



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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Monday, March 20, 2023
3:30 P.M.

RE: Noticed Meeting CMs Carlucci, Boylan RE Council Leadership

Location: Henry Cook Room, City Hall

Attendees:

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| CM Carlucci | Sonia Johnson | Carla Lopera |
| CM Boylan | Jackie Lee | Mary Staffopoulos |
| Sheri Webber | Brooks Dame | John J. Nooney |

Meeting Convened: 3:35 PM

CM CARLUCCI

Okay, well, let the record reflect that my microphone is working but my light is not, [laughter] and this is the first meeting in this committee room since it's been named the Henry Cook Room. And so, I think that's a pretty neat deal. For his legacy and his family.

It's about 3:35, so I called this meeting because I have an interest in knowing who all the candidates [for Council leadership roles] are going to be and invited all my colleagues to come if they wanted. I did want to start off by saying, I think we need to kind of outline how these [meetings] are supposed to work, and 2020-319 was introduced and sponsored by Councilmember Morgan and myself.

[reads from Rule 1.103] Annual declaration of leadership interest, method of election of officers, annual declaration of leadership interest, candidates for City Council offices to be filled by election, pursuant to Council Rule 1.102 and 1.103 shall express their interest for Council consideration for President or Vice President for such election by filing his or her intent to be considered and any supporting material, no more than two pages with the Office of Council Secretary/Director no earlier than March 1, and no later than March 30. Council may consider these Council members for future leadership positions and hold noticed meetings to discuss qualifications."

And so, I was not comfortable with the March 1 meeting that was held. But I thought since they did hold the meeting, I think there was one of the Council members running for Vice President



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Who sent out something on March 2nd, but his meeting was on March 1st at 1:30. And I tried to find where there are any minutes where Council Member White expressed what his qualifications, philosophy, plans, or platform was... do we have any of that? Any minutes?

WEBBER

[off mic] No, sir, only the minutes provided by CM White's ECA.

CM CARLUCCI

Yeah. I see there were other Council members who did most of the speaking, at that meeting held on March 1, which was the first day. I did not know then Councilmember White was running so anyway. No offense to Councilmember White. He is a friend of mine, and I'm sure, if he is elected to it, he would do a fine job.

But I'm gonna go down "memory lane" just a little bit for a second because I'm just going to share what I think Council elections should be. And the reason that we changed the rules with this bill was so that we would define the month of March for candidates to reach out to other Council members. And because it would make a more competitive process.

And then when I found out leadership meetings were already being held, and the host, apparently, was the Council President, and that one candidate for Vice President already has eight signatures? That kind of puts other candidates behind the eight ball. And I think what's supposed to happen is those "intents to run" should be given to Peggy who is our Council Secretary. And then she could distribute that to different Council members, and then different Council members can talk to the candidates in noticed meetings in order to find out: what are your plans? What's your platform? Why do you think you can do this job? What's your philosophy in terms of being vice president, and hopefully moving into the presidency? And in the minutes, they don't really do much explaining.

I supported Councilman Salem because he successfully made it through the vice presidency and did a good job with that. So, I signed on with him. I just don't believe that this process should be structured in such a way that everybody kind of get surprised, and I think Michael Boylan has really paid his dues for leadership in this regard.

And I want to thank you for meeting with me today. But I just felt those remarks needed to be made for the record. You know, I'm just for fairness. But the good news for you is, there are still some votes out there. And so, I would, you know, just like to turn it over to Councilmember Boylan.



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What would your philosophy be? What are your qualifications? Why do you think you can aspire to this vice presidency, and then move on up to the council presidency, and how would you address the other Council members? What would be your way of asserting yourself in leadership, but yet, working with so many different diverse members of our City Council?

CM BOYLAN

Well, first of all, thank you for putting this together and encouraging all to be part of this meeting to share those thoughts. I think it's really important to do that.

CM CARLUCCI

Before you do, I did want to mention, we did invite everybody, all the Council members were invited. Is that correct, Sheri?

WEBBER

[off mic] That is correct, sir.

CM CARLUCCI

Right. Okay.

CM BOYLAN

Thank you. I want to speak to your comment about the intent of the bill -319, and you hit the nail on the head. It was meant to be a compact and competitive process. It focused more on compact, and as you well know, the aspirations for leadership was communicated, historically, going back probably five to six months before [March], and then it kind of, I suspect, created some discord among Council operations and processes when you're having those conversations far out.

So, the idea of moving it to March and making it a window of 30 days, I think the compact piece was served that purpose. It doesn't speak to the competitive process, however, to your point. When you have two meetings, however appropriate in terms of the capabilities of both of those folks who put themselves forward as president and vice president might be, to your point, on the day that this process begins, and to garner as many commitments as they did upfront. I don't know if it's appropriate at some point in time if we kind of step away from the opportunity to make those kinds of commitments beforehand because it certainly speaks to an inability to make it a competitive process. So, but that's neither here nor there.

CM CARLUCCI



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Well, no, it is here and there, because that was the point of the legislation, but I understand you're point, so go ahead.

CM BOYLAN

Yes. So, what I attempted to do, as best I could, is speak or act in line with the bill. As you might recall, last year I submitted a letter of intent to my colleagues and the Director about the prospect of my candidacy as vice president, and last year that was quickly set aside because of the commitments that were made to Mr. Salem at the time.

So, I did the same again this year—waited a couple of days, didn't do it right away, give it some thought after understanding what had happened on March 1. And I decided I still wanted to put my name in the hat. Because I thought, to your point, and I appreciate it, and I do believe I've earned the right to serve in a leadership role with this Council. And it's based upon a variety of things, as I noted in my notes to you and others about the experience I've demonstrated in my leadership, as it relates to the future of JTA workshops, as well as on the Critical Quality of Life Issues Special Committee, and learned some lessons. I co-chaired the Safer Together [Committee] with CM Morgan, though that one didn't play out as well as we had hoped.

But I think in the context of the other two, I did demonstrate my willingness to be collegial in my leadership process and actively engaged my colleagues in the work that we did. So, when I say that I led both of those efforts, what I truly did was facilitate both of those efforts. And I think that is the role of Council leadership: to serve as a servant leader in the process and to provide our colleagues with the opportunity to move forward on initiatives that are important to them, and to do it all in a fashion that engages others in the work.

It's difficult within the Sunshine limitations and we need to do things the way we do which makes it cumbersome sometimes. But nonetheless, in both instances, I was able to demonstrate we can effectively impact policy and practice across the board. Dealing with the first one, particularly. Then the second one focused on identifying critical quality issues and coming up with a comprehensive, logical process to answer three questions: (1) what's the scope of the issue, (2) what's being done presently in the private/public/nonprofit sector, and then finally, (3) what are some best practices we could adopt going forward? And we were successfully able to move a lot of those items, like recommendations that came out of the latter [Critical Quality of Life Issues Committee], to be an integral part of our Strategic Plan. So, I think I've been able to demonstrate that in a practical sense.

Now, I do appreciate the fact that At-Large positions, of late, except for Councilman Scott Wilson [Council President Wilson], most of our leadership has come from the At-Large positions.



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Because I rightfully believe the district Council member's first priority is serving the needs of their constituents. Sonia Johnson, my associate, and I have done, I think, a pretty remarkable job staying on top of that, largely because we have the capacity and time to do so. I tried to address the issue that I have the time, and I think the ability and leadership skills, to serve in this capacity, and that's why I push it forward. As to priorities... First, I still want to continue to champion those critical quality of life issues. I think access to health care, homelessness issues, affordable housing [is key]. If you saw the article in the paper today, Jacksonville is still undermanned in terms of housing, and the demand is great. We need to continue to address those policy issues.

But I also think that we need to be more aggressive and proactive in serving the needs of the individual districts whenever we can. To support the Public Works Department and others, so that rank-and-file citizens out there feel like their needs are being met as well as what we are doing in downtown and business development in our communities, which are all long-term with great return. But at the same time, if you're John Q. Citizen out there paying taxes and just can't understand why they can't get their sidewalks fixed, or drains improved, etc.? And I recognize we, as a Council, have done a lot to focus on providing the funding for those services to increase the opportunities for those things to happen, but the challenge of manpower and materials is impacting us, even to this day, in that regard.

So those are the kinds of areas I think I would find myself interested in focusing on, and again, trying to find others who could rally around those issues and work with me, while at the same time providing an opportunity and a forum for my colleagues to serve those interests that are important to them.

CM CARLUCCI

What would you use your year as vice president to do? Put together a business plan, so to speak, on what you would want to bring? As you're supporting the Council President in all, naturally. But the year as vice president is a chance to observe the Council president and a chance to learn from the Council president how to handle delicate situations. I know that's what you will do, so would you be putting together a business plan so when your opportunity comes as Council president, you could take the best advantage? Because, you know what? You may only get to be Council president one time in your life. That's like going to a restaurant, getting a full plate of eggplant parmesan and a Caesar salad, and you're either gonna eat it all or leave half of it on the plate. What I mean is, it truly is a once in a lifetime chance to leave an imprint on your city and your fellow community members, and so forth. So, would you use that Vice President year to put that business plan together, to direct the Council's attention to the priorities of the time?

CM BOYLAN



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Absolutely. As a matter of fact, again, based upon my experience, if you take a look at the critical quality of life issues. I reached out to Council President Freeman and asked about the prospect of putting together that committee and when we did the Safer Together workshops. I asked Council President, at the time, about the opportunity to head that up when Scott Wilson was President of the Council. I was the one who raised my hand to put together the scope of work for the Council attempting to do a series of workshops on the various JEA scenarios that were being presented to us. I would definitely not get ahead of my skis with respect to overstepping my bounds with a president and his or her priorities. But I would be and have demonstrated my ability to understand and recognize what I want to see get accomplished during my term as President and have that groundwork laid.

CM CARLUCCI

Well, if you're elected, you've got a whole 365 days counting that day when you become a Council President. That year flies by. So, you know, use that year as vice president to be putting that business plan together, where you can really, you know, hit the ground running.

CM BOYLAN

Greatly appreciated. And you know this better than I, certainly, at the end of the day, while we take great pride in serving our constituents, at the end of the day, the legacy pieces are what you and I will be remembered for and the leadership that we exhibited in some of those. In the Ethics Commission as an example for you and others, I'm sure. To say I was part of the process, maybe didn't lead it, but I was part of the process that made these things happen, that will impact the city for years and possibly decades to come. So, I recognize the opportunity it creates for me and I recognize that I will have to put together that kind of foundation.

CM CARLUCCI

Okay, that sounds good. Well, I have not met with Councilmember White. Have we had any communication from Councilmember White as to an invitation to have a one-on-one meeting or any type of meeting noticed?

WEBBER

[off mic] No, sir, and you made it plain in your one-way communication about Council leadership that you were willing to meet with anyone interested in the vice presidency.

CM CARLUCCI

Yeah, I sent that out on purpose because I was hoping that Council members would reach out to me. Councilmember Boylan did so I set up the meeting and you have earned my support, sir.



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CM BOYLAN
Appreciate it.

CM CARLUCCI
If you have a pledge handy, I'll be happy to be your first signer. Unconditionally, and not asking you for anything except, where's your damn pledge sheet? [laughter] Excused me, I didn't mean to say it quite like that. Just slipped out, and I know Nooney's back there taping the whole thing. [laughter]

CM BOYLAN
I was purposeful in not creating one. I think to foster a competitive process we should provide, you and others, the opportunity to reflect, and have the opportunity to have the conversation, if Mr. White chooses to have it with you. I just think the whole idea of those—and I will call them what they are—premature commitments. That process, I think, does not lend itself to the competitive process that we are seeking to see happen here.

CM CARLUCCI
Well, what's today, the 20th? I think it's not gonna be premature.

CM BOYLAN
No, yours isn't. I'm talking about the other [commitments] being premature.

CM CARLUCCI
Yeah, and I appreciate the fact that you did not prepare that with any presumptions, but I think I have to sign it in the meeting, if I'm not mistaken, or do I?

CM BOYLAN
I'm not sure that you do.

CM CARLUCCI
Mary? Let's let Mary answer that one. So, if a pledge winds up on my desk, you know, one day or one afternoon, then I can sign that and then deliver that back to his Council aide? And I assume [to CM Boylan] that you've given notice and everything to the Council Secretary? She's aware of it?

CM BOYLAN
She is aware of it. I would probably give it to the Council Secretary.

STAFFOPOULOS



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[off mic]

CM BOYLAN

As a matter of practice, I just mean, in principle, and I'm not talking about in this situation, but if we can get away from the practice of having and signing commitment letters, and just say, *"Okay, you've garnered my support and I will consider voting for you when we take this up as a matter of Council."* And if we can get to that point in time, so that we all have [opportunity]. Particularly in an election year when you've got eight or nine Council members who may be brand new to Council and will be brand new to this process. So, the idea of making this a competitive processes would certainly work better and give greater opportunity for that to be successful if we got rid of the commitment sheets in advance of that, and that's why I haven't done that. I didn't want to be presumptuous, certainly.

CM CARLUCCI

No, I can understand where you're coming from. I guess I'm just a creature of habit regarding commitment sheets, and I think it's a good way for public records to state where a Council member lies.

I can remember once upon a time, and I won't say who it was, but this Council member was fortunate enough to always be the last. Because we used to do the roll call and the Council members would say who they were gonna support. And it would get down to the last Council member in the alphabet, and by then it was a done deal. Yeah, and if it was nine to nine, he would never sign a commitment sheet and he'd go with the winner.

CM BOYLAN

As we take a look at this process, I might even give some thought to the idea that... because I can tell you... *"Gosh, Michael, had I known you were going to run."* I think there needs to be a period of time, whether we say the first 10 days of the month or not, that in letters you have to declare your intention. And that commitment letters can't be accepted until after the 10th day, so that everyone has a clear opportunity to communicate their interest of serving in a position. So, you don't have that excuse that *"Well, I didn't know you were interested"* when people try to play by the rules. But anyway, that's something we can take a look at.

CM CARLUCCI

Well, anyway, I would like a commitment letter from you to sign please.

CM BOYLAN

You got it.



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CM CARLUCCI

I think that's the best way for me to be on the record. I have given ample opportunity, I think, to be called for a meeting, and I appreciate the spirit by which you've gone about this because the biggest assets that one has as a Council member is being fair and having integrity. If you lose those two, you've lost it all. Not only with your colleagues, but you've lost it with the public. That's our biggest asset.

I've made my feelings known about the whole thing. You've told me everything that I needed to hear—you have led, you have collaborated, you have been a gentleman, and you have been everything that I believe we need in a Council President, and I really want to emphasize that you have led on critical issues, not just the Critical Quality of Life [Committee], but the JEA. You led on some very tough issues and the way you collaborated and the way you've worked with others is exemplary, in my book. We haven't always agreed, but you can't be right all the time. [laughter]

But I just think that's what you've done, and I think you've earned your stripes. Councilmember White is a good friend, and if he wins, he'll certainly have every bit of support from me. This is not a popularity game, but I think it's selection based on the merits and giving people an opportunity to have these kinds of meetings, which you have done. So, you know, bring a pledge by, and I'll get it to you in a day or so. Just in case Councilmember White wants to contact my office and have a meeting with me. I would be more than pleased to meet with him. So, I may hold off for a couple of days just to see.

CM BOYLAN
Absolutely.

CM CARLUCCI
But right now, I very much would enjoy supporting you, and it ain't over till it's over.

CM BOYLAN
Thank you.

CM CARLUCCI
All right. Mr. Nooney, are you wanting to say something, sir? Oh, well, if you got a public comment card, or not, just come on up to the podium.

NOONEY
Well, thank you. My name is John Nooney, name and address is on the record. And you know, yeah, let me just, you know, read from my public comment card. But you know, in my opinion like this is evidence for the attorney general or the state attorney and restoring 2017-160. It's public participation. And



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according to Carla Miller, it was OGC that removed it. And according to Karla, the Ag or a state attorney can restore it. So, with Council leadership, it's first time I've heard of councilman, you know, white running for vice president and you know, and I've attended, you know, these leadership meetings in the past. And with Councilman White, like, I don't have the bill right off the top of my head but had you with a tourist Development Council. And you know, you're sitting in the acting chair and recognize public participation before the vote was taken. And that's just a microcosm of an example. But that doesn't. So all I'm just saying is, you know, whoever is leading this council will you ask to restore public participation to the Jacksonville City Council legislative committee process? And I'm working, it is it's restoring the public trust. And it just gives Joe Q Public you know before you vote on something, at least that opportunity for reconsideration of something that you may not have heard about on any particular on a bill or anything else that you know, you're making these unbelievable, you know, fiduciary decisions that impact all of us. So, you know, I wish you all the best, you know, it's shoot, you know, I was ecstatic, just to see your public comment card there. So, thank you guys.

CM CARLUCCI

I'm always for public comment, always have been, unless it's not in accordance with Council rules. As we have to go by Council rules. John, I'm as familiar with you as anybody else because you started coming up here on my watch, 20 years ago.

NOONEY

That's right. Woody Cooper.

CM CARLUCCI

Oh, golly. Yeah.

NOONEY

Yeah. But anyway, it's because I'm not from Jacksonville.

CM BOYLAN

Well, I don't know if you noticed today, I didn't do it today because your public comment card was not on the bill we were taking action on, but every other Rules Committee meeting, I take up public participation before we take up any of the bills or the appointments. And I changed the rules on that one. I'm the only committee that allows public comment before we take up the bills.

NOONEY

But again, that's, well. There's public participation in public comment, they're different. They're different. And then public hearings. That's Florida Statute. But anyway, you know, again, council



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leadership you guys have the opportunity. All I only know is you don't work with the Attorney General. She'll be back, you know, I mean, and again, it's not it's just to restore it. That's all.

CM CARLUCCI

Well, that might be something, that I'll take upon myself, to ask our General Counsel to see about restoring public comment, and I think what you're saying is you'd like public comment before every vote, is that what you're saying?

NOONEY

It's not public comment, it's public participation.

CM CARLUCCI

Ok, but let me ask again. Are you asking for public participation to speak before every Council bill we take up? I just wanna know what you're talking about.

NOONEY

If a constituent comes into a meeting, and they have, you know, I'm not filling out a card for every single bill. But you know, in we have those cards, we had those cards, and but if someone fills out a card on a specific bill, then before you vote on it, you just recognize that person because right now, you know, people are being like I said, I don't want to get into all the weeds. But that is public participation. It's not to speak on every single bill.

CM CARLUCCI

Well, you know, John, you remember because you've been doing this for a long time and you're probably as familiar with the Council as anybody that I know that's not on the Council, but the public participation, which is basically the public comment section, used to be at the end of the meetings, and we moved it up under the leadership of Tommy Hazouri to the beginning, and then it was taken back a little bit, which probably wasn't a big problem, but anyway, we will we will do what we can to understand what else we can do to make public participation more accessible to the people. And that's always been a hallmark of anything I've ever done. I think that's true of CM Boylan as well. Okay, all right. Thank you. Thank you all for coming. Appreciate it.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:08 PM

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

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cc: Council Members/Staff
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