

OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Special Called Meeting
May 16, 2023 6:00 PM
Owensboro City Hall
101 E. 4th Street
Owensboro, Kentucky

1. Call to Order - Mayor Tom Watson

2. Roll Call - City Clerk Beth Davis

Present:

Mayor Tom Watson

Mayor Pro Tem Mark Castlen

Commissioner Bob Glenn

Commissioner Pam Smith-Wright

3. Explanation of Vacancy Procedure Process – City Manager Pagan explained that the meeting was called to continue the process of filling the vacant Commissioner seat on the Board of Commissioners. State law provides thirty (30) days for the remaining members to fill the vacancy. The new Commissioner selected in the process will serve through the rest of 2023. A special election will be held in conjunction with the general election in November in which city voters will elect a candidate to serve for 2024, which is the second year of the vacant two (2) year term. The filing deadline for the special election has previously been reported as June 6.

Other than providing a thirty (30) day window, state law is silent about the process for filling a vacancy. By providing for an open application period and conducting public interviews of all applicants, the designed process is open, fair, and as objective as possible. The City received thirty (30) applications, three (3) of them have subsequently withdrawn, still far more than expected. It's great to see so many residents interested in serving the City.

The City received so many applications the interviews had to be split over two (2) meetings. Eighteen (18) interviews were conducted last night and nine (9) interviews will occur tonight. Both meetings, today and yesterday, are open to the public and shared live on the City's Facebook page and YouTube channel.

The interviews will consist of four (4) questions: you'll be asked to provide an introductory statement, to discuss your community involvement, what you think the City's priorities should be, and if you plan to run in the special election for the second year of the term.

The order of interviews, like last night, was assigned randomly in an excel spreadsheet. Up to two (2) minutes will be allotted for your response to each question, and there will be a clock on the screens that resets with each question, allowing everyone to track the time.

Like yesterday, a closed session will be held to follow the interviews so the Board of Commissioners can discuss applicants while fresh in their minds. Following the closed session, and after the candidate has been identified, the Board of Commissioners will reconvene in open session to vote to select a Commissioner to fill the vacancy.

If the person selected is in attendance, they can be sworn in tonight. If the person is not in attendance, a time can be scheduled to administer the Oath of Office on Wednesday or as soon as possible.

4. The applicants listed below were interviewed to fill the vacancy on the Board of Commissioners. The following questions were asked of each applicant with up to two (2) minutes to answer:

1. Please take 2 minutes to introduce yourself to members of the public and Board of Commissioners.
2. Please describe your involvement and/or experience in working with local community issues and organizations.
3. Based on your knowledge of Owensboro's city government, what do you see as top priorities for the city and for you as a member of the Board of Commissioners?
4. If selected to fill the vacancy, will you commit to running in the special-election to fill the remainder of the term?

Caleb Farkas
Sharon NeSmith
Jim Tony Fulkerson
Billy Pogue, Jr.
Titus Willis
Robert Morris
Sharon Castle
Jerry Ray Davis
Gordon Wilcher

5. Following the interviews, the Board of Commissioners went into closed session under KRS 61.810(1) (f) to hold discussions which might lead to the appointment of a member upon motion of Mayor Pro Tem Castlen and a second from Commissioner Smith-Wright; motion carried unanimously.

6. The Board of Commissioners returned to open session by motion of Mayor Watson and a second by Commissioner Glenn; motion carried unanimously.

7. Motion was made by Mayor Watson to nominate Sharon NeSmith to fill the vacancy on the Owensboro Board of Commissioners through December 31, 2023. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Glenn; following a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

8. Mayor Watson administered the Oath of Office to Sharon NeSmith.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m. by motion of Mayor Watson and a second by Mayor Pro Tem Castlen; motion carried unanimously.

Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Davis, City Clerk