the background information that Mayor Wagner provided on the matter and advised that he would be able to work with anyone to get the work done. Deputy Mayor Pollard then advised that his concern in the matter stemmed from how the process was conducted. He was made aware that a new City Administrator had been selected via a press release without having been consulted or involved in the decision-making process. He reiterated that this has always been a matter of concern.

12.17 Deputy Mayor Pollard then explained that each Councillor has a different way of thinking and a different perspective, however, because they may disagree on a matter does not mean that they are fighting or quarrelling. Members of the Council should be able to disagree and carry on with the business of the Council.

12.18 Deputy Mayor Pollard advised that as a group, they have to live with the decisions that are made in Council meetings and he takes this responsibility very seriously. He explained that his issue has always been with the process, and expressed the need to find better ways to communicate; they have a responsibility to the people of the city and the Belize City Council.

12.19 Councillor Castellanos stated that he is a three-term Councillor and that he has always represented the people, in some instances, he may be right and in others, he may be wrong, but he believes that the Councillors should have been included in the process so that they could be informed.

12.20 Councillor Castellanos then explained he was requesting that Councillors be a part of the interviewing committee. He acknowledged that the matter is now before the Council for approval based on the advice of the committee, however, when concerns are voiced, it is not to be taken as a nuisance.

12.21 Councillor Castellanos added that the Council has always respected the majority, and in this case, the majority was asking to be included. The majority was requesting an audience with the Mayor and would have supported whatever recommendation came to

the Council, they just wanted to be included.

12.22 Councillor Thompson added that even if the decision was made at the administrative level, as a member of the executive body, he would have liked to be informed.

12.23 Councillor Miller stated that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, if the principle is that everything should be done the right way, then the same principle should have been applied in this instance as there were members of the Council who were not even engaged on the matter, which he found to be disrespectful. They too were not being inclusive.

12.24 Deputy Mayor Pollard raised a point of order regarding the statement made by Councillor Miller.

12.25 Councillor Miller continued by explaining that if the Councillors who requested to be included in the interview process are saying that things should be done the right way, then that should be the case all the time. One cannot be selective about what is done the proper way.

12.26 Deputy Mayor Pollard advised that he did not write the letter requesting to be included, nor did he call the other Councillors to ask for support. He observed that a space was provided on the letter for each of the Councillor's signatures, and he simply signed in the space designated.

12.27 Councillor Miller then clarified that he was not insinuating that Deputy Pollard wrote the letter, but was simply stating that not all members of the Council were engaged in its signing. If Councillors are stating that things be done the right way, then they must ensure that everyone is engaged.

12.28 Councillor Hamilton advised that the letter was written to stand on process and procedure. She was not aware that interviews had been scheduled or notified of who the candidates were until the news was out.

12.29 Councillor Hamilton continued by stating that The City Administrator is the Chief Executive Officer, and as the executive body, they should have nominated the Councillor who would have been involved in the interviewing committee. She added that she is not aware of how the information was shared with the media, but after consulting with peers and mentors, she has no issue with Mr. Vaughan. It is not a matter of the person appointed but about the principle of procedure that was taken.

12.30 Councillor Kwan advised that he was called to sit on the interview committee, and can vouch that it was a fair process. He offered support for Mr. Vaughan's appointment because he was once a councillor and knows about their experiences. The committee debated the merits of all applicants and the interviews were conducted fairly. Councillor Kwan expressed his belief in Mr. Vaughan's ability to do a good job.

12.31 Councillor Nunez reminded those present that the people are the ones who elected them to ensure that the work of the Council is accomplished.

12.32 Councillor Cattourse stated that she was not included in any of the processes.

12.33 Councillor Thompson acknowledged that the administrative and executive processes are two separate components of the Council, and added that he believed that the Councillors could have debated among themselves to appoint a representative on the interview panel.

12.34 Mayor Wagner stated that the Mayoral seat is the highest position in the Council, responsible for day-to-day operations. He also mentioned that he does not discuss matters with members before Council meetings to encourage independent thinking. The Mayor is the only elected full-time employee, yet Councillors want to decide who will be the CEO working alongside him.

12.35 Mayor Wagner noted that the individual in question has the full support of the highest office in the country, and advised that the media uses Councillors to get material for the news. Mayor Wagner then noted that the Council did not ask to be in this position of having to appoint a new City Administrator, and if the former City Administrator were here, the same Councillors would have been asking for her removal.

12.36 Mayor Wagner stated that those Councillors should have cherished her and honoured her competency in life. Mayor Wagner acknowledged that he and the former City Administrator disagreed numerous times, but ultimately always came together because they understood that it was not about one person, but about a team.

12.37 Mayor Wagner assured the Council that a solid team would be built around Mr. Vaughan, who would champion their causes. He urged Councillors to learn from their mistakes and reminded them of the great opportunities they have to serve their communities effectively. MOTION PASSED.

12.38 Councillor Cattouse moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve an employment contract for a period of one (1) year between the Council and Mr. Jeffrey Trapp, to carry out the duties of Sanitation Supervisor. Seconded by Councilor Kwan



MOTION PASSED.

### **13.0 New Business**

**No matters were tabled.**

### **14.0 Submissions from the Building Unit**

14.1 A request by Crime Stoppers Belize for the adoption of the roundabout on the Phillip Goldson Highway near Reimer's Food Mill for advertisement purposes. MOTION DEFERRED.

14.2 A request by Abner Murillo for a No Objection Letter to the Central Building Authority for the construction of a drain and use of the public reserve area for parking at Parcel No. 813 Baymen Avenue, Belize City. MOTION APPROVED. Approval was given for the construction of the drain, but not for use of the public reserve area.

14.3 A request by Mr. Alvan Gillet for a No Objection Letter to the Central Building Authority for the construction of a Commercial Structure to be utilized as a warehouse on Parcel 5084 on the Phillip Goldson Highway. MOTION APPROVED

14.4 A request by Ms. Kim Flowers on behalf of Seashore Residence Ltd. for a No Objection Letter to the Central Building Authority for the construction of a five (5) storey Commercial Structure to be utilized for rental purposes at Parcels 3761 and 3762 Sir Barry Bowen St., University Heights. MOTION APPROVED

14.5 A request by Chun Hua Chen for the construction of a structure to be utilized for commercial and residential use at Parcel No. 967 Mahogany St. MOTION APPROVED Consultation to be conducted with the area representative.

14.6 A request by George Ezewudo on behalf of Innovative Signs for a No Objection Letter to the Central Building Authority for the construction of a commercial structure with a total of seven (7) parking spaces at Parcel No. 1430, Caribbean Shores. MOTION APPROVED.

14.7 A request by Lilian Gaibu on behalf of MDL Investments Ltd. for a No Objection Letter to the Central Building Authority for the use of the 66 feet reserve/seabed, to construct two piers and a breakwater in front of Parcels No. 2373 & 2148. MOTION APPROVED

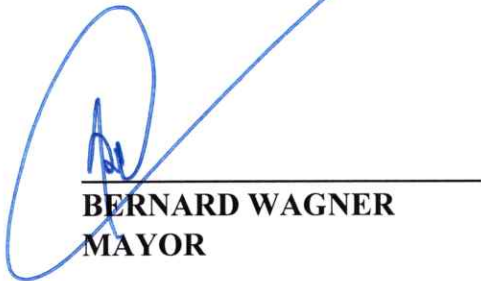
14.8 A request by Atlantic Bank Ltd. for a No Objection Letter for the construction of a crosswalk on Cleghorn St. MOTION NOT APPROVED. A recommendation was made for the proposed location to be adjusted.

**15.0 Other Business**

No matters were tabled

**16.0 Adjournment**

16.1 Councillor Kwan moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Seconded by Councillor Nunez.

  
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**BERNARD WAGNER**  
MAYOR

  
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**ALBERT VAUGHAN**  
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

