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ICRC

12/01/20 Meeting

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>> Steve Lett: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

As chair of the commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order.

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At this time I would like to have the Department of State staff to take the role of the commissioner's presents.

Sally, would you take the role for us, please?.

>> Yes, good afternoon, Commissioners. Please unmute and say present when I call your name.

Anthony Eid.

>> Present.

>> Brittini Kellom.

>> Present.

Cynthia Orton.

>> Present.

>> Douglas Clark.

>> Present.

>> Dustin Witjes.

>> Present.

>> Erin Wagner.

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>> Present.

>> Janice Vallette.

>> Present.

>> Juanita Curry.

>> Present.

>> M.C. Rothhorn.

>> Present.

>> Rebecca Szetela.

>> Present.

>> Rhonda Lange.

>> Present.

>> Richard Weiss.

>> Present.

>> And Steven Lett.

>> Present.

>> Sally: All Commissioners are present.

>> Steve: Everyone should have received an agenda as eight items on it including the adjournment at 3 o'clock.

Are there any additional items that anyone would like to add at this time?

Seeing none, I would entertain a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

>> So moved.

>> MC will second.

>> Okay.

All in favor say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Aye.

>> All opposed the same sign.

>> Steve: Okay.

The minutes that we have been provided will take -- there are three of them, but we'll take full agenda presentation on November 19, 2020, from 9 to 2.

If everybody's had an opportunity to look at those, if there are any corrections, we would entertain those at this time.

The only one that I saw reading through it was under old business two said motion by chair Clark, I believe we should note that's commissioner Clark.

With that correction, are there any others?

MC.

>> It just occurred to me he is chair one of the subcommittees, so I don't know that it's inappropriate.

>> I don't know that it's inappropriate but it's more.

>> Clear.

- >> Clear for it to be commissioner.
- >> I'm not against it.
- >> We'll refer to him as chair on his minutes.

I would entertain a motion to accept the minutes as presented.

- >> I move to accept.
- >> I second it.
- >> Okay.

And all in favor say aye.

- >> Aye.
- >> All opposed the same sign.

We also have minutes from the executive director committee, I believe.

Doug Clark, M.C. Rothhorn, and Richard Weiss.

- >> General counsel.
- >> Yeah, that's general counsel.
- >> General counsel one, okay.

Are there any -- the three gentleman, are there any corrections that you saw in those?

Okay.

Excuse me.

From anybody else, are there any questions?

If not, we entertain a motion to accept those as presented.

- >> I move.

So moved.

- >> I second it.
- >> Doug seconds, all in favor say aye.
- >> Aye.
- >> All opposed the same sign.

>> Under the last advisory committee for communications and outreach, that committee is Juanita Curry, Cynthia Orton and Janice Vallette, ladies are there any corrections that need to be made to your minutes?

- >> There is one correction on .2.

It refers to -- just a minute.

I can't see.

- >> I'm having issues.

It refers to committee Chair Clark.

It should be committee Chair Curry.

- >> Okay.
- >> All right.

We'll fix that correction.

Any other corrections?

- >> I don't think so, no.

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>> No.

>> All right.

Any other questions from anybody?

>> All right.

We will entertain a motion to accept these as presented.

Juanita, do you want to make the motion?

>> I move to make the motion that we accept this as presented.

>> Any second.

>> I'll second it.

>> All right.

All in favor say aye.

>> Aye.

>> Any opposed same side.

All right.

Aye sally, I checked earlier to see if there was any public comment.

You indicated you didn't think so at the time.

Has that changed?

>> Nope.

>> All right.

We're up to old business.

Department of state update, who is doing that?

>> Hello, everyone.

>> All right.

Ms. Sally Marsh.

>> Thank you, very much.

I just, a couple of things really quick and we can talk more about them later this week because I want to give you all time to discuss your agenda items at hand. Quickly on the compensation front, within the next few days, I expect the contract that Kelly services has been working on to be final.

They had to adjust some language, that's why it's taking extra-long to make sure it's reflective of all of you.

And we're in the process of hiring at that point should be fairly quick.

You'll have to fill out an application and an I9 and then you'll be able to receive compensation.

So I'm looking -- I'm kind of working closely with Kelly services to try to get there done this week, or if not, very early next week.

Because I know it's been a long haul and I really appreciate all of your patience.

But we seem to have rounded the corner.

So that is moving forward and I will keep you posted on kind of anything else later this week.

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On computers, laptops, so the laptop you all agreed to purchase for all 13 of you actual will I is no longer carried by the state as of like right around the time when we had the discussion.

So there is basically a replacement model that's the same but with a refreshed -- essentially the same but with a refreshed CPU.

It's still what our -- the tech person who helps us procure devices for the department of state would still recommend.

So if that's fine with all of you, I can proceed with them obtaining those computers.

And then expect more details later this week but just to kind of give you a heads up.

Because they are state computers, you will have to do some extra steps to get them set up correctly within the state network.

So more details to come but it's looking like you might actually need to meet a representative from the state at, you know, secretary of state branch office or some other state network building so that you can get it properly set up and we have they all over the state as you know are.

I don't anticipate it will be a huge problem.

Just to be aware it will be a little more involved than getting your phones set up.

And you should all have your phones at this point and be online with them.

Let me know if there are any issues with that.

I know there were a couple of hiccups but I think we're set.

So those were my quick administrative updates.

>> All right.

Rhonda?

>> Are the new computers that they're recommending relatively the same as far as price wise.

>> It's actually slightly cheaper.

I should have mentioned that.

The ones you are going forward with are about 12 hundred.

These are coming out around a thousand.

Like I said, originally it was supposed to be the 5500.

This is the 5510.

So it's very similar, it's just newer is the sense I get.

>> And cheaper.

So bonus.

>> Yeah.

>> Do we get our choice of color?

>> I think there's only one color available.

>> Same color as Henry Ford had, black.

>> That's my guess.

>> All right.

We would entertain a motion at this time to approve the substitution of the computer for the 5510 instead of the 5500.

Rhonda?

>> Dustin had his hand up, Steve, I don't think you saw him.

>> Dustin.

>> I just had a general question in regards to compensation itself.

Is the first one going to be backdated to when we actually started.

>> So I've asked about whether that's possible.

It sounds like they might have to do it, not backdating but maybe paying an upfront sum for the time that you would have been on payroll and then moving forward.

So that's, I think, something like that would be possible.

But I'm still trying to work out the details with Kelly services.

They have restrictions based on their own internal processes.

So I'm trying to work with them to figure that out.

>> You also mentioned that I9 and [INAUDIBLE] even though we're 1099 contractors.

>> I would say -- so we'll have sort of the detailed documentation within the next several days so I don't want to off the cuff tell you something that's actually not correct for how they're planning on putting you within the system.

>> Okay.

Any other questions regarding any of that?

We're back to making a motion to accept the substitute computer.

>> So moved.

>> Rhonda moved, who second?

>> I'll second.

>> Juanita second.

All in favor say Aye.

>> Aye.

>> All opposed the same sign.

>> Thank you.

>> Thanks, everyone.

>> Sally, do you know if they're going to send around another purchase order that I'm going to sign?

>> Yes, they will.

>> Okay.

I will look for it.

>> Okay.

Executive director candidate discussion.

We're back to where we left off at our last meeting.

Where the executive director we had narrowed it down and interviewed people.

And Brittini, are you good to coordinate our discussion on this?

>> Yeah, I am.

>> All right.

Take it.

>> So not much disclaimer in preface, guys, but I think this is a good moment where we can flush out some of the things that we discussed last meeting and some of our initial thoughts and kind of come together in a space to discuss the candidates for the executive director position that we had the pleasure of interviewing.

So I don't have -- let me see.

If we have our first candidate was Brandon Bryce and I'm open to how you all want to approach this in terms of like going down the list or we could either take the approach that we had the last time which is going around and everyone giving their, maybe top two choices.

But, then, of course, discussing them at more length.

But I also personally find the value of discussing each candidate to be honest and making it fair.

And I see Rhonda is nodding her head.

Dustin is in ordering his head.

Richard, do you having in to say?

>> Yeah, just out of curiosity, I think at the last meeting, all of us, I believe except or chairman didn't want to comment on the candidates because he wanted to read the e-mails, which I thought was a good idea.

And I guess what my question was and the reason I'm asking is because at the last meeting everybody commented except Steve and I kind of wrote down here a little hash marks to the individuals that the commissioners liked.

And I just wondered if Steve had come up with 1 or 2 or 3 of them that you liked.

>> I did as a matter of fact.

I went back and looked another their resumes.

I looked at my note, ET CETERA, and my pick would be Dr. Mitchell.

>> I'd be happy to speak to that if we want to do it that way.

Of.

>> All right.

Then, the only other thing I wanted to bring in here since you have made your comment, I kept track so the leading candidate had eight votes, that was Suann Hammersmith.

The next one would be Dr. Mitchell with six and then Brandon Brice with five.

And I think Juanita Phillips had four.

So if that's any indicator as I said, some of us did two people, obviously that adds up to 21 or 22 votes.

I just thought I'd throw that out there quick.

Maybe that might help narrow it down a little more.

>> It does.

The only thing I'd say, maybe someone -- you guys can't see me doing air quotes but if someone doesn't make the cut, so to speak, I don't want anyone on the commission to think that their opinion of that candidate doesn't hold weight or it shouldn't be discussed because they weren't in the top votes.

Richard, do I agree that's extremely efficient.

There's no need of going back.

Rhonda had a hand and Rebecca, I saw that you had a hand.

Rhonda?

>> My thought was since we had more time that we would go through each candidate. I know the last time we met we had 15 minutes.

I only throughout my top one.

So everybody had enough time.

But I think in all fairness.

Now that we got a little more time.

Maybe some of them we can go through quicker if we're in a consensus that some didn't really, you know, do as well as what others did.

We can go through them.

But I think we do owe it to each one to at least go over theirs one more time.

I've watched our interviews three times now and I went back through resumes so I found things that I didn't see the first time.

>> Yeah.

And then we got other information, yeah, that's true.

>> Yeah.

Just in fairness, I think, that's my thoughts.

>> We have 70 minutes, I think, Rebecca, I don't know if I'm going to say about what you're going to say.

Maybe then it makes most sense after kind of listening that we have the candidates that may be are not in our top choices and maybe discuss that and then move on to a more lengthy discussion of the ones that we are more interested in.

Rebecca, what were you going to say.

>> I was just going to -- I had done the same thing that Richard had done.

I was taking a tally as people were giving off their names and had the same ranging that he did.

So one just to confirm what he said was accurate.

That I had the same tallies that he had.

Also I think that was exactly what I was going to say.

Let's start with the ones who weren't on that high tally list and sort of see if anyone else wants to add any commentary on them.

And then we can otherwise remove them from the list.

I think that's the most efficient way.

>> So let's get started.

I think with raise our hands and, you know, I call on whoever wants to speak and then we'll move through discussion that way.

So if anyone wants to get started with, let's see, as I pull up the list, can someone give me -- do you want to start with Brandon?

>> Brandon Brice was first.

>> But he was a front runner too.

So the top three were Dr. Mitchell, Suann and Brandon, they were the top three.

>> Okay.

>> Janet or Janette, Vickie and Amna are the bottom three.

>> Dustin, yes.

>> Are we talking about Brandon currently.

>> Dustin, I think something is going on with your sound.

>> I can talk louder.

>> That's perfect.

>> We're talking about Brandon currently, correct?

>> No, we're going to talk about Amna, please forgive me if I'm mispronouncing.

And Janet and then Vickie.

Those are the three that we're discussing currently.

>> Okay.

All right.

>> Anthony, I'm sorry, I couldn't see your hand is raised but I'll get to you after Dustin, okay?

>> So I had a chance to look through all the public comment again in regards to Amna, as far as I'm concerned, she's out.

That's just me.

Because of all the comment from multiple people coming through e-mails, she moved from number four to number six on my list.

You heard coming -- saying, addressing the elephant in the room saying all this stuff that one person said in regards to social media is compounded heavily with all the other e-mail from people who were not on social media saying do not hire this individual because of her affiliation with one particular party for the most part and not being able to work in a capacity with people on all sides of the political spectrum.

That's my thought.

>> I think that's pretty well rounded, simply because we're in a unique position. Even though we're experts in our own right but we have a higher responsibility to represent kind of this, you know, the community.

The folks that we're serving and so I personally also agree and believe that we would be doing a disservice to disregard that level of pushback from the public.

I want to be able to honor them.

Again, we can't please everybody but I think it's important for that trust to be there and some of the comments didn't seem to be just like a personal matter.

Seemed to be a little deeper than that.

And I mean that respectfully.

Rhonda?

>> I understand what Dustin is saying.

And I actually went through -- I've lost a lot of sleep about this one, I'm going to be honest with you all,

You know, not being able to talk outside of this.

And I have to say that, to an extent, I believe what she's said, just because I did -- a lot of people that sent us letters, I did my own investigation.

Now, some of those I do believe were very sincere and thought-out but I do think there is an extent to politicalness to it.

And I don't want, you know, we had one letter from an lady who actually collected signatures from voters and not politicians who highly recommend her.

I'm not trying to be emotional, I'm just like -- I feel bad.

I'm a very empathetic person.

I know that's my own downfall.

With that being said, in all fairness, because I need to practice what I preach and I preach public perception and although I think that she could possibly be a wonderful candidate, she's had some great letters come in in response to her also, I mean, they're not all negative.

But do I need to practice what I preach and I keep preaching to everybody on this commission the public perception plays a very big role.

With that said, I guess I agree that she -- for this particular position, she probably -- although I think she would do a wonderful job, I think I would have to pass on her also.

And I'm trying not to get emotional, but I lost sleep over this one.

>> It's okay.

I can understand why, Rhonda, yeah, I get it.

Doug?

>> Yes.

I look at her and I think she's really got the solid background for this type of work based on her experience and so forth.

And again the thing that bothered me were the e-mails that came in from the public. But there are a lot of positive ones and there were a lot of negative ones.

So I look to the negative ones and the large majority of them, if you take a look at the daylight timestamp they're all between 8 o'clock and like 8:40 on a certain evening.

It's like they sat around a table and put this stuff together and then mailed it out.

And that kind of turned me off to all the negative comments.

You saw the same thing MC?

>> Yeah, but again, like Rhonda said, public perception I think is going to drive a lot of the things we do.

And we've gotten public comments about that.

I've seen -- I got one this weekend from Tom McMillin which I think was attached.

He pushes toward an independent type approach toward any of these positions.

Executive director, general counsel or communications director.

And then I saw one today that got mailed out to us from Sally that indicates they think we're taking too part an approach to that and think it needs to be more part son.

We can go either way with that.

On this one, I get uncomfortable with the number of e-mails from the public.

Both negative and positive.

It's like particularly the negative ones because like I said, the majority of them came within this half hour time frame or so.

So I would say that given that, we want to try to avoid any controversy with the public.

>> Thank you, Doug.

I'm going to get Anthony and then MC, you're next.

>> Hey, everyone, this is Anthony Eid speaking.

So a couple of things.

First, I think we would be better suited going with the original process that Brittini laid out.

We have time to talk about all of the candidates and I think talking to -- about all of them might do us -- might serve us better so that we each have a full guess with each candidate.

So with that said, I personally think we should go through all five of them.

And I don't think it will take that much longer than what we're currently doing because we probably all have pretty similar notes on each one.

That's my first comment.

My -- to add to the discussion around Amna -- can you guys hear me?

>> Now, we can.

>> Sorry about that.

To add to the discussion on Amna, I pretty much agree with what Doug just said.

I mean, we have messages for and against her.

And public perception is important.

However, I'm not quite sure about how much of the public we're actually engaging with at this point.

It's also possible that, you know, we're engaging with a select few special interest that might be, you know, quite a bit smaller than the actual general public.

I just think we should keep that in mind.

>> Thank you, Anthony.

I just want to say something really -- Rebecca, go ahead.

>> Yeah, I was just going to say.

I appreciate the e-mails about the timing of the e-mails that was something I noticed as well.

But to me, I didn't just look at the e-mails, I also did some search on her.

I looked up her campaign contributions.

She did mention during the call that she had donated to one of her friends who was a democrat previously and that was because the woman was her friend every other campaign contribution she made in Michigan was to republican.

I don't think she's being honest.

The big thing that stuck with me is if you look at the news reports from when the time she was last running for mayor, I believe it was, 13 out of the 15 members of the boards who worked with her regularly, the city council and school district endorsed the person who is running against her.

And so to me, and there were comments in some of the news articles at the time about her being a top down manager and not being collaborative and not listening to people who were under beneath her.

And the fact that people who have worked with her before chose to endorse someone else, to me, that's a huge red flag.

Just on the last comment about perception.

My thought is when you're deal with someone who is generating a lot of fire, and you have other qualified candidates standing in the running, why would you consider picking that person over the other qualified candidates, it just doesn't make a lot of sense to me for an independent body that we would consider going that way when we have other people who are very qualified and very preferred by other committee members.

>> You said exactly what I was going to say.

The only thing I would add I agree, Rhonda, I'm very empathetic.

But I did also see the same article that Rebecca is referring to.

In fact, for all of the candidates, I went through social media and anything available.

I did my own search.

There was also something, my first love is not politics, my first love is people and understanding them.

And there was something in the interview where I felt like, and I can't speak for her, but if I knew that I was coming into an interview with all of that, I would have tried to wow the panel and I felt there was a lot of focus on her trying to address the negative public comment but in the way that was like placating us.

I think she was being somewhat genuine saying that we're doing a good job.

I'm just speaking frankly.

I think there was dishonesty underneath it.

And that's all I have to say about that one.

MC.

>> What we're doing now is I think is really important is we're you be packing how we're making decisions.

I think this is exactly what we need to do.

I want to encourage each of us as commissioners, as we go around.

This is the transparency that the public needs.

I know it's difficult for us to be articulate all of the Tom time unpack how we made the decision and what we're doing is exactly right.

I just want to say thank you and encourage us all to try to -- when we have -- when we have insights into how we made a decision and why we're choosing who we're choosing, I think we should try as best we can to just say it.

>> Thank you, MC.

Steven?

>> I think the comments as to the qualifications of Amna are appropriate.

I guess I would caution us to speak to the facts as we know them or we can find them out to attribute some ulterior motive to what she may or may not have said, I don't believe moves the ball forward.

It so that's my only caution.

I mean, to say that I believe she was not being honest or she wasn't being this or being that, if we can simply limit our discussion to here's what we know, here's what we found out.

Here's what was said, then I think that's a better way to go.

I don't vote for her either, by the way.

>> I agree.

>> I will quickly say I think it's beneficial because we don't know some of these people in real life that we -- all we have is the feel and that is important because we'll be working with them.

So if we feel someone is being dishonest, whether it's her or anyone else in an interview, then we likely will feel that along the way and I know that some legal issues, ET CETERA, have been a concern on the commission.

So I just want to raise that.

Any other comments on Amna before we move on?

Okay.

Let's move on to Janet.

I always want to call her Janette.

I apologize.

>> I think it is Janette.

>> Okay.

Janette.

Thank you, MC.

Dustin?

>> Janette is still my number one pick.

The reason for it, I kind of sort of -- well, I brought it up last time as well.

As far as personality goes and how her interview went, it went extremely well.

Her credentials are great.

But the things that stand out in my mind is absolute most is she went above and beyond to learn things and do things and set things in motion on her own.

Made a 60 day plan and all that fun stuff without being asked to do so.

And when I mentioned that, I don't remember who exactly said it, but they said, you know, that's something we can ask everyone to do once we offer the job.

The fact of the matter is, we didn't have to.

And that stands out in a leadership position that I feel very strongly about.

She was personable.

She was nice.

She answered all the questions honestly, I don't mean to say honestly but with quite lengthy responses that were open.

And I think she did very, very, very well and to me proved that she would be an excellent candidate for this particular position.

>> Sorry.

I was on mute.

.

With Cynthia first and MC, Doug and Rhonda, is that how it went.

It's okay.

We're a flexible group.

Go ahead.

>> Well, Janette was also my top person for all the same reasons that Dustin said.

I felt she was highly qualified.

I loved her energetic nature and I thought her personality did really seem easy to work with.

I felt like it would be a good addition to our commission as far as being our executive director.

And just would also say that I did look social media and all the other things that we could discover on our own, at least as far as what I could discover on all of them and found nothing negative there for her.

>> Thank you.

Anthony has his hand raised too.

So I know we can't see him.

But I want to get Anthony and then we'll go back to the original order.

Anthony?

>> You can take the others first and then come back to me.

>> Okay.

MC?

>> Thanks.

Janette connected with us over zoom in a personal way like none of the other candidates did.

There was an incredible personal connection.

I want to acknowledge that's not easy to do virtually and I felt seen and heard and I felt she acknowledged each of us and connected with us like I said.

I think the other candidates weren't able to do it.

Second, I think she was one of the few, who did, like you said, Dustin.

She reached out.

I want to offer that, that caused concern to me.

I do think that -- one of the things I believe is that we need someone with a public servant kind of approach.

Someone who can get things done and move things through a government system in less than a year who has the ability to do chief of staff and run -- let's say executive director qualities and public servant.

I want to them take direction from us and give us a variety of responses in ways we can unpack it.

And as a commission wrestle and ultimately make decisions and then potentially give directions.

What was concerning for me is she did that I can that -- she didn't take direction, and again, there was no reason she should have.

So there was a concern for me that there was a little bit of an ambition there.

And again, because we had Dr. Mitchell also give us something just like the executive director -- or excuse me that strategic plan.

She also took it upon herself, Dr. Mitchell did, to sort of unpack and give us a list of why she was the right candidate to unpack it, for me, she was essentially helping me make a decision in a way that other candidates didn't.

And again, I think Janette gave us a different approach, right, but also something additional.

And meaning additional written material and because it was, again, my bias is looking at a public servant rather than a corporate executive who is going -- I want someone who is going to take our directions and understand that we each will have different meanings and opinions and it's difficult as a board, as a commission.

To sort of take direction from that.

I think only a public servant who has had dozens of years in multiple formats and rise to that challenge and do it off the bat and lead people.

I guess what I'm suggesting is Janette is also high there but I have a concern for the very reasons that you mentioned Dustin, because I was a little concerned about taking too much initiative or a little too ambitious.

>> I think it was Doug and Rhonda and then if you all still have comments and then Rebecca.

>> Yeah, this is Doug.

I just have a couple quick comments.

I worked in the same company that one of the companies that Janette worked in. And when she talks about the project she ran, I believe it was voice communications switch over.

Those are not easy projects.

Particularly for when you're doing it in a large organization.

So I think she needs a lot of credit for that.

For doing that.

To me it's a big deal.

I was involved in some projects too globally, and I don't know if hers was global or not. It's a lot of coordination.

And that's what we're looking for, somebody who can coordinate things.

It's a lot of coordination.

The other things I'd like to say is she appeared nervous and hyper.

And that kind of bothered me a little.

I look for people that are a lot calmer doing business and so forth.

Just wanted to make that comment.

I'm good.

>> Thank you, Doug.

That was appreciated.

Rhonda and then Rebecca.

>> Kind of going off Doug's last comment about her being nervous and everything.

That's actually what I wrote down in my notes, seems nervous.

And then after that I put reminds me myself a lot when I get excited about something.

Sometimes I have a tendency to rattle on.

Sometimes I get emotional, but it doesn't mean that I'm not a good worker.

So as far as that goes.

She did seem really excited so was it nervous or just excitement.

Because as he said in her interview, she was looking for a new career and this was the only job that she applied for.

She awe others but this was the one she wants.

Maybe it was the excitement to she made it to that point to our list of interviews.

I'm never going to count anybody out.

Every time we have a zoom meeting, I'm nervous.

My heart pitter patters every meeting.

As far as the nervousness, I think that's something if she was nervous, she could overcome.

I like the idea of how she talks, that she would support the commission.

That's always an important thing and I like that Steve asked that a lot.

Do you see yourself working with the commission, working for the commission, are you a supporter or leading us.

So I appreciate those questions that were asked of that.

As far as she goes, our last meeting, she wasn't on my top but she was one of my top three.

So as far as rating goes, I would be happy with her also.

She was my top three.

So just wanted to throw that out there.

>> Thank you, Rhonda, Rebecca, and then Anthony, if you want to.

I don't know.

>> Yeah, quickly, it's the same perception.

So she was so energy get I can and personal and relatable.

But I also felt like she was prattling on -- which is sort of from my Scottish heritage -- a lot and that concerned me a little bit because I found it was a little distracting from the message she was trying to get across.

And it made me question is this person going to be efficient but then the other part of me was like, it seems also like it's just nerves.

So it was that ambiguity I had about what appeared to be nerves and sort of not being efficient with responding to questions that sort of made me put her as my number three because I felt, you know, I was a little concerned about that as well as other people have commented.

>> Rebecca, this is Brittini Kellom and I agree with what you said and Steve might spank my hand later. But that's fine because he doesn't want me to talk about the feel. But I -- it's not about her, I think, my top choices were Dr. Mitchell and -- my brain is moving slow today.

Susan.

Okay.

Susan, sorry.

And.

>> Suann, no.

>> Sorry, I'm a little under the weather, please bear with me.

I think we made such a big deal rightfully so about political affiliation and connections and contributions and there were just some candidates that, to me, avoided those questions.

They spent time talking around it.

So I think, for me, it goes back to if these were the standards in the interviews and if those things are important to us as a commission, and those are the things that we have to pay attention to.

As Rebecca said it took her awhile even to the point where she was saying specific -- she was not my top choice.

I think that there are other qualified people that could represent.

Though, you know, we came in with a variety of experiences, I think we need to look for someone that is comfortable in -- feels comfortable about navigating in that kind of space and is going to be able to be strong and think clearly about it.

I think she offered.

She has a wonderful experience and I don't want to discredit the company and the project that she's worked on.

But I just think that there were better -- there are better choices for that.

Anthony, are you ready to --

>> Yes, yes.

I just wanted to hear what everyone else had to say first and kind of take notes on it.

I like this candidate a lot.

She is one of my top choices for most of the reasons that has already been said.

I didn't really get that she was nervous.

I instead got that she was passionate and excited to start the job.

Some direct quotes from her was that she wants us -- she wants to help us do the best job that we can.

And she specifically also mentioned community as an interest which was important to me.

And I also agree with most of what Dustin had started off with was saying that, this candidate to me, at least, seemed the most prepared and who actually seemed like, you know -- I guess it could be considered ambition but I kind of looked at it more as being prepared and coming in with a good plan and a good strategy to help move us forward.

>> Any other thoughts?

Juanita?

>> Yes, I was listening to each of every one of you all and I kind of agree with everybody but then I think that when we make our selection, that we go by really their qualifications.

I know when people interview, some people probably are used to being before people and they can come off better.

Some people may come off nervous.

And some people may come off all kinds of different ways that might seem a little inadequate for the position.

I just think that we should stick closely to their qualifications.

A lot of people are nervous when they are on an interview and a lot of people practice for an interview.

Sometimes you can't tell one way or the other.

You've got to go by their qualifications.

>> Thank you, Juanita.

Do we move on to Vickie if no one else has anything to say?

Okay.

Yes, Rhonda?

>> Rhonda, you're on mute.

You're saying all sorts of great things.

>> Boy, you missed it, now I forgot it.

I was just going to say I'll get it going with Vickie.

I thought she seemed very nice.

She talked about her service related work history and what have you.

I have nothing negative to say as far as her interview goes.

My only opinion is that there were other resumes and applicants that were far more qualified.

So that's really -- I have nothing negative on her.

Like I said, she did speak of some very good things but she was in some pretty good competition as far as people east experience.

I thought there were some that were just a little more qualified than her.

>> Thank you, Rhonda, Cynthia?

>> I'll just second what Rhonda said.

>> That's appreciated.

>> Rebecca and MC.

>> I would add a third on that.

I just didn't feel she was as experienced as other candidates.

>> MC is the fourth and he agrees and Doug agrees.

I would have to say the same.

So we've gotten, we did AMNA, with did Janette.

We did Vickie.

Do we want to talk about Suann.

There's my justice.

I am a stickler with names.

Rhonda, get it started again.

>> Are you guys tired of me yet?

>> No.

>> I'm raising my hand, she's my top pick.

I go back to experience.

30 years in an executive director position.

So she's got the experience that we're looking for.

The fact, I know in our last meeting, there was some said about not the government experience and it being all on, you know, the other side, but I think with her experience with United Way, I mean united way, isn't that kind of their job to reach out to the community.

So that in itself, is something to look at, I think, and the fact, here with go back to this and I go -- I know I keep going back to it over and over and over again.

When we asked about political affiliation she didn't have any.

She said with 30 years of being in the job where she is where it's an outreach to all communities.

You can't contribute and have to be impartial.

We've got a lot of public comment that says if we're going to hire somebody we should look at somebody that's independent and I partial.

If you have 30 years of experience in united way and such, in a position where you can't really have a political affiliation because it effects the amount of income you bring in for the company, then I think as far as the public comment goes, and as public perception, that she would be an excellent choice with that too.

So I'm looking at, in terms of experience, public perception, and when I said I wanted to interview the executive directors, I said that sometimes I just get a gut feeling about people and she's one that I had that gut feeling about from the time I read her resume and then interviewing her.

My opinion of her never swayed and call it a gut, but I always go with my gut and it's not let me down yet.

So I just think that she would definitely be a good one and I think that she could work well with everybody on the commission.

So that's my thoughts on her.

>> Thank you, Rhonda.

MC?

>> I would echo what Rhonda said.

It goes back to what we said about Vickie.

I feel like Sheryl has over 30 years of experience in a government position.

Because we are such a body that is so government based and we have one year less than 12 months to sort of wrap up all that we're doing.

We have to -- and our executive director, I believe is executive director really it's the name that I don't know will ever apply to anything else.

Just like we are a commission that has never existed.

You know, we're a state body but we're really unique.

I think just like that, our executive director is totally unique and so because Dr. Mitchell has both urban commission experience and urban Oakland governmental experience and has worked with like zoom meetings and setting up meetings at a city administrator

much like the executive director and has also been in a rural area and has again almost that same 30 years of experience--and because of all the -- all the additional information written material that has helped me understand that she can help us as a commission, not just me but us, I think, repackage reformulate and help us potentially get to multiple places.

I think she's above Suann.

She would work for us, I agree.

I just believe that Dr. Mitchell is one above and I'll just offer that because of the additional information, all these -- she has the united way and worked with a huge community like a rural community and did unbelievable work.

Much like Janette.

What I'm suggesting is because of the breadth of the letter of recommendations from Dr. Mitchell, it demonstrates, written demonstration of network in the community and they've rallied behind her in ways that I just like -- I'm really impressed. What I mean to say, I think her network may be deep enough in the community outside of government and have the government experience.

That feels like because we're under time fresh as a committee of 13 needs to understand ourselves as commissioners and our executive director to help us and the staff and has to respond to us in ways.

I think we need somebody who that is this unusual qualifications and I think Suann can do it.

I'm not disagreeing.

I believe we have a super qualified person in Dr. Mitchell, and therefore I'll leave it.

>> Thank you, MC, I saw Dustin's hand then Cynthia and then Juanita.

>> So I'm going to start by saying that Suann was number 1.1 on my list.

It was basically a tie for everything that Rhonda was saying.

I'm going to put this out there short and sweet, this is my personal opinion.

I personally don't want an executive director with 30 years of government experience.

That's just my own personal -- hold on.

My own personal opinion because we don't have it either.

And I do believe that the fact that they -- excuse me, she has community outreach with united way and other such places that are not government related, that is much better to me than the potential of having a sway because she has so much government experience.

And that's just my personal opinion on the matter.

So -- and I'll leave it at that.

>> Thank you.

Dustin.

Cynthia?

>> I raised my hand because I just felt like our discussion of Suann was kind of

hijacked and we need to be talking about Suann.

I agree with what Rhonda and Dustin have said and so I don't need to take up more time.

But she also was like 1.5 for me, almost.

>> Thank you, Cynthia.

Juanita and then Rebecca.

>> Yes, I was agreeing with MC.

That Dr. Mitchell, in fact, I even changed my person from Brice to Sheryl Mitchell.

Because looking at her and going overall of the candidates, I examined Dr. Mitchell's document and everything, her resume and everything over and over and she's seemingly to me stood out more than just about all of them.

And mind you, all of the can dads are very, candidates are very, very, good.

I changed my opinion from Mr. Brice to Dr. Sheryl Mitchell.

I thought she was excellent in reading her thing over and over.

I agree with MC.

>> Thank you, Juanita, you also reminded me that we didn't discuss Brandon Brice.

I don't think we did.

>> But I gave his name the last time we were doing that.

>> Okay.

>> I did that.

>> Rebecca?

>> He was my number one picked.

>> I really liked Suann, I liked Dr. Mitchell, for Suann, I felt that you're dealing with two people who are very qualified between her and Dr. Mitchell.

And I was the one who raised this up before, is my only concern is -- and this is something the committee needs to think about.

Suann has excellent experience in the nonprofit arena.

Dr. Mitchell has excellent experience in the government arena.

I don't know that nonprofit necessarily translates as easily as government experience does because with government experience you are dealing with different rules and regulations and apportionments and how things are run.

That was in my opinion the only thing that was a negative factor for Suann is not having that government experience.

Although the nonprofit experience she has is impressive and she seems competent and capable.

To me that boils down to those two people.

And that nonprofit and government was a key factor.

>> Thank you, Rebecca.

I would have to agree with Rebecca and MC in term of the analysis.

Those -- Suann was my -- like my one and a half.

It was just a tie between the two and what Rebecca said that was that deciding factor between why I put Dr. Mitchell first and Suann second or tie, whatever.

>> I just want to apologize if I feel like I hijacked it.

I didn't mean to.

I'm so sorry.

>> It's okay.

Juanita?

>> Well, I just want to say I know that we hadn't discussed Mr. Bryce, that was my first choice.

He was my first choice, that's why I mentioned him.

After I said, after I read about her over and over and the rest of them.

That she was my choice.

I just wanted to clarify that.

>> Let me get Anthony first.

>> Sorry, I know it's kind of hard without the video.

So thank you, Brittini for looking out for the hand raise.

Are we -- before I state my comments on Suann, should I also state my comments on Dr. Mitchell or are we going to come back to that at a later time.

>> We'll come back to Dr. Mitchell, you can mention Suann right now.

>> Okay.

Wonderful.

Just wanted to be clear for everybody.

So I guess I just preface by saying that, you know, myself along with Rhonda and Dustin, all three of us were on the subcommittee that narrowed it down to these five applicants.

And I do strongly believe that any of these five, especially the Brandon Bryce, Sheryl Mitchell, and Janette Phillips and Amna, really can get did job done. I am, however, a little less enthusiastic about Suann as some of the other comments I have heard.

I have nothing negative to say about her.

I think she has impeccable job experience.

I think if we were only going by strict job experience she is a front runner.

However, I also take into consideration on who I think I can -- who I think can develop the best relationship between the commission and the executive director that relationship is of importance to me.

And I didn't -- when we asked Suann that question, I didn't really hear as good of an answer as some of the other candidates.

So I think she's great and I don't have any objective negative things to say.

And I think if we do decide to pick her, she would be a great executive director, however, I have a tad lower than some of the others on our list.

>> Thank you, Anthony.

Doug?

>> Let me pass on it.

My comment was going to be on Brandon Bryce, so I'll wait until we bring him up.

>> Okay.

Without further ado, why don't we bring up Brandon now, technically I kind of went out of order.

I totally skipped over his name.

We can take about Brandon at this moment.

>> Okay.

Great.

Basically I'd like to support with Juanita said.

I took another look.

He was number two on my list.

And I dropped him down a notch.

Basically I didn't think he had the experience some of the others had.

So that kind of drove me to that decision.

So that's my comment.

>> Thank you, Doug.

Rhonda?

>> As far as Brandon goes, I had a number two on my list.

When we talk about people interacting well, he seemed confident.

He seemed like somebody that you could approach easily, very easily.

Almost somebody that you felt comfortable with.

>> Yeah.

>> Going back over his resume a little more also, I noticed a couple things that I didn't notice the first time.

Not that they're huge things but could be beneficial and his skills he says he has -- he's advanced in Spanish.

So speaking Spanish that could be a huge thing and also American sign language.

A couple skills we didn't necessarily think about with the position but something that could also be handy in the position.

Especially when we're reaching out to communities.

I like what he had to say about integrity, honesty, I have to say even though he's a republican, he's open and public about that.

He says his life is open book.

If you want to look him up online.

He invited us to look him up online in my opinion.

I like that direct approach.

You know, he's not trying to hide anything.

He's -- this is who I am, this is how I was raised, this is what you get.

And I appreciate that.

I really do because it seems like in days you don't get so many people that seem so true and honest.

I and just kind of felt that he would be a good fit.

But like I said, he was my number two.

If he was considered, I do think he would do a good job.

He may not have as much experience but he has that hint of government experience but also a big hint of public experience.

So, you know, it could just be just the right mix.

As far as public comment, I only saw one that came in, other than phone call and I only saw one and they're only complaint was that he's a republican.

I take it with a grain of salt.

I didn't hear any that said that he -- you know, the work that he's done.

I haven't heard anyone saying he does bad work or anything like that.

So that's my opinion on Brandon.

>> Rhonda, any other opinions on Brandon?

>> Oh, Rebecca?

>> I'm sorry, I was on double mute.

So my first concern with Brandon I don't think the experience is there.

Compared to Dr. Mitchell and compared to Suann and compared to Janette.

I don't think the experience is there.

He has some lower level director position experience.

But not executive director experience where he's managed an organization.

That is a concern for the me.

The other concern for me and I mentioned this before is as after affiliation with patriot radio station.

It's a conservative radio station.

Maybe I missed it, but I don't remember him bringing that up at all during the interview and I feel like he was sort of peddling himself as being kind of middle of the road.

I looked at his political contribution.

He has some republican some democratic.

But then I watched a bunch of his videos on the patriot and he clearly comes across as being a conservative republican.

That's not disqualifying to me in and of itself.

But the fact that he doesn't disclose that affiliation, he didn't mention it to us.

We're obviously going to find it if we look into it, and again, I'm concerned about the opt particulars of how that looks to the public in general that we have someone who has that very strong affiliation, lots of public commentary out there about his views and I'm just concerned about the opt particulars of it.

So to me combine that with what I see as a look of qualifications or a lack of strong qualifications, to me, I wouldn't be able to vote in favor of him.

>> Thank you, Rebecca.

Aaron and Dustin, wait a minute, Anthony, Erin and then Dustin.

>> Thank you, Brittini.

I Brandon Bryce is one who is in my top three.

I good with what Rebecca was saying about his experience.

He does have a little less experience than Dr. Mitchell or Janet Phillips or Ms. Hammersmith.

I think he might be able to make up with that in different areas.

I really like the actual things he spoke about.

He spoke about voter integrity.

He spoke about there being no safe districts.

He spoke about bring the power back to the people.

These are direct quotes from him.

And he specifically said he wants to make sure democracy stays afloat.

.

So from that, I gather a lot about his, you know, about the reasons on why he's applying to this commission.

It was also reflected in his applications.

In those reasons I think can be just as important as the qualifications.

As far as his background goes, I'm not quite as concerned.

I think he was pretty up front with us.

He did not mention if radio station specifically but like someone said earlier, he did invite all of us to take a look into his background to see what we can find.

And, you know, he just came off as a pretty levelheaded genuine person.

That I do think we can work with.

That's about all I've got.

>> Thank you, Anthony.

Erin and then Dustin.

>> Brandon was one of my top picks as well.

He said he wanted to -- he was interested in the position because it gave Michiganders the power.

I disagree with Rebecca because he came right out and said he was a conservative Christian.

And he may not have disclosed the patriot radio show but he did disclose what party and what his affiliations were.

And he does -- he did mention that he has 14 years of experience with both groups and some of the issues that they worked on were both bipartisan so he was one of my top

picks as well.

>> Thank you, Erin Dustin.

>> Brandon also was in my top three just because he was very personable and he did come out and say, you know, he was open and honest about his political beliefs and basically his entire life quite frankly with all of us.

The fact that he was open enough to basically invite us to start looking for things, searching for him online also stands out.

Going to experience though, however, that's going to be my biggest thing.

Not as much as experience as the top two individuals here that I've picked, and then echoing on Rebecca itself, I actually subscribe to serious XM and saying that patriot radio station is a conservative station is farfetched.

They are out there.

And that's could have negative connotation on the public, again, my opinion.

>> Thank you, Dustin.

Any other last thoughts about Brandon?

Okay.

Let's move on to talk about doctor Sheryl Mitchell.

I knew this was going to be --

>> Nobody is raising their hands so I'll get the ball rolling again.

Dr. Mitchell does have a lot of experience.

It the only thing -- and let me flip to it, I didn't -- honestly, I didn't feel that type of connection with her.

I don't know what it was.

I just -- I don't know, maybe in my opinion I almost felt -- and you can't judge a person over zoom, I know, but first impressions, she didn't seem like somebody that me, personally, that I would be totally comfortable approaching.

You know, some people were a little more open and comforting, I guess, I don't know if that's the word.

I don't always use the correct language.

And then something that stuck out to me, Brittini, is something that you had said about, I don't remember which other one it was, about not being so forthcoming about political affiliation.

And I honestly don't think that she was all forth coming.

That was actually in my notes that we took the day we did it.

She kind of hemmed and hawed and didn't say right away who she was affiliated with.

She's like well, you know, I was kind of with this one party but then doing this we've got to be impartial and I believe Steve actually, because I went back and rewatched it, Steve asked, so can you tell us what party that is.

.

You know, as far as that -- and the political thing is not huge to me.

Who is going to do a good job.

I keep pushing the public perception and I feel like we're darned if we do and darned if we don't, especially if they have a political affiliation.

So experience, yes, she's got great experience.

For me personally, I just didn't feel that connection with her.

I don't know.

I just felt that there were others that I would be more comfortable working with.

And other than that, I have nothing really negative to say about her.

I just feel that new my opinion there were other people that I would prefer over her.

>> Okay.

Thank you, Rhonda.

Let's get Erin and then Cynthia.

>> The only thing I had with Dr. Sheryl.

She stated she was currently full-time with her current position.

And I didn't know how that would affect her availability to the commission with that.

That was the only thing I had.

>> Thank you, Cynthia and then I'm going to bounce back to Rhonda.

>> So I kind of felt the same way that Rhonda explained, just she does have good qualifications.

I just didn't feel that it would be as good of a fit as some of the others.

I also -- the main thing I wrote down in my notes, is that especially a couple offer answers seemed that she was reading them and I didn't get that with any of the others, but definitely on a couple of her answers I felt like that.

I just felt like anyone request write and read the perfect answer but I wanted to know how she really would work with us.

So that was all I had to say.

>> Thank you, Cynthia, I appreciate that.

Rhonda and then MC?

>> I wanted to address Erin's comment about the full-time job because in the interview, Erin, I did ask her that.

I don't know if you recall and she said she spoke to whoever it was, her boss or whoever, and she could work part-time doing that and do this full-time, she'd be willing to, but if that isn't something that we would be willing to let her do, she would be willing to give up her other job.

I don't know if you remember that from the interview, I just wanted to let you know that I did ask that question.

>> Thank you.

Rhonda.

MC.

>> Yeah, thanks Rhonda.

I remember you asked that question.

I was -- yeah, thank you, I appreciate that.

I also did not -- I noticed that I didn't connect with Sheryl Mitchell like Brandon, you know, he was the first one, I think Mitchell was the second one.

Brandon I connected with and right after Mitchell, it was Janette.

It was noticeable.

I went over and over in my head about that in particular.

What I looked at was the written samples.

I'm trying to put myself in our shoes.

I'm trying to understand as we as a commission might actually have a director, who can not only support us and fit an emotional feelings, are valid and important and hard to quantify.

So I guess I'll offer that that's also hard to put -- to justify and be transparent as we are.

What I'm suggesting is because of her written sample and because there was a calm energy and I think what I know is that this person, this executive director is going to be a face.

And is going to be essentially helping lead staff in a rapid fire, rapid pace, right, there's going to be commission meetings that are held with public comment where we're going to need, you know, to draw lines and we've already experienced how difficult it is to actually have all of our conversation and deliberate and make good decisions and thoughtful decisions and feels instantaneous and we can't talk outside of it.

It feels like we need a director, for me, I may think I want a little bit of director slower -- not slower in the sense I think she's quick.

I think she's a prepared public servant.

Again, this is where my bias, I'm trying -- because I think it may actually serve us.

I just want to acknowledge.

I having like because of this -- yeah, all of the things -- all the experience she has and because it's live and because she's actually working right now, it's super live.

She knows how to deal with open meeting act and everything right now during COVID time and it's may be important for me to ask sally because I think the secretary of state and staff is going to continue on after we have our full-time staff maybe important for us to acknowledge. But my hunch is that we're going to need an executive director who can actually, substitute, I may be wrong there, but substitute for the secretary of state because they will be going away or be a support but not actually our staff because we're the independent ones who choose.

I guess what I'm saying is that's a very deliberate kind of thoughtful approach that I feel like might serve each of us, even though it may not be as -- yeah, extroverted.

She made a point of saying I'm excited.

I don't think she's comfortable.

She may be more introverted and that may be exactly why she Excelled and maybe why she got so many letters recently.

She may not be as connected -- she may not connect with people the same way.

And, again, my hunch is we may want that.

We is all of us.

Check.

>> Juanita?

>> Yes, I just want to say that that's what connected me with Mr. Bryce.

The way he came off so comfortable.

I was comfortable with how he was talking and how he presented himself.

I was not as comfortable with Sheryl.

I like her resume.

I like the things that she did.

And for me as an example, sometimes when we first meet people, we are not ourselves.

We try to come off professional and nervous and everything.

And sometimes we have to know one another until we come off that horse and just be ourselves and get the job done.

All this first appearances, first talk, we don't know how it's going to go.

We just try to go by their resume and if they have qualifications.

I can't judge a book the first time I see a person and sometimes they switch up on you, and we have to be aware we can't judge a book but we need to try to stick to their experience and resume and we can bring them down to our level, once they get to know us, I believe.

>> Thank you, Juanita.

We have maybe six more minutes.

I'll get sally first.

>> Thanks Brittini, I just wanted to jump in really quick on sort of two points.

One that you were just getting to, Brittini.

Which is the time and sort of wanted to say both that, you know, you don't have to stick strictly to the sort of time frame estimates that were in the agenda.

If you'd like to continue your conversation on.

You can do so.

We do have the close captioner and translators until 3:30.

Because we thought it might go late.

If you want to take some extra time to finish your conversation, you can.

What I want to say.

And I think this is state the obvious.

You don't have to take a vote today.

It might be a great process to do a final round of interviews or ask for additional

materials or additional things to review and then make a decision, right?

So I don't want anybody here to feel -- I know you want to have your executive director and absolutely, right, like, that would be fantastic for all of you.

That said, don't want you all to feel like you need to take an up or down vote today and have that be the thing you go with.

So just wanted to mention that point.

And then to MC's sort of question, comment about the role of the secretary of state in the future.

Two things, one, the secretary of state per the constitution is the secretary of your commission must provide technical assistance, maintain the public record, those sorts of secretarial duties so the department of state, the Secretary of State's office will be doing that, you know, per our constitutional requirements.

But in addition to that, you know, it's technical assistance and assistance as requested by the commission.

And so certainly, you know, if you have an executive director and staff, but would like to continue to using our office as a resource, whether it's connecting with the partner organizations we have across the state for engaging the public in the map drawing, or, you know, occasionally asking us questions because we have been working on this whole project for a while.

We're absolutely -- I would say it's not too much to say we're thrilled to continue to help and be sort of an advisor as is helpful to all of you.

So it's not like the minute you start to hire staff the department of state goes away.

And that's something that we'll definitely have to have further conversations about with your executive director and all of you, don't feel like you're losing all of us with a snap of the fingers, so I hope that's helpful.

Let me know if you have any questions.

>> Thank you, sally, I appreciate that and I'm sure we appreciate that.

>> Can I say something real quick.

>> Yeah, go Anthony.

>> Thank you, sally, for that information.

We all appreciate it.

Just to touch really quick on Dr. Mitchell, not really much to add.

You guys pretty much all said everything I would say.

She's one of my top people.

I would just say much in the same way that I think if negative letters might bias us against Amna, I think we should be cognizant that the positive letters might bias us the other way for Dr. Mitchell.

So I think we're all very sure we're cognizant of it.

While it was impressive that we have a whole bunch of letters of recommendations from a whole bunch of different fields. I also think that type of thing it's not hard to

manufacturer -- isn't it the right word.

It's not too hard to e-mail and will say hey, can you put a letter for me.

Irregardless of the letters, I think she's a fine candidate.

I just wanted to ask either sally or Mike, I believe to hire, we need at least one positive vote from democrat, republican and independent on this commission.

So I just want to make sure that was the case.

>> I don't believe that that's the case.

I believe we have to have seven out of 13 votes to hire the republican, democrat, independent comes down to the final drawings, maps, ET CETERA.

>> I might be wrong, but I actually think it's both.

I think it's the seven and at least one of each in those seven.

But I might completely be wrong.

Mike is off mute.

>> Mike?

>> Hello.

>> Hi.

>> Hello, everyone.

I was just looking up the constitution definitive language.

I'll be right back with you to answer that.

>> I happen to have it.

>> Perfect.

I was going to say my understanding is with Steve that it had more to do with there being the process on the constitution for removing employees but I don't recall the same language in the constitution offhand.

It's been a moment since I've looked at that in terms of hiring employees.

Is that what you're seeing, Steve?

>> Yeah.

>> Yep, nice to see you all by the way.

>> I'd be happy to read it, Anthony, will that help you.

>> I'll trust you.

I just want to make sure.

>> Remember, I'm a lawyer, you can't trust me.

Thank you for everybody being on mute.

Okay.

Here's where I see we're at.

We've talked about everybody.

Do we want to continue talking, are there other things to be said, or are we ready to move to a vote to hire somebody?

Or do we want to bring somebody back for another interview.

I guess we can do it this way, I would move that we take a vote on whether or not we

want to bring anybody back for an interview.

If I have a second, we'll take a vote.

>> I will second that.

>> Okay.

If you would want to bring one other more persons back for an interview, second interview, signify by saying aye.

>> Steve, is there a discussion on this motion?

>> There can be discussion on this motion, certainly.

Go ahead.

>> Yeah personally, I feel comfortable with the due diligence that we've done now and I would like to finish this process up.

There is a motion on the table.

So we'd have to take care of that first.

However, what I would suggest is that maybe we can take up preliminary vote to narrow it down to three, and see who is left.

And see if there's any more discussion on those three and then take a final vote for one.

That would be my suggestion. But if you all feel like we need to bring back candidates.

I understand that too.

I don't feel that's something I have to do at this point.

>> I agree with Anthony.

In the essence of autonomous and committee, I think we're ready to make initial decisions today.

>> Kind of the final decision, but Doug.

>> I agree.

I think we should go right to voting.

I think we've heard enough from these people to make a decision.

>> Okay.

>> One of the ways we could vote is use rank choice voting.

Which is basically, let's say you got four people.

You vote.

Nobody gets the majority.

You drop off the bottom person and revote.

Drop off the bottom person if necessary, and revote.

>> Okay.

Any other discussions?

The motion is do we want to bring back anybody for a second interview.

If you want to bring back somebody for a second interview, raise your hand.

I don't see any hands.

Anthony, is your hand up?

>> It is not.

>> Okay.

The motion fails.

So we're prepared to move forward.

Are there -- are we -- I guess the question becomes, we have basically narrowed it down by my listening and writing down to four, Janette, Sheryl, Suann and Brandon.

We have kind of eliminated Vickie and Amna.

>> It sounds to me with we have a two.

>> There were certainly support for the four I named and there wasn't much support for the two that I named.

Cynthia?

>> I like what Doug proposed about voting.

Because we might not all have the same one person but if we can get a consensus of who we all felt really comfortable with, that might help us with the vote.

>> Agreed.

>> Okay.

So the motion -- I'll take that as a motion, Doug.

Is that we do rank voting.

And we -- are we agreed we have four people and we're going to vote for four?

>> Nod your head, thumbs up, do something.

Okay.

So, Doug, the way that I understand this would work, you would vote your first person you would vote for would be number one and then you would have a number two, number three, and number four?

>> I can't hear you Doug.

>> Yes, everybody would vote for the four people and then we rank them by the number of votes they have.

Drop the bottom person and then revote.

>> Okay.

You're not going to assign.

Like my bottom person was say Brandon, you're not going to assign Brandon's vote to the top vote getter.

>> No, I'm not.

We're going to revote and whenever we get to seven votes, that's it.

>> That's it.

Okay.

>> I think maybe we should ask everybody if they want to do it that way.

>> Okay.

I was getting to that.

>> Okay.

>> I take that as a motion.

Of is there a second for Doug's motion for rank voting.

>> Can I ask a question first, before we second it.

Can you explain it.

I might be a little slow here.

Explain it to me again.

Are you saying that all of us vote on each person out of the four.

>> Let's have a second and then we can have a discussion which is what you're asking for.

>> Okay.

>> Anthony will second.

>> Okay.

Now, go ahead, Doug, explain the rank vote.

>> No, we would all -- there's four candidates, we would all vote for one of the four.

Okay.

And so let's --

>> At the same time.

>> At the same time.

And then whoever had two least number of votes, we eliminate that person and now with have three left and now we go back and vote again.

We continue that process until you get somebody that gets seven votes, because I believe seven is what we need to carry something.

>> Okay.

I got it now.

>> That would be the process, if you want to do it that way.

>> You might only have one vote.

Because there might be seven votes for one person.

>> Yeah, somebody may come up with seven votes and we're done, yeah.

>> Now, since we're all doing this on zoom, the way I propose that we do it, would be I would -- I would say all who would put Janette as number one, and I will go around the room and everybody will tell me number one.

Now, that's one way, and then I go around for number, two, number three, number four.

Or I could go to each person, and go to Rhonda, who is your number u one, who is your number two, who is your number four.

Probably would be faster that way.

>> You wouldn't have to do it.

You would just have to ask who is your number one.

>> No, you've got to have everybody say everyone.

>> No, no.

>> No, that's not if process that I talked about.

Everybody votes for their choice.

>> Well --

>> You add that up.

You say Brandon's got two, Dr. Mitchell's got three.

Whoever is on the bottom, we eliminate and vote.

>> That's not I understand how rank voting would work.

I would rank my number one, my number two and my number three and number four.

>> Okay.

What would we do after that.

>> Who is that the most number one proceeds, whoever is number two proceeds, whoever is number three proceeds and the last one, number four drops offer.

>> Okay.

I think we get the same result.

We can do that.

>> I'm actually if favor of the way Doug first explained it.

>> I think we're going to need a spreadsheet the way that Steven is proposing.

>> Sally?

>> Just a quick suggestion and kind of recommendations, thinking about the folks who are take the minutes and us having to write it down, what I'm wondering is if you all just go around and say who your first choice is, I think then the level of complexity by which you have to do saying your second, third fourth might be more clear.

If you go around and there's a fair amount of consensus, then it might only like have to be one vote essentially or two votes.

So we can maybe start with that and then depending on how much disagreement there is, essentially, we can, you know, adjust because we might have to do a spreadsheet for the 1, 2, there, four, choice.

Which is how it's done when it's on a ballot.

But because of the nature of the group, that would be my suggestion.

>> Yeah, that's what I was talking about when I was saying.

I sounded like there was two main folks really of the candidates.

But yeah.

>> Okay.

Then as I understand what everybody is wanting to do, correct me if I'm wrong and I'm wrong lots of times.

I would read the first candidate and I'll say it's Janette.

And everybody is going to say yea or nay.

>> Kathleen is raising that there's still a motion on the floor and that's a good flag.

>> The motion is are we going to do rank voting and the we're trying to figure out how that is going to work.

>> She wrote in the chat and I'm just being observe about.

Richard.

>> I don't know, Steve will go ask Rhonda who is your first choice and the next individual who is your first choice.

Kind of like I did at the meeting when we made our comments about the candidates and then whoever has the most votes, if it's seven then it's done.

If they don't, then we do what Doug said.

We drop off the low one and start over.

It does that make sense to you?

>> Make senses to me.

>> Sound goods to me.

>> Okay.

>> So moved -- wait, I think we just clarified the proposal, right.

>> We clarified how we're going to do it.

>> Yeah, we did.

>> Is everybody ready to begin the process?

>> Yes.

>> Do we vote first to close the motion.

Just in terms of par la men tear procedure.

>> Sure.

All in favor of the rank voting as we described it, say aye.

>> Aye.

>> All opposed say I have some other suggestion.

Hearing none, all right.

Rhonda, who is your first choice.

>> Suann.

>> Doug, who is your first choice.

>> Suann.

>> Richard, who is your first choice?

>> Suann.

>> MC, who is your first choice.

>> Sheryl Mitchell.

>> Erin, who is your first choice?

>> Suann.

>> Cynthia, who is your first choice?

>> Suann.

>> Suann?

>> Yes.

>> Juanita, who is your first choice?

>> Sheryl Mitchell.

Dr. Mitchell.

>> Janice, who is your first choice?

>> Dr. Mitchell.

>> Rebecca, who is your first choice?

>> This is such a hard decision.

>> That's not one of our choices.

>> I'm going to go for Dr. Mitchell.

>> Dustin, who is your first choice?

>> Suann.

>> Anthony, who is your first choice?

>> Janet Phillips.

>> Who am I missing besides me, who am I missing?

>> Brittini.

>> Brittini, who is your first choice?

>> Dr. Mitchell, I didn't get to give my Dr. Mitchell comments but Dr. Mitchell is my first choice.

>> I guess I'm the last person to vote and I vote for Suann.

>> That's seven.

Suann is our potential hire.

We don't have to go any further.

>> Steve?

>> Yes.

>> I have some three additional things that I'd like to talk about if we could.

Relative to this hire.

Let me just list them real quick and then consider if it's worth talking about right now.

Actually, number one, who is going to do the hiring and I'm assuming that's the secretary of state because this is a government job.

And who is going to notify the other candidates.

Second of all, what is the salary that we're going to offer this person.

This is coming out of our budget.

So I don't think that should be dictated by the state.

I think that should be something we decided on.

When we posted the job, we posted the salary range.

We have to determine how much of that we're going to offer somebody.

And then the third thing I had was, what if this person turns down the job and they could because of the money, or a number of reasons, are we just going to go to our second choice and make the person who is second choice and offer.

Or are we going to come back and revote.

Those are all things that we need to discuss before we wrap this up.

>> Those are good.

Maybe we can take care of, number one, who hires, sally, are you still with us?

>> Go ahead, Mike, you go first.

>> Good afternoon, again, this is Mike Brady, Michigan department of state.

So sally and I can certainly assist this commission in any way, as, you know, and we're happy to do that.

I appreciate very much one of the comments that Doug just made and part of his question about not just the hiring but more to the point in terms of in negotiations which I think effectively needs to happen around the salary.

And so I think, you know, given -- it's one thing to extend an offer.

It's another thing to work out the actual logistics of actually bringing somebody on board. But understanding that this individual, again, you were -- you know, you had a lot of competitive candidates.

And these are folks who are used to trying to negotiate to that.

There's a range in there.

I'm not sure how to divorce or sprinkling any value in attempting to divorce the extension of the offer in negotiations to that.

Sally and I can assist in any way, my initial thought would be as a recommendation of course to this commission.

Would be perhaps Steve and Brittany as chair and vice chair could be authorized by this commission to negotiate on its behalf in both extending the offer and then negotiating the actual price range.

Just as a practical matter, can I cut to the chase, you set up a phone call, you make the negotiations, you already have the price range there, I think, you know, of course any further deliberation that you have, that individual, I'm sure, is either watching it or will be watching it and so, you know, to the degree that you want to preserve it as a real negotiations, if you were to say right now, well, I think you offer 50 percent but be prepared to go to 75 percent.

They're going to see that and say well, I know you're prepared to go to 75 percent.

Why don't we do that.

That's not necessarily, some of that is the reality of doing this in the public sector of but terms of being mindful of that, that perhaps one way to address this would be to give, again, it doesn't have to be Steve and Brittini but it certainly could be, you can take maybe two other people and have some range of representation across the political affiliations.

I'm not talking about a formal committee, I'm talking about a few individuals to author rise and negotiate that.

Along it's within the range and they've got the ability to do that.

Reiterate, if there's anything that Sally and I can assist with, we stand absolutely ready to assist and serve you.

>> Mike, one of the items that I would be uncomfortable with doing it that way, would be I would have no idea what the states benefits are to discuss that.

And that's going to come up in the discussion, you know, what benefits are on top of the salary.

>> Thank you, Doug.

On that particular point, whoever -- if this commission were to accept either what, you know, what I just proposed or some variation thereof, Sally and I can quickly pull that information together and get it to the whole commission but frankly the individuals, you know, so authorized there.

It's not entirely clear to me, I think you all discussed this and I may not have chimed in at some point in the earlier stages as we're draft the job description.

It's not entirely clear whether this individual is actually a member of the civil service automatically.

This is a short term engagement by, you know, kind of by definition given the work of this commission and then in terms of the work of the person supporting this commission.

So we're looking at, definitely, a year, more likely a year and a half to two years of some sort of -- you know, other conversations that we've all had before.

And so just thinking about something like that.

Maybe you offer contract and maybe it starts with a question to say, obviously this is not a position that, you know, will go on forever.

This is not a commission that will remain indefinitely.

This commission will do its job.

It will sunset and then a new commission will reconvene in ten years.

So just thinking about all of that.

If I were in the shoes of making that offer and negotiations, I would start, after I make the offer, and say in light of the time frame of the work here, do you want a contract, do you want us to try to develop a benefits package and other things and that certainly would naturally lead to other questions of compensation.

Are they taking benefits on their own or price point in salary because you're providing benefits for them.

For as many people as there are, there are many different thoughts on how people would like to handle that in my experience.

>> If I might just add something that I think is really embedded in everything that Mike is saying, but to put a fine point on it.

You all are doing the hiring.

Like the commission is hiring this executive director, it's not the secretary of state office who is doing the hiring.

It's all of you.

And you all are a body of the legislature.

Kind of your money is sort of housed and accessible through the legislative counsel.

And my understanding -- and I don't know all the of specifics, but my understanding is because of that, there are slightly different things where somebody might not be a formal member of the civil service or the state but they might have some access to some of those same benefits because of their position in the legislature and in sort of an administrative role.

I just want to underscore, which, again, I think it's embedded in what Mike is saying, it's all of you who are doing the hiring.

We can be helpful.

Mike has done a lot of hiring in state government and elsewhere.

We can help be part of that process if that would be helpful to all of you.

But you all, you know, you're in the driver's seat.

It's your hire and this person won't be an employee of the department of state.

>> Rhonda.

>> Okay.

It's a two part question now.

When we were first talking about having two members negotiate the pay, once they come to a number, then do they have to come back to us to vote on that since it's going out of our total income or is it because there's a range that was set for the job that they just have the okay to just whatever they do?

That's my question.

Once a salary, once a compromise is made, do we have to vote on that as a group or as a whole.

>> Richard.

?

>> If you want to answer Rhonda's question first, I have something that came up here quick unless you want me to ask it now.

>> No, I thought maybe you had a comment.

>> No, I had another question.

>> I would hope that the commission would set a top and a bottom of a range of the salary and allow whoever is doing the negotiating to be within that range.

And if we wanted -- obviously if it came in lower, we probably would approve it without too much argument.

But if it came in that we needed more, then we would have to come back and say okay, here's where we're at and we need your approval.

>> I just wanted to know -- sorry, I just wanted tonight the logistics of it.

Thank you.

>> The way I would envision it, is when we make the offer, we also make the offer

with a salary as a starting point.

The expectation is not for them to come back to us and say this is what I want.

And it's for us to say this is what we give at this point and see if they take it.

>> Sure.

>> That's what we have to determine or the people that we delegate this task to have to determine that.

>> Okay.

Anybody else.

We have a suggestion that we have a couple people, myself and Brittini, I'm not -- my thought was we would use the chairperson of the subcommittee and one other person off the board to do that.

But I'm open to whatever the group think is on this.

Doug?

>> Yeah, I would expect the entire committee to do this.

That's three of us, one republican, one democrat and one nonpartisan person and this will bring closure to their assignment as a committee.

>> I don't have a problem of that.

How does that sound to everybody, Cynthia?

>> I think that's a great idea.

>> Okay.

We'll take -- Juanita.

>> I just can barely hear you, my sound popped off.

>> What is being discussed, the committee, the subcommittee, the three people on the subcommittee, would contact Suann and make an offer of employment.

>> That sounds good.

>> If the three members of if committee are meeting, they trigger an open meeting requirement as the committee itself is a public body.

And they will have a quorum.

It will be two members of the that committee.

Just something to be mindful.

Question of like deliberation or action or whatever else.

>> So what you're saying is --

>> There's a way to sidestep by simply authorizing somebody in that regard.

>> That was going to be my follow-up.

We take it for them and pull it back in full commission.

If there's two, that takes care of it.

?

>> And I think you have the two people from the commission are also two people from the committee, two cube it.

>> I was thinking more of Doug and somebody else on the commission would meet.

Two people.

>> Yep.

>> And solves the open meetings problem.

>> Doug do you want to do that.

>> I can do it but I was not the head of the committee.

>> Who was.

>> Anthony was 123450 if you want to do it.

I don't know if Rhonda or Dustin would like to be a part of that.

>> I would.

Actually, I would.

If nobody minded.

I really would.

But I'm open to so.

>> Yeah, I'm open to it as well.

>> Okay.

>> Sounds like two people.

>> Rhonda, were you on the committee?

>> Yes, I was on the committee for the executive director, correct.

>> Then we can't have Doug.

We need a commission person.

>> I was not on the committee.

>> I thought you were.

>> No, Anthony was.

Anthony was the chair on the committee.

>> So we've got Doug and Rhonda.

Okay.

>> Dustin as well.

>> No.

>> I was on the committee.

>> You were on the committee.

Okay.

So it's just Rhonda and myself.

>> Is everybody good with that.

Do we need a motion.

If you're good with it, raise your hand.

If you're not, raise your hand.

All right.

Doug and Rhonda will contact Suann to work with Mike and sally putting together a

package and go from there.

>> One last thing, Steve.

Is everybody okay.

We have the same party affiliation.

Is everybody still okay with that?

>> I just want to make sure.

>> Don't do something crazy.

>> Okay.

Gotcha.

I don't know what you can do but don't do something crazy.

>> So let me go back, if we're going to do that and we'll take Mike's advice on salary, what should we do if she turns down the job.

Should we go to our second choice that we talked about automatically.

Or come back here.

>> I think we ought to come back.

That's just my -- you know, because.

>> All right.

>> I think it's -- we've got several good people and things people can change their mind in this matter and so I would want to come back.

>> Okay.

>> That's me.

I mean, what does everybody else think?

Come back for a second small mini discussion?

You're going to put together a package.

That answers all your questions that we can do right now, Doug.

>> I think so too.

>> Okay.

Unless we have something further on this, we're up to number one, we're up to time to quit.

We have another half hour if we want to take it to discuss initially the general counsel committee report?

>> Richard, you do have something, go ahead, I'm sorry.

>> I think I know the answer to the question but just since we're hiring three people and according to sally that's our job, what if we decide one of the individuals we do not like is not doing the job that we expect, are we able to release them and hire somebody else?

>> Yeah, there's a procedure, actually in the amendment that provides how you get rid of somebody and that one does take a republican and democrat and probably an independent.

No, it still takes seven votes but it has to be a democrat and republican in that seven too.

So, yes, there's a way to get rid of them.

All right.

What's everybody's pleasure.

Do we want to keep going or do we want to adjourn?

>> For the record, do we need a final tally for who everyone voted for or are we good.

>> I can give you the final tally, final tally was seven for Suann, five for Sheryl and one for Janette.

And I'm sure somebody was on the support staff was taking count.

>> Yes, we've got it.

>> I further assume that she took count of who voted for whom.

>> Steve, we did some good work today.

I know I'm emotionally exhausted.

I would move to adjourn.

>> Do you got bread in the oven or what.

>> No, I've got emotional care to give myself.

>> Are you making motion.

>> I am.

I'm moving to adjourn.

>> I second.

>> Rhonda seconds.

Okay.

>> Can I make a comment?

>> It's debatable, go ahead.

>> I think our time is so limited with us getting together, I think we should just continue on because it's difficult to get all the support staff involved to make these things happen.

>> Well, that's someone speech against the journey.

>> Doug, are you talking about moving on stuff for executive director position or the council?

That will be time-consuming.

>> On the general council, yes.

>> Let me ask a question before I decide how I want to vote.

Does the committee have a short list put together.

>> Of people?

>> Yeah.

>> Yeah, what I wanted to do today is give you a summary of what the process and methodology of what we used and indicate who is on our short list and why we chose those people.

>> Since we have a lot of people who would like to leave.

Can we just get the short list and then everybody have a chance to look at them before we talk to them the next time.

>> Sure.

Actually the names are from the write-up that was shown at the beginning of the meeting.

We've got -- and we'll get into why we only have two people but we've got two people on the short list.

>> Okay.

>> One is Juliann.

>> Do you want to spell all that?

>> J-u-l-i-a-n-n-e P-a-s-t-u-l-a.

>> And the second candidate we've selected for the short list is James, L-a-n-c-a-s-t-e-r.

>> Okay.

>> And we can get into the methodology we used and why we chose those people next meeting if you'd like.

>> All right.

Unless there's further discussion on the motion to adjourn.

We got to short list down and all in favor of adjourning raise your hand.

>> I'm so sorry to interpret here but quickly, I wanted to maybe suggest that the committee for communication and outreach also told you all their short list so that everyone comes to the meeting on Thursday prepared to discuss both sets of candidates.

>> Very good.

Yes.

That would be good.

>> Great.

So who is the chairperson of the outreach?

>> I am.

>> Juanita?

>> Yes.

>> Okay.

How many are on your short list.

>> We have eight.

>> Okay.

Go ahead.

Read them off.

>> We have Janet Lebson, Brenda Kerfoot, Kari Despisota, Cynthia.

>> That's not the list that I have.

Maybe the Secretary of State's Office could give the list because they were taking notes.

>> I'd be happy to.

Juanita would that be helpful?

>> No, I thought we decided 8, 3, 3 and 2 or 3, 3, 3, it was really, 3, 3, and 2 people.

So it was eight.

But, yes, you can go on and give it.

>> There's eight in your minutes.

>> Yeah, that's what I was following.

>> Sally, I think you should say who you got.

I have wrote down two.

And I don't have the last one that she said.

>> Okay.

Of so the eight that we have from the minutes from the meeting are Janet Lebson, Sonya Howell, Brenda Kerfoot, Andrea Taylor, Bill Froehlich.

>> Correction on my part.

I did not have the Woods guy.

>> Edward Woods.

>> I didn't have Edwards wood nowhere. So I couldn't read up on him.

I didn't have it in my package.

But I know we discussed it.

But I couldn't find it when I looked through my paperwork.

>> Okay.

We have listed the short list on outreach and the short list on general counsel.

All in favor now on the motion to adjourn raise your hand.

All opposed to adjourning, raise your hand.

>> Anthony, which did you do?

>> We can adjourn.

>> All right.

We are adjourned.

We'll see everybody Thursday, I believe.

>> There's a good possibility that I will not be able to make Thursday.

>> I can't hear you.

>> Hello?

>> Yeah, Dustin.

>> I was going to say, there's a very good chance that I will not be able to attend the whole meeting on either Thursday or Friday.

Due to work.

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We have a lot of people that have called off and we are kind of short staffed currently.
I'll see what I can do.

>> Okay.

The meeting Thursday sign in by is 11:45.

Thank you everyone.

Good work today.

Thank you.