

Work Session
City Hall
Fayette, Alabama
November 26, 2018

The City Council of the City of Fayette held a work session at 5:00 o'clock, p.m. on November 26, 2018, in the Council Chambers of the City Hall.

Upon roll call the following were found to be present: Mayor Ray Nelson, Councilmembers Linda McCraw, Eddy Campbell, Jason Cowart, and Cedric Wilson. Also present was City Attorney Dale Lawrence. Councilmember Jerry Nichols was absent.

Mayor Nelson announced a quorum was present and the meeting was open for the transaction of business.

INTERVIEW OF MUNICIPAL JUDGE APPLICANTS

1. Mrs. Ebony Winston Rodgers

The first applicant interviewed was Mrs. Ebony Winston Rodgers. Mrs. Rodgers was admitted to the Bar in 2016. She has a solo practice and does criminal appointed work in the District and Circuit Courts. Mrs. Rodgers was a student prosecutor in Massachusetts and represented juvenile clients in the law school clinic. She said she works well with others. Mrs. Rodgers said accountability, integrity and justice would be the way she would operate the Municipal Court, if appointed judge. She said she would usually be available because her office is located in Fayette. Mrs. Rodgers stated this is more than just a position to her, because it would be an example to others who came from similar circumstances as her.

2. Mr. Steven Nolen

The second applicant interviewed was Mr. Steven Nolen. Mr. Nolen started practicing in Fayette in September of 1986. He has served as Assistant District Attorney and also has been a substitute municipal judge in both Fayette and Berry. Mr. Nolen stated he would soon begin prosecuting in traffic/criminal court as well as child support court. He stated he has supervised at least two and sometimes three office personnel throughout his career. Mr. Nolen stated he also has to manage the child support cases and work with employees of the Department of Human Resources. He would be available most of the time to deal with any necessary advisements and hearings.

3. Mrs. Amanda Walters Porter

The third applicant interviewed was Mrs. Amanda Walters Porter. Mrs. Porter received her law degree and has been practicing since 2013 in a solo practice. She stated she mainly works in the field of criminal law and juvenile law. Mrs. Porter is the Bar Commissioner for the 24th Judicial Circuit and is President of the Fayette County Bar Association. She stated she thinks it is very important that people are treated fairly. She has had experience working with both sides of the criminal justice system, both defendants and victims. She stated her office is in town and she would usually be available for any hearings or advisements that are necessary.

4. Mr. Ronald H. Strawbridge, Jr.

The fourth applicant was Mr. Ronald H. Strawbridge, Jr. Mr. Strawbridge has been practicing since 2000 and works at Strawbridge, Strawbridge & Strawbridge in Vernon. He has a general practice that includes criminal defense and juvenile cases. He stated he would have fewer conflicts because of the location of his practice. He stated running a law office requires leadership skills and provides experience in dealing with others. Mr. Strawbridge said he relates to people well and knows many of the police officers. He did not think availability would be a problem and would be available as necessary. Fayette is his home and his office is in Vernon.

5. Mrs. Kelly McCaleb Kearney

The fifth applicant was Mrs. Kelly McCaleb Kearney. Mrs. Kearney began practicing law in 1996 and has practiced in Fayette and Tuscaloosa. She has also served as Assistant District Attorney. She has been the municipal judge for the Town of Berry since 2000 and has been working with the Berry Court Clerk for 18 years. She said the Court has to treat all who come before it fairly and this is done by having rules that are followed. Availability would not be an issue with her. She said she brings 18 years of experience to the position and because she is not currently practicing she would have very few conflicts.

At the conclusion of the interviews, the Mayor and Council ranked the candidates writing down their first, second, third, fourth and fifth choices for municipal judge. If a candidate was the first choice –

he or she received 5 points, if second choice – 4 points, if third choice – 3 points, if fourth choice – 2 points, and if fifth choice – 1 point. The submissions of the Mayor and Council were then tabulated. The most any candidate had the possibility of receiving was 25 points (five 1st choice votes x 5 points = 25). Three of the candidates received first choice points. Mr. Steven Nolen received the most points.

PAVING ON 25th STREET NW

Mayor Nelson reported to the Council he had received an estimate of \$44,000.00 for the paving on 25th Street NW. He stated there are 44 miles of streets in Fayette not including Highway 18 and Highway 43.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon the motion to adjourn being made by Councilmember Cowart and seconded by Councilmember Wilson, the same was unanimously adopted.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk