

From: Kim Roney <mskimroney@gmail.com>
Sent: 10/17/2018 8:59:53 AM
To: Sheneika Smith
Cc:
Subject: Re: Why without us?

Thank you for your quick response, Sheneika. Because I so strongly value the voice of the people, especially those who's voices are un/under-represented, I remain firm in my plea.

Grace and Peace,
Kim

On Wed, Oct 17, 2018 at 9:38 AM Sheneika Smith <sheneikasmith@avlCouncil.com> wrote:

I hear your concern but given the situation we could not resume the original process. A few things were at play.

Number 1- we found a clear candidate. To coral other candidates just to meet a process would have been disingenuous. Just think, we would expose those others candidate, possibly putting there current employment at jeopardy when they arent actually the choicest.

Number 2- The candidate of choice was also a top pick in other manager searches. This was a very competitive candidate. We had to seal the deal before another organization grabbed them. Critical decision. Time sensitive!

Please know that pushing foward to land this candidate had nothing to do with shielding them from criticism from the community. If that were the case this person would not be suited for our organization because bearing criticism is a great part of being a city manager.

The folks really stirring about us circumventing community engagement are largely among my friends and constituents. Trust that council, community leaders and staff alike saw this person as a stand out and perfect for us in so many ways. And if you cant trust that, TRUST ME.

This person is gonna be challenged by groups across this city for a number of reasons; their identity alone will spark questions without cause. I advise those close to my values and community interests to be at ease. Our new city manager will need your support and allyship moving forward.

The city will rejoice tonight, Kim. If council chose wrong, let us bear that burden, but at this venture, please help the new manager by focusing on the main things. We have a well qualified manger with depth and we've made history once again.

Sheneika E Smith

On Wed, Oct 17, 2018, 8:24 AM Kim Roney <mskimroney@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mayor Manheimer & City Council Members,

I urge you to reinstate the public engagement part of the hiring process for the City Manager. Even if it's just one candidate instead of a group of finalists, we need you to honor what you have committed to the public, and until Wednesday at 4pm, you can choose to keep your commitment instead of cancelling inclusivity.

I want to say, "This isn't how we do things." Unfortunately, it has been, but it doesn't have to be.

If you are trying to protect this hire from feedback and criticism, you don't have to fail them by removing the input that would build trust with the community. We have to acknowledge that there's a deep sense of mistrust in our local, state, and federal government right now. Skipping the public engagement process you chose to offer means taking a big step back. It will take a great deal to recover since we will have welcomed this person through a process that starts them off on the wrong foot with 10 laps behind us in the progress in which we've invested to heal community and build trust.

The right person for the job will value public input, even when it's hard to hear or when they're in total disagreement. If you have offered them the option and they've declined, this is not the person we need running the daily operations of the City. If you have not given them the opportunity to choose, or have hidden the withdrawal of your promise to engage the people of Asheville, you have done yourselves and all of us a disservice.

Please move now, today, towards a realignment to your commitment: reinstate public engagement with the candidate for City Manager before their contract is signed. This could look like a series of 5 meet & greets across town, a process you are familiar with, and that will set them up for success. This is an opportunity to be our best, and we require you to demand it.

Kim

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Kim Roney - Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Piano Teacher

Asheville City Multi-Modal Transportation Commission & Transit Committee Member

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