

CITY OF WOBURN
CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
As a Committee of the Whole
WOBURN CITY HALL
COMMITTEE ROOM
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025 – 6:22 P.M.

Voting members present: Chair pro tem Joseph Demers, Councilor Robert Toro, Councilor Lou DiMambro, Councilor Robert Ferullo, Councilor Charles Viola, Councilor William Pappalardo and Councilor Darlene Mercer-Bruen

Absent: Chair Joanne Campbell and President Jeffrey Dillon

Also present: Human Resources Director Shawna Healey

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Reading and approval of previous meeting minutes: Motion made by Councilor Demers and seconded by Chair Campbell to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the meeting of November 13, 2024, all in favor, 7-0-2.

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Order that the City Council fill the vacancy of the position of City Engineer: Human Resources Director Healey said she has prepared a list of questions for the committee to ask of Mr. Alexander J. Rozycki, who presented for an interview for the position of City Engineer. She said she has also provided the committee with Mr. Rozycki's resume and a cover letter. Chair pro tem Demers asked: "Please tell us about yourself, describe your work experience and how it has prepared you for the City Engineer's position in the city of Woburn. Why did you apply for this position? Describe your most recent job duties and how they relate to the City Engineer. Please note one or two major accomplishments you achieved in your most recent position." Mr. Rozycki said right now he is the Asst. Town Engineer in Reading. He said he started there seven years ago. He said he worked at CDM Smith, Inc. before that. He said he felt like it would be a good lifestyle change to get into municipal government. He said he is aware of Woburn through collaborative efforts with Reading. He said he understands the responsibilities of being an engineer in a community. He said he lives in Stoneham and he feels like the City Engineer position in Woburn would be a good fit. He said he has been part of a good team in Reading. He said he started a project six years ago that took the flow of the Aberjona River into a detention pond. He said he was able to obtain a \$7.1 million grant. He said the project involved the Planning, Engineering, DPW and Town Manager departments. He said he saw through the project from the ribbon cutting to its finish. He said it was very rewarding. Councilor DiMambro asked, "What do you know about the City of Woburn and its Engineering Department operations?" Mr. Rozycki said he is aware of the traffic issues in Woburn. He said he worked

with Woburn officials to adjust a traffic light on the Washington Street/West Street corridor that improved traffic flow. He said he is familiar with the city's demographics. He said he has worked with City Engineer John Corey and GIS Coordinator Matthew Barrett. Councilor DiMambro said he would love to meet with Mr. Rozycki and hear what his ideas are. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said she appreciates what the town of Reading has done to collaborate with Woburn on traffic issues, and she thanked Mr. Rozycki for his role in that. She said Mr. Rozycki is highly recommended by City Engineer Corey. She said she is glad to see him sitting in that seat. Councilor Pappalardo asked Mr. Rozycki how he would handle a transition from Asst. Engineer in Reading to City Engineer in Woburn. He said the Woburn City Engineer's office handles a lot of volume. He said there is a lot of stuff going on in that office. Mr. Rozycki said he recognizes Woburn is a bigger community than Reading, but the difference in population isn't too drastic. He said a city or town engineer has to collaborate with consultants. He said that's who you lean on. He said he understands that the City Engineer's office is public facing. Councilor Pappalardo the City Council works closely with Engineer Corey. Mr. Rozycki said he understands the office has to move at warp speed. Chairman pro tem Demers asked, "What skills are essential to being a good City Engineer?" Mr. Rozycki said being able to manage what has to happen and what can happen is an important part of the job. He said knowing when and whom to ask for help is also a key component. Councilor Viola asked, "Can you describe some projects that you have worked on that are similar to projects that Woburn has in the works?" Mr. Rozycki said he is aware of the projects at Shaker Glen and Hurd Park and said those are very similar to projects that were undertaken in Reading. He said there is a commonality with paving roads and infrastructure planning. He said he got his start as an environmental engineer and in that capacity he oversaw the condition of a landfill and that helped him deal with soil conditions. Councilor Toro asked "This position requires significant interaction with the public, contractors and vendors, City Council and city boards. Describe your experience making public presentations and interacting with the public. What have been some of your most challenging interactions?" Mr. Rozycki said town meeting is different than city government. He said he is pretty comfortable speaking in front of a large group. He said the tough part of the job is that people only call you when they have a complaint. He said there is a lot of negative feedback but knowing that is a big part of it. Councilor Ferullo asked "What do you like best about your most recent job position? Please inform us of your interpersonal or professional strengths. What specific areas would you like to improve on?" Mr. Rozycki said the town engineer is similar to what City Engineer Corey does. He said Engineer Corey is one of the best around. He said he would like to be more involved with long-term planning. He said that would be a nice change of pace. He said he is pretty comfortable dealing with the public. He said he doesn't like it when people tell him he's not trying to help and he is. He said that's when it can get personal. Chair pro tem Demers asked "How would you describe your management style and how would you adapt it to work here? Do you have an open door policy? What are the advantages and disadvantages to having an open door policy in your opinion?" Mr. Rozycki said one of the things about municipal government is the unexpected changes. He said he thinks that is a determining factor on why there has to be an open door policy. He said the hours of construction are different than the hours of an engineering office and town hall. Chair pro tem Demers asked, "What is your experience with budget preparation and defense to a wider audience, i.e., the City Council?" Mr. Rozycki said his experience with budgets is more in the background, but he is aware of what is in the budget. Chair pro tem Demers asked, "What additional skills do you have to complement your engineering training?" Mr. Rozycki said he has a master's degree in civil engineering. He said

he was a volunteer on the Conservation Commission in Stoneham. Chair pro tem Demers asked “If hired, how would you approach your first three months of work? Priorities? Tasks? How would you go about assessing the needs of the Engineering Dept. and implementing any changes that may be needed.” Mr. Rozycki said he is not sure how much longer Jay Corey is going to be around but he can’t learn enough from someone who has been in his job as long as Engineer Corey has. He said if there is an overlap he will shadow Engineer Corey. He said one of his proprieties would be listening to the City Council and the residents to see what their needs are. He said he would dig into the capital plan. Councilor DiMambro said there are a lot of projects that come in front of the City Council and the council always relies on the Engineering Dept. He asked Mr. Rozycki how he is with time-sensitive issues and projects. He said the council relies on department heads. He said Councilor Mercer-Bruen and he have two of the busiest wards in the city. He said it is almost like the City Engineer is an air traffic controller. Mr. Rozycki said he knows how to prioritize what tasks need to get done. He said he knows how to be flexible. He said the commercial/industrial aspect of Woburn is different from a lot of towns. He said it will take some kind of learning curve. Councilor DiMambro said the council definitely appreciates someone who will cut through the minutiae. Mr. Rozycki said he understands that no one appreciates 5-page memos about storage units. Councilor Demers asked what experience Mr. Rozycki has with TIP and MPO projects. Mr. Rozycki said he worked on a project on Main Street in Reading that converted a four-lane road to a two-lane road with a shared during lane. He said he has a good rapport with Paul Steadman at MassDOT. He said Reading was successful in finding a construction grant for that project. Councilor Mercer-Bruen said she has seen the work that has been done in Reading Center, on West Street and Route 28. She said it was a big effort. She said she wishes Mr. Rozycki nothing but the best. She said he will be seeing a lot of the council. Motion made by Councilor Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Councilor Ferullo to recommend to the City Council that Mr. Rozycki be appointed to the position of City Engineer; approved, 7-0-2.

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Motion made by Councilor Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Councilor Ferullo to adjourn, all in favor, 7-0-2. Chair pro tem Demers adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent

Clerk of Committees

