

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – NOVI CIVIC CENTER – 45175 TEN MILE ROAD**

Mayor Gatt called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mayor Gatt, Mayor Pro Tem Staudt, Council Members Breen, Casey (absent, excused), Markham, Mutch

ALSO PRESENT: Pete Auger, City Manager
Victor Cardenas, Assistant City Manager
Thomas Schultz, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

CM 18-10-172 Moved by Markham, seconded by Mutch; MOTION CARRIED: 5-0

**Roll call vote on CM 18-10-172 Yeas: Staudt, Breen, Markham, Mutch, Gatt
Nays: None
Absent: Casey**

PUBLIC HEARING: None

PRESENTATIONS: None

MANAGER/STAFF REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENT: None

Mayor Gatt explained that the purposed for this special meeting was to interview candidates to serve on Novi City Council until the next City election which is in November 2019. The seat is vacant because of our friend and colleague, Wayne Wrobel's untimely and very sad death. He said that tonight was not a time for speeches and campaign rhetoric by candidates, or by the councilmembers. He said everyone sitting up there has campaigned for their spot at the table and they have earned the right to be here by the vote of the people. He stated that there are five councilmembers there that evening due to Member Casey being in Japan representing the City. He said she will watch the tape from tonight's meeting and she will participate in the selection process at our next scheduled meeting. He said that she emailed him her questions and he will be asking one of them on her behalf when it is her turn. The five councilmembers present that evening, along with Member Casey tonight along with Member Casey are taking the place of the thousands of registered Novi voters and hopefully be able to select one candidate that can serve on Council for the next year. He said that four votes will be required for a candidate to be selected. If none of the applicants received four votes at our next meeting then a Special Election will be called per our City Charter. He reiterated that there would be no campaigned or speeches that evening. He said that each candidate would be called to the podium and will be given two minutes to introduce themselves and succinctly tell us why they want to serve on City Council until the next City election in

November of 2019. If your introduction continues for more than two minutes he said he will politely interrupt them and call on City Council to begin asking their one allotted question. He reminded them that they have their applications and have studied their qualifications. He explained that they did not have to go over them again. Each councilmember will have the opportunity to ask one question. Please answer the question as best you can. No debate and no decisions will be made tonight regarding this process. At our regular scheduled Tuesday, November 13th meeting we will publically debate and hopefully we will choose one of those interviewing to sit up here for the next year as we do the people's business.

INTERVIEWS FOR CITY COUNCIL:

1. Ron Berry

Mr. Berry said it was a pleasure to be there this evening. He has been a citizen of Novi for over 31 years and has been married 38 years with 2 adult children. He retired in 2014 after 41 years from MTU America, which is a Novi company. Always had interest in city government but business and raising family, didn't allow him to devote time to public service. As a retiree and empty nester he has time to fulfill this dream. His background is in business, a key element to managing a City. Always listen to voice of citizens, use that input to make smart decisions that are in the best interest of the City of Novi and its citizens. If he is selected, he promises to keep open mind and serve with honesty and integrity while continuing to build on our success as premiere city for residential and business development in the United States. He looked forward to serving alongside you and to address the challenges of the future. Thank you for your time and consideration of his application for this position.

Member Markham thanked him for his interest. She said she was amazed at how many people and how strong the backgrounds are. She asked what is unique to your professional experience that you think will help you on City Council. Mr. Berry stated that most of his career was manager of people and worked with his team to achieve ultimate goals.

Member Mutch thanked him for stepping forward. He asked if he could name some of what you see as top priorities for the City of Novi government over the next five years. Mr. Berry thought careful planned development. We have a lot of opportunities. Businesses we would like to have and others we would not. He said we should be planning correctly, and the location of different types of businesses to try to maintain residential areas and business corridors where they need to be to optimize city.

Mayor Pro Tem said he was going to ask the same question of everybody. He wondered how he felt about the use of economic incentives for retention and attraction of new commercial businesses to Novi. Mr. Berry thought there was absolutely nothing wrong with economic aid to bring the proper businesses in to the city. He felt that it would have to be a long term benefit to the city. It is not just a matter of bringing them in, but bringing the right businesses in.

Mayor Gatt said Member Casey wanted to ask what do you think Council should do or focus on that it's not already? Mr. Berry said that was a difficult question because there are a lot of things out there and it is a matter of priorities. He follows the City Council meetings regularly, and certainly agrees with the priorities we have. He thought that the items we are working on are the correct items. As far as other opportunities, he doesn't have specific comments. He said he was in favor of the projects that the City is working on at this time.

Member Breen said that he mentioned in his application that he wanted to help Novi strategically expand, she asked if he could elaborate on that statement. Mr. Berry said we have a lot of undeveloped resources in Novi. That's a strategic opportunity to bring the right kinds of businesses in. He felt that going along with economic aid, that's an opportunity for us to pursue the right kinds of businesses. We should continue to do that. The Grand River Corridor seems to be filling in nicely, but there is still a lot of available land that could be developed along that corridor. He thought if we had the right kind of businesses that could flourish and could be a real asset.

Mayor Gatt stated he will be asking the same question to all. He asked if he was chosen, do you plan to run for election in November of 2019. Mr. Berry said he has given it deep thought and he would like to consider that as a possibility. He would like to see how he fits in and how City Council dovetails in with him. If it's a fit, he would pursue the opportunity to run for re-election.

2. Colleen Crossey

She said she has lived in Novi for ten years. She has received her Master's Degree from the University of Michigan in Labor and Industrial Relations. In her previous neighborhood she was the president of the Homeowner's Association. During her term she had to hire a lawyer in order to defend her neighborhood from a lawsuit. She was proud to say that they won and she continues to be a fearless advocate for our neighborhood. She worked at Monroe County Mental Health, Monroe Community College, Washtenaw County Jail and a women's shelter for victims of domestic violence. Money has always been tight when she has worked for a non-profit agency. She has become quite good at getting a lot done on a small budget. She looked forward to opportunity to put those skills to work as a Novi City Councilmember. She completed the Lakes Area Citizens Academy Course and Ambassador Course. You know a lot about her already, she is on the Beautification Commission. She is very much for keeping green spaces in Novi and balancing out the park areas with the residential areas. She has been a coach for Girls on the Run, Girl Scout leader, Rotary Clubs Feed the Need, taught 2nd grade religious education and a VFW member.

Member Mutch thanked her for her interest. He asked her to name her top priorities for Novi going forward. Ms. Crossey stated that one priority would be to help mentor small businesses because there are so many services at the city and county level that would be beneficial to their businesses. Another idea is infrastructure, in terms of roads and

maintaining the plumbing. She thought if she had a chance to introduce the people who already work in the fields that high school students are interested in going into, like mentoring, that would be really beneficial to the students.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said he had a good idea of what her answer would be to his question he was going to ask everyone else. He said he would ask a little different question. He asked her what she thought the City has done well in her eyes and how she would improve. Ms. Crossey felt that Council has done a lot of things well. She is glad to be part of Beautification Committee and other things that she has been a volunteer for. The compromise they have come to in terms of the south Walled Lake development has been very good. It has been very beneficial, awkward, but beneficial.

Mayor Gatt asked for Member Casey if there was anything specific that she would like to accomplish if appointed. Ms. Crossey some ideas she had that she spoke about earlier. She stated that from the number of people that were interested in this position, she thinks people want to be part of community and she would like to find a way to do that.

Member Breen thanked her for all of her years of service to the City. She said that she mentioned previously about fixing the city's infrastructure. What particular aspect of our infrastructure needs the most attention and how would you find resources to fix it. Ms. Crossey said that revenue sharing has been going down a lot through the years for all municipalities. She fully understands about working on small budget to get things down. She knows the city goes for a lot of grants, that's a wonderful way to enhance revenue. She thought of infrastructure as electric, water, and sewerage which need to be maintained. Jim Nash said Novi is looking good when it comes to water, but it's always important to keep an eye on roads and keep them maintained.

Member Markham appreciated that she participated in the Ambassador Academy that she clearly wants to serve community. What can we do as a community that we can better communicate sustainable practices to the community at large? Ms. Crossey said that it was her understanding that we have a Tree Fund. One thing that could be done with Tree Fund is plant native trees because when you plant native trees and plants you don't have to water them as much. They are used to Michigan weather, and they don't need to fertilize as much. She said they are more likely to grow because they are used to climate.

Gatt Gatt also asked her if she plans on running for this seat in November 2019. Ms. Crossey said she would think about it. If she gets along and is able to do productive things for the City, she may continue with that.

3. Katherine Dooley

Ms. Dooley said that most of you know me already. She has lived in Novi since 2009 and worked here longer since 2003. A lot of us have worked together. Currently she

works and lives here. She is the Communication Specialist at a National Food Group, a small business here. She said she also is on HOA Board for Country Place Condos and on the Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee. Most of all, she is proud to be member of Novi Rotary. She currently is on the Board and has been doing the programming. She said she was compelled to serve is because it's a driver of who she is. She has always been somebody that has been drawn to public service and how she is able to help others. The particular set of skills she does have as someone who has been in creative industry for over 20 years, she can visualize and troubleshoot issues. Most important is that she is collaborative in nature, an avid learner and listener. She said she tends to works well with others. Her son goes to school here and she loves the community. She has been drawn to this community even before she became a resident.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked the same question as the first applicant. He asked her how she felt about economic incentives and attraction of new business. Ms. Dooley thought that Novi itself as a city is already very attractive to businesses. The reason we know this is because of the amount of businesses that have already in fluxed into the city. She did believe economic incentives, especially for business that will create jobs, she is in favor of that.

Mayor Gatt asked for Member Casey what she thought City Council should do or focus on that it's not already. Ms. Dooley said she looked over the goals that Council put together in January. She was in favor of a lot of them. She thought she could be a huge asset to help bring those to fruition. To piggyback on current goals, like building the urban park by the water tower, and also the walkability of Novi. She said she would love to see development of a centralized "downtown". She said that she knows we have Main Street and a lot of the city activities are focused there. One of the things that she finds most attractive in other cities is developing that area that has people that are able to connect and walk from place to place. We do have a little bit of business, but Grand River is so busy that if she ever sees someone cross the street, she crosses her fingers that nothing happens to them because it's not built for that yet. That would be a huge asset.

Member Breen thanked her for her service to the community. She asked her to expand on what you said previously about how your experience would specifically help bring some of these things about. Ms. Dooley said as someone who has run around Novi physically she always hits obstacles and gaps, which are a danger to the residents. There shouldn't be any place in Novi that can't be walked or run to. Her assets are that she is a visual thinker, she can see end game in multiple paths. She said she always to think in win, win, scenarios and paths to success. That is truly how she thinks. She said she was able to see different paths and can picture in her head. To be able to articulate and work with the group such as your selves, it would be an honor. She felt that they could do a lot of good together.

Member Markham thanked her for everything she has done so far. She thought that she had an interesting background, and blend of skills. She wondered if she thought if there

is an unmet need in Novi that your skill set could help. Ms. Dooley said that one of the biggest things that we can do as a community that we can build off of, is that we are diverse and we really do appreciate that diversity. In that comes strength. She grew up downriver. When she grew up, she was the diversity, parents were first generation. We are in a special place in Novi because we can learn from each other and become a stronger city. She appreciates arts and learning, it's what she feels can typify us even more. She is proud to be here. She thinks she can enhance it and take it further.

Member Mutch thanked her for her current service and willingness to take on this next step. You touched on priorities, but would like to give opportunity to expand on what she thinks are priorities. Ms. Dooley said she was impressed by goals that were put forth in January. Since this is appointed position, the learning gap is quite large; she would have to learn quickly. Some things important to her would be establishing the circulator/trolley transit systems because we have a lot of shopping districts. You can't walk to each other them. That would be amazing accomplishment. Long term is looking at sustainability initiatives, she is in favor. We have to think about how that affects carbon footprint in the long term. As far as walkability and pathways, the investments in parks, and paying attention to green spaces and canopy. They are talking about in her HOA. She thought that it was something that we have to pay attention to as a city. Green spaces are an attractive thing.

Mayor Gatt asked her if she plans on running for this seat in November 2019. Ms. Dooley said that would be something she would have to think about. She has always been compelled to enter into a life of public service. If she is appointed, in order to do initiatives, she would run probably.

4. Justin Fischer

Mr. Fischer said it's with unfortunate circumstance that he is here today. He said he had the pleasure of serving with Member Wrobel. He gave his condolences to Debbie and all of his family and friends. While filling his shoes won't be easy, he believed his prior five years on Council make him a suitable candidate for the appointment. A deep understanding on how our Council operates will allow him to immediately jump into the deliberations in business before City Council. He believed his record of past votes show he always voted how he believed to be in the best interest of the City and its residents. Other details of his background can be found on his application.

Mayor Gatt asked for Member Casey if there was something specific he would like to accomplish. Mr. Fischer stated that he was happy to see the goals and those are priorities he would support. He said the financial background and sustainability of the City is important to him. He believed funding the pension plans and OPEB are top priorities. He also said that Infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks and water/sewer are a priority.

Member Breen thanked him for his prior service and stepping up. Given that he previously served on City Council, is there any unfinished business? Mr. Fischer said no,

there wasn't any unfinished business. He thought he wasn't someone trying to get a project across, but be a solid voice as it pertains to financial and all decisions before Council. He is pleasantly surprised how Council has continued while he was gone.

Member Markham welcomed Mr. Fischer back. He said it was always interesting to talk to someone who was somewhere else that gives you different set of eyes. She wondered what recommendations he might have managing traffic, gridlock, based on what you've seen elsewhere and what you saw when you came back. Mr. Fischer said Dubai was looking at Uber helicopters, but didn't think that would work here. He wouldn't say it was experience abroad, but in the automotive industry. They are looking to get into elements of mobility. Those are areas we need to look at collaborations. On the same front, will the city have to own its senior transportation fleet in the future or can we rent and revenue share with other places. As far as what surprised him, his neighbors to west have developed extensively. That will be priority and concern as it impacts Beck Road and Ten Mile.

Member Mutch thanked him for being willing to serve. You've touched on a couple priorities. He asked if he could talk some more about other items of priorities. Mr. Fischer said he remembered some discussion about rehabilitation of Ten Mile and Meadowbrook. He recalled on a Mayors exchange they talked about grant programs. Those are some areas he would support finding out what the City can do to help with improvements. That would be another priority.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said they used to spar about Fund Balance. Since you've left, we've taken it to a significant Fund Balance. What is your position on maintaining a high Fund Balance? Mr. Fischer said he aims for a reasonable Fund Balance. He said back then they were in much different times. They were talking about laying employees off; it was a tough time to be on Council. Despite all that, Council got together and did what they needed to. His position on Fund Balance back then was the budget and what actually came in. But they came in where he thought they needed to be. He said he wouldn't expect to change policy at this time.

Mayor Gatt asked him if he planned on running in November of 2019? Mr. Fischer stated that he hasn't made a determination yet. He would be committed to serving the remaining term. He would make that decision in January or February. His family dynamic has changed. He has two young ones now, this is a time commitment. He would see how it goes.

5. Cindy Gronachan

Ms. Gronachan said she has served the community in various capacities. She has been serving years on ZBA and two Home Owner Associations that has have given her great training. She said she is an effective listener to residents throughout city. Since this is nonpartisan, she would be a good fit. She would vote for what is best for residents and keep it going forward. She has a history and a level of commitment and dedication to serve City of Novi.

Member Breen wondered what specific issue would you like Council to address and what qualities do you have that would help address that issue. Ms. Gronachan said she had full confidence they are going in right direction. She wasn't sure if there was a particular problem that she could walk in and tells them how to do it better. She would listen and learn as opposed to listen and talk. She would be more reserved.

Member Markham said that she mentioned that she has been president of a couple of HOA's and lived here a long time. You have good perspective on what older subs might need. What infrastructure needs do the older subs have and why? Ms. Gronachan said she serves on the HOA in Willowbrook and their Drainage Committee. In May of this year after a severe weather event, there was drastic flooding in the Willowbrook Subdivision. For those of those that don't know, it is east of Meadowbrook, south of Ten Mile and a small section north of Ten Mile up to Haggerty. The water was standing on several streets. As a result, they went to social media to ask residents to report, but no one reported. Brook Farm Park has large drainage pipe through it, as a result of a clog, it caused the four foot backup. She worked with Jeff Herczeg and they found what was causing the massive flood. They quickly resolved that issue within a matter of days. The other part was they went through and opened drains on Meadowbrook. She is working with them because Council approved the report and funding for the study. The study came in, and in order to do the right thing it would takes millions of dollars to fix Willowbrook. They are working with the City to see what could be done as we move forward to fix the issues throughout the subdivision.

Member Mutch wondered what she would see as one of the top priorities for the City. Ms. Gronachan said the Ring Road was important for Grand River. The Grand River Corridor may be downtown Novi in the future. She thought that we need to look at the vacant buildings. Residents are concerned that those vacancies are not good for the City. There needs to be some sort of committee that encourage repurposing the standing buildings. It is very important that we don't have too much vacant. She also thought that the drainage was a priority.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked if she thought it that at times the buildings are not repurposed, but actually come down instead. Ms. Gronachan said that has happened. She thinks re-purpose would be to tear down and rebuild if that is necessary. Not all buildings meet another business requirement. Her purpose is that maybe a better marketing approach could help with that.

Mayor Gatt asked for Member Casey if there is something specific you want to accomplish. Ms. Gronachan said she would like to fill the seat as best as Member Wrobel would do. She knew him for a long time. She was an admirer of his work and involvement with the community. After watching him all these years she would hope she could carry on in the fashion that he did.

Mayor Gatt asked if she would run for the seat in November 2019. Ms. Gronachan said she ran for office and it was grueling and expensive. She was not prepared to answer

that question at this time. It would have to do with finances and how she felt after serving on Council if appointed.

6. Brent Jones - Absent

7. Doreen Poupard

Ms. Poupard said she lives at Fox Run and has since 2005. She said her community experience is quite lengthy and has been a personal lifelong commitment to serve in organizations that reflect her value and add to the common good. She said it was good to be back here and she had four years of tutoring from Julie Farkas. She said they can count on her to show up, do homework, have no hidden agenda, to ask questions, to listen, and to be someone who will be a contributing team member. It would be an honor to step in where Member Wrobel walked.

Member Markham said we are expected to grow the senior population to over 15,000 individuals within 25 years which is an increase of over 50%. She asked as we look at growing in population, what do you think we need to add or do differently for seniors across the economic spectrum. Ms. Poupard said Novi does a good job looking out for, and being concern about seniors. We have terrific medical facilities but public transportation is an issue. She said the residents at Fox Run have their own bussing, but that is a concern. She felt there were little things one can do. They could set up Villa Barr with walkways to make is accessible so seniors can get out there. Other things such as lighting and having communication that is easy to read and not white on dark grey background. As seniors, we need more help to stay connected. She said that was a major concern, not to be isolated but maintain connections.

Member Mutch said he was glad to hear the Library Board was a good fit. He asked what she would see as priorities for the City of Novi going forward. Member Poupard said a Council Member is not an individual but a member of Council. One person's views can be shared and talked about but it is the Council. It wouldn't be her ideas, but the Council moving ahead with the goals they have set. She added that this was a management run City. Council listens to and solicits input from management more so than individual members. She said she has a personal background in the sustainability goals and environmental issues. That has been a personal thing for her. She said we were strong economically so this might be the time to be more assertive and aggressive in some of the needs around City. Council acts as a unit, not as individual people. It is management that we turn to for input and follow up with their suggestions. She said good work on goal setting and collaboration with Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said she had a lot more insights after leaving Council than while you served. Ms. Poupard agreed. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked what dynamic she saw now that you didn't pick up before. Ms. Poupard said it has enhanced the role of Council working as a unit. You are the listeners, ears, and voice of people in terms of what needs to be done. She said there was greater diversity in the City than is reflected in the people who come before you. She asked how do you find ways to hear the

quieter voices that are behind the scenes. She asked how we can have greater collaboration with schools, the library, and business community. She said her insights are the awareness of being one part of a very important large system as the City grows.

Mayor Gatt said Member Casey would like to know if there is something specific you would like to accomplish if appointed. Ms. Poupard said there wasn't one specific thing. She thought this Council has been very creative in working with parks and walkability. She referenced the purchase of Villa Barr and how that was unheard of. Just to continue encouraging that creative response and the collaborative working with management. That's the way a City works and the one thing she wants is to contribute to a common voice that builds together as opposed to individual voices.

Member Breen said she brought up something interesting when she mentioned collaborating with schools. She asked if there was anything in particular. Ms. Poupard said they do a lot of athletic programming and extra tutorials. The communication as to what's going on in the schools and asking the schools what they need. We have 4 districts in the City of Novi, which is unique. She said they shouldn't forget Walled Lake schools and South Lyon and Northville. We have a great school system and we reward those who do well scholastically and athletically. But there is a whole slew of students who are not as eagerly involved in the City and she didn't know how to go after them. There are parents who are already engaged and involved, but there are a lot of children who don't have that kind of support to do things. She said they should ask the question of how to be more involved is important.

Mayor Gatt asked if she would run for the seat in November 2019. Ms. Poupard said no, she will not run.

8. Binyamin Qamruzzaman

Mr. Qamruzzaman expressed his sorrow for Council Member Wrobel's passing. He said he has a certain type of mindset that would be useful to the City of Novi. He said he doesn't get personally attached to decisions. A lot of people get emotionally attached to a political issue. He said he looks at objective facts and reasoning and logic rather than emotions.

Member Mutch asked what he saw as the top priorities for the City over the next 5 years. Mr. Qamruzzaman said autonomous infrastructure. Autonomous vehicles are being developed and a lot of countries are pushing for electric and autonomous vehicles. You cannot have a car drive itself by just looking through a camera, there has to be outside infrastructure in the roads, stoplights, and car communication. That requires the City to install the right infrastructure which will be necessary as those are being developed.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked if he supported the use of economic incentives for the development and retention of commercial business in Novi. Mr. Qamruzzaman said when you have a complicated problem, you need a complicated solution. Trying to

simplify a complicated solution doesn't solve the problem. He said each business has to be looked at closely and individually to see whether or not it's appropriate to give them incentive or if the City of Novi is going to benefit from giving them incentive. If you give a business an incentive and they aren't paying for City services but still getting them, that hurts the City. He said however, if that business is bringing in a certain type of resident, traffic, economic wealth, then yes it would be worth it. Everything needs to be looked at. The solution has to be as complicated as the problem.

Mayor Gatt said Member Casey wanted to know if there was something specific he wanted to accomplish if appointed. Mr. Qamruzzaman said he would like to bring a downtown area to Novi. He said when he moved here around 2003 he thought the decision to make Main Street the oddest thing because Main Street is a side road and never became a downtown. If you want a downtown, you need a main road. He thought Ten Mile Road and Novi Road would be the perfect location because it's close to the Town Center and mall. Novi Road cuts right through it and there is plenty of land to develop. He said they could use incentives to bring the right businesses there.

Member Breen asked what qualities he had that made him a better candidate to serve on Council. Mr. Qamruzzaman said being a scientist and engineer, he is mathematically inclined. He understands science and physics well. He said when it comes to renewal energies, autonomous infrastructure and development, he has a better understanding of the physics involved to make an informed decision.

Member Markham said he has unique experience having served overseas in the military. She asked if there were amenities or programs he would like to see that could serve and include younger veterans. Mr. Qamruzzaman said a mental ward. He said the Northville mental asylum got shut down decades ago and many mental wards have been getting shut down. Mental health care is struggling in this country and the only good VA hospital is in Ann Arbor. A good VA hospital in Novi would be great addition to the veterans, especially those suffering from mental illnesses.

Mayor Gatt asked if planned on running for this seat in November 2019. Mr. Qamruzzaman said he will and has already started his campaign.

9. Dr. Ajay Raman

Dr. Raman thanked Council for the opportunity. He said he was honored to be here along with the dozen candidates which speak volumes about our community and the passion everyone has to participate in the community. He said the truth is he prepared a speech that is long and boring. He has been in Novi for seven years with his wife and two kids and they live in Island Lake. He serves on HOA Board of Directors which serves over 900 homes. He said he has good quality experience when it comes to management and being able to speak up and represent the community. He is a practicing physician and business owner, the medical practice is here in Novi. Several candidates have government experience; he doesn't want to pretend that he does. He offers something unique and very different. He hopes he can tap into his

experiences outside of government and offer something different. Part of his public service, there is managing staff, budgets, economic development. He graduated from Novi Ambassador Program which he felt was incredible. He has always had an interest. He thought it was an amazing opportunity.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked how he viewed the use of economic incentives for retention and new commercial business. Dr. Raman said if used in the right manner it is a good thing within reason. He knew that currently it has been currently being deployed in the City and we have had some great results from that. We have Excellent companies like Hino is just opening up on 12 Mile and we have other opportunities coming our way as a result of that. There is a lot of positive, but again it needs to be weighed as the big picture to make sure that the economic incentives will not ultimately be a bad thing for our community. It is more complicated than just a yes or no. Overall he thought it could be a good thing. Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said it's easy to say no, but difficult to explain.

Mayor Gatt asked for Member Casey what he thought Council should focus on? Dr. Raman said he didn't think there was anything they haven't been doing. He said he has been following quite a bit of the activity and minutes, etc. He thought that what we've accomplished as a community since the downturn has been phenomenal. It thought he would have large shoes to fill. If he had honor and privilege to serve in this capacity there would be a lot to learn in the first year. He would like to learn and see what he can offer. He would like to help in any way that he can.

Member Breen was very impressed with his varied background. She wondered what specifically he would you like to see Novi do that we aren't doing already. How can you help solve that? Dr. Raman stated that as a resident, the traffic situation. He said if you drive 10 Mile and Beck at rush hour it is ridiculous. He said, can one person change that, no, but as a Council it would take a lot of effort. He spoke with Mayor Gatt and learned more about RCOC and how they distribute their funds. He would love to be involved in approaching them and look for grants. He thought that maybe there could be a more equitable distribution of funds. He would like to get us on par with Rochester. We are bringing all this business to county, can we have support from Oakland County or other resources to help try to build our base.

Member Markham was surprised to see someone would step forward from Ambassador Academy. She commented that his background was unique. She said with his medical background, what opportunities he saw that we could maybe enhance free or maybe low cost healthy options for all residents in the community. She stated either with programming or infrastructure that we can better serve the community. Dr. Raman said through their cultural and religious programs they offer opportunities where they do volunteering. He said many physicians; nurse practitioners can offer opportunities for health screenings. Sometimes local establishment such as Sam's Club does something frequently to do blood pressure screenings. This gives residents an opportunity to get checked with baseline screening.

Member Mutch thanked him for being willing to serve. He said that Dr. Raman touched on his lack of experience in government. He said the most important skill that you need to bring to the table is common sense. He wondered what he thought his priorities would be other than traffic. Dr. Raman is community programming, celebrate diversity. He said through Parks and Recreation and the Library there is a lot of programming out there. He said he would love to inject and bring some diversity to help represent our community. If it means broadening opportunities to embrace that it would be wonderful.

Mayor Gatt said it was wonderful seeing him at the Ambassador Academy Graduation the other night. He asked him if he was planning on running for this seat in November of 2019. Dr. Raman said if given opportunity, it would be a steep learning curve, but he thought he would be up to the challenge. He would love to see if he can embrace it. If he does a good job and fits in, he would consider it.

10. Sandeep Vadera

Mr. Vadera said he is an engineer by training and profession. He is Mechanical Engineer with a Master's Degree from Ohio State University. He also has a Master's in Automotive Engineering from Lawrence Tech. He is a first generation immigrant. He has been here for 27 years here and he is a US citizen. He has been a resident of Novi since 2005. His kids go to school here. He felt very blessed for the Novi school system. He has a son that is a senior, the other son in 7th grade. He hasn't had much experience, but there's always a first step. He said he was willing to take that. He worked for Liberty Park HOA for four years. It taught him a lot in terms of problem solving, leadership, and integrating. He said that he enjoyed doing good work for the community. He said why he is interested in this position was that it was a similar drive as why he came to this country at age 21. He didn't know a whole lot, but took a leap of faith.

Mayor Gatt asked for Member Casey if there was anything specific that he would like to accomplish. Mr. Vadera said that road widening of 12 mile between Dixon Road and Beck Road. He said it is a single lane road and they struggle. He would like to understand what RCOC bottlenecks are. There is a traffic light at Declaration and 12 Mile which they don't have in the front of the sub. He said 13 years later they still don't have a light. He went to RCOC and they did traffic study. He said green belt reduction in the city; he said he is all for more subdivisions, but trees have been vanishing fast. He also mentioned the potholes are a challenge. Filling them is number one and then how they are filled. They are not doing a good job in just spreading asphalt. He said he would like to see better coordination amongst the HOAs. He said they are struggling a lot in Liberty Park HOA for contractors. He thought better coordination would be Beneficial to get cost effective services. He thought that the water department seems to have some confusion because they don't know who the management associations are for many subdivisions. He said that vacuum breakers had to be redone. They have four or five that was very expensive for them. One and a half years went by before they actually found out who they had to contact.

Member Breen said she loved hearing his story about becoming citizen. He set forth specific ideas, as someone who lives on north end, she appreciates. Is there anything you would like to see on the north end of town that the City isn't handling yet? Are there any amenities, any type of communication? Mr. Vadera said the biggest challenge is traffic light at Declaration Drive. At the peak of traffic sometimes it can take 10 minutes to make a left turn. Novi police have been aggressive giving tickets over there. You can't reason with them beyond a certain point and get a ticket. Cannot take a left and the traffic is constant from both sides. You have to stay in turn lane but then you get a ticket. He tried to put in a petition online. He gets a standard response back, but it doesn't get to the issue. The builder said they would get a traffic light and they believed them. He said there is some challenge with builders. When Dixon Meadows was approved they signed a contract for green belt development of 120 trees. They didn't do it properly. They don't have funds to go after the builder.

Member Markham mentioned that his HOA is relatively young and wondered if there was a lesson they learned as part of a HOA as how it communicates with the City that we can do better. Mr. Vadera said that there is a low interest in residents to be part of HOA. To him, he is a reserved person. He didn't want to run for that position, but he saw how poorly things were done and he felt he could do better. Other than internal politics, they have a unique situation. They have two communities. One side is townhomes and one is single family. He thought that the biggest help is putting HOA's in touch. They struggle for contractors. Annual dues are \$505 a year. He said there is a cost pressure from contractors and it is getting expensive. HOA management wants to charge them more.

Member Mutch said it was interesting to hear his personal story. He had already touched on a number of priorities. Can you give specific example of city-wide priority to address? Mr. Vadera said a downtown area, congested traffic and bringing more life to the Grand River and Novi Road area. He mentioned the Japanese Village. He thought that more vitality in that area might help. He read about Novi Expo Center, but he didn't know what was decided. At one point he read something like a Mayo Clinic was planned there. He said he would concentrate on widening of the roads.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said that he covered points he thought about, didn' have any additional questions.

Mayor Gatt asked him if he would run for the seat in November 2019? Mr. Vadera said he was very inexperienced, so one step at a time. To be modest, he likes to take simple steps to see how he would work.

11. Ramesh Verma

Mr. Verma said he has been in the City for 40 years and really enjoys it. He said about 35 years ago, the Novi Parks and Recreation started soccer for children and he is a soccer player so he got involved. In 1981, that Mayor appointed him to the Stormwater Management and Flood Control Committee. In 2004, Governor Granholm appointed

him to serve as Commissioner on Services to the Aging. In 2005, he was appointed to be Commissioner for the Asian Pacific for American Affairs. He served in those capacities for over 13 years. In 2007 he was appointed to the Library Board and is still a trustee. In 2015 he was appointed to the Novi Building Authority. He has volunteered his services to the State and City. He wishes to continue to serve his City. He said he has seen the City grow in population and over 16% is from different ethnic communities. The present Council is well represented, but none represent any ethnic community, but now they have that opportunity.

Member Breen said he has an impressive background in serving the City, State and his home country. She asked what he would like to see Council address that it is not already. Mr. Verma said it's not that they haven't done it. The Council has done so much, that's why Novi is the best City in the nation. He said they need to have a plan for the infrastructure and roads. We should be looking forward at those types of things.

Member Markham said he touched on the subject of diversity. She asked what ideas he has that might bring our diverse communities together. Mr. Verma said during his experience at U of M there was no blending of cultures. He was asked to write a report on it and they accepted 14 of his recommendations. He said the time has come to get ethnic communities involved. He said his point is that inclusion is not there yet. We should encourage ethnic people to come forward.

Member Mutch asked what he viewed as the City's top priorities moving forward. Mr. Verma said the top priority is to plan for infrastructure. Novi is growing but also to the west they are growing and their traffic is coming to Ten and Twelve Mile Roads. He thought the planning should be done not only for road infrastructure but for sewer systems that will last 50-70 years.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt asked as someone who has served for a number of years on Library Board, how Council can better support the Library. Mr. Verma said the City has done excellent work for the Library. He said he couldn't ask them to do more than what they have been doing for the Library. He said whenever they are trying to do something at the Library, they approach Council and they say yes. Member Wrobel was very much involved and they thank him for that. He said he wants to come to Council to do something different.

Mayor Gatt said Member Casey wanted to know if there was something specific he would want to accomplish if appointed. Mr. Verma said infrastructure needs to come first. He said the City is growing and administration is doing well in roads, but he doesn't want to be in same predicament as Macomb County. We should be looking forward and taking care of drainage. Novi is almost 50 years old and our infrastructure needs to move underground.

Mayor Gatt said he has never met a nicer man. Whenever he walks into room, people smile and he lights up the room. His service to the community, no one can touch it.

Thank you for everything you have done and continue to do. He asked if he planned on running for the seat in 2019. Mr. Verma said no.

12. Tim Welcer - Absent

13. Laura Williams

Ms. Williams thanked Council for the opportunity. She said she has been a Novi resident for 30 years. She is retired from public education and retired from higher education as an adjunct at Madonna University. Now that she is retired, she is on the Beautification Commission and Sustainable Novi. She saw this opportunity and thought she would take a shot.

Member Markham asked what recommendations she had to better communicate sustainable practices to the community at large. She asked how the City can promote and provide information. Ms. Williams said being an educator, that's where her focus tends to be with education. They do a lot of that through Sustainable Novi and the programs they've been presenting. Also with Beautification, she is working with the National Wildlife Federation for certification. She said because of that certification she worked with Oakland County and realized the County worked toward that certification for all of Oakland County. She said so many of the communities in Oakland County are working to the same end but haven't explored those possibilities. She thought they could become closer knit and accomplish goals faster if they find out what other communities are doing and piggyback on ideas.

Member Mutch asked what she saw as the top priorities for the City over the next 5 years. Ms. Williams said as an art person she tends to look at everything as a blank canvass. Novi has such incredible gems as anchors to the City, like 12 Oaks, Tollgate, the entire City of Novi campus, Suburban Collection, and Providence Hospital. With all those wonderful assets, it would be fantastic to look at those resources and how we can utilize them better. Maybe work together at obtaining mutual goals.

Mayor Pro Tem Staudt said Novi may be lacking a college level education program like having an Oakland University campus. He said we have Walsh College and South University, but as an educator, what could you do to encourage a major university to locate a campus here. Ms. Williams said we have the space so that could be a possibility. She said she appreciated that when she was working through her master's degree that she didn't have to travel as far. She could see how that would be an asset. She said we would have to look at what portion of the program the City would be interested in and work collaboratively. They would have to see where the focus would be and begin small and build on the opportunities presented.

Mayor Gatt said Member Casey would like to know what Council should do or focus on that it's not already. Ms. Williams said Providence Park is an untapped resource. She

said they came to the Novi Library and had a discussion on nutrition several years ago. She said Sustainable Novi as well. They have a lot of grass, she thought we could utilize that campus area in a lot of ways that would meet goals of the City in terms of sustainability. It could address some issues with senior citizens and our diverse community. She said she has been there and talked to different doctors about programs at the hospital such as acupuncture which isn't available. She thought since we have a diverse community, maybe we could expand that.

Member Breen asked if she saw a specific way that the youth of Novi are underserved or another route in which the City can work with the youth or schools that we aren't doing already. Ms. Williams said when working towards the National Wildlife Organization they needed a logo. She contacted the art department and they will work with us on a logo for National Wildlife. She said she also reached out to the Art Institute last year and did a student competition for the Sustainable Novi logo, which was successful. She said through sustainability there are a lot of schools that have gardens and they will work with schools in that aspect.

Mayor Gatt asked if she will run in 2019. Ms. Williams said that was an exciting possibility. She was hoping she could serve and get her feet wet to see what direction they are going. She was excited about the direction of the City including the Japanese Village, other things in terms of sustainability.

Mayor Gatt said that was the end of interviews and thanked everyone. This will be a very difficult decision because they have all presented qualities they would love to see on Council. They can only choose one person and it takes 4 votes to choose that one person. He said if for some reason they can't decide, they would have a special election for this remaining part of that term. He was hoping they can come to a 4 person consensus. They will discuss it at the next meeting on Tuesday, November 13th.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 P.M.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Robert J. Gatt, Mayor

Transcribed by Deborah S. Aubry

Date approved: November 13, 2018