

Owatonna City Council Minutes

May 23, 2025

On Friday, May 23, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., Council President Raney called a Special Session of the Owatonna City Council to order in the Chambers of the Charles S. Crandall Center. Present were Council Members Boeke, McCann, Svenby, Voss, Burbank and Raney; Human Resource Director Thamert; Human Resources Specialist Jarrett; City Administrator Busse, and Administrative Coordinator Clawson. Council Member Dotson and Mayor Jessop were unable to attend.

Following the roll call, Council Member Svenby made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Council Member Boeke seconded the motion, all members present voted aye in approval.

Review Search Process - City Administrator

HR Director Thamert commented following City Administrator Busse's announcement of her plans to retire August 7, 2025, a Search Process for the next City Administrator was approved by City Council during their meeting on April 15th. An Ad-Hoc Search Group active during this hiring process included Council President Raney and Council Vice President Voss, Human Resource Director Thamert and Human Resource Specialists Boss and Jarrett.

The Ad-Hoc Search Group identified five traits they were looking for in the candidates:

- Relationship Builder
- Growth Mindset
- Trusted Leader
- Commitment to Service
- Inspiring Presence

Twenty-three applications from six different states were received from applicants with varied experience. Three candidates were chosen as finalists selected on their education, experience and alignment with the City's core values of Better Together, Community Stewardship and Pride in Our Work. The finalists were:

- Jenna Tuma, Assistant City Administrator, Owatonna, MN
- Craig Clark, City Administrator, Austin, MN.
- Cathleen Reynolds, former interim City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer, Crosby, MN.

On Tuesday, May 20th, the finalists spent the day in Owatonna to tour the community, meet with staff groups, final interviews with the full City Council and participate in a Meet & Greet open house.

Authorize Conditional Job Offer

Human Resource Director Thamert commented that during the interview process, the top-ranking candidate was Jenna Tuma and requested Council facilitate the next step in the Search Process.

Council President requested a motion to authorize HR Director Thamert to facilitate a conditional offer to Jenna Tuma for the City Administrator position. Any negotiation of

terms/conditions of compensation package between Council and Ms. Tuma will be memorialized in an employment agreement drafted by the city's labor attorney and then presented to Council for approval. Members of the Ad-Hoc Group, City Council President and Vice-President will continue to be the primary point of contact between the HR Director and the Council.

Council Vice-President Voss made this motion, Council Member Boeke seconded the motion; and all members present voted aye in approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments heard.

COUNCIL & CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

Council Member Voss thanked HR Director Thamert for her assistance and expertise during this search process.

Council Member Boeke thanked the applicants, adding he thought all three finalists were excellent candidates, and the Council appreciated meeting them.

Council Member McCann commented that he would echo Council Members Voss and Boeke's comments. He thanked Council President Raney and Council Vice-President for also assisting in this search process and then thanked City Administrator Busse for her years of service and that there will be some big shoes to fill.

City Administrator Busse congratulated the Council on completing the process. She has full confidence that Ms. Tuma possesses strategic vision, operational experience and is emersed in the city's values; these qualities will be important to guide the city into the future and as she transitions into retirement.

Council President Raney commented that this decision was made based on the results of candidates being interviewed by a cross-section of City staff representing many departments, the directors and with input from all seven City Council Members and Mayor Jessop. Administrator Busse has mentored Jenna to prepare her to transition into a City Administrator role. We believe Ms. Tuma is ready for this step and pleased that it will be with Owatonna and confident that this selection will ensure a smooth transition. Once a start date, terms and conditions of employment are finalized, they will be presented to the Council for approval at a regular scheduled meeting in the coming weeks. We are committed to maintaining our purpose of creating a better tomorrow and our core values.

Adjourn

At 9:12, Council Member McCann made a motion for adjournment, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, and the meeting closed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator