

**Birmingham City Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 13, 2023  
6:00 p.m.**  
Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/807722625>

**I. Call to Order**

Therese Longe, Mayor

**II. Roll Call**

City Clerk Bingham called the roll.

Present: Mayor Longe  
Mayor Pro Tem McLain  
Commissioner Baller  
Commissioner Boutros  
Commissioner Haig  
Commissioner Host  
Commissioner Schafer

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Markus; City Clerk Bingham, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, City Attorney Kucharek

**III. Public Comment**

**IV. Discussion Items**

The Mayor provided introductory comments.

The Commission conducted final interviews of the City Manager Candidates in the following order: Jana Ecker, Blaine Wing, and Troy Bell.

After the final interviews, Commissioner comments were as follows:

- All three candidates took their individual preparation and the Commission's questions seriously;
- One of the candidates would be both ready to rise to the challenge of being the City Manager and demonstrated dedication to the community. Birmingham was fortunate enough to have such a candidate;
- The City would need someone who: would stand up for the City, believes in the City, would be able to work cooperatively with Staff, would be able to retain Staff and create a working environment that is forward-thinking, and would be able to work well with the public;
- Familiarity with Birmingham and its processes would be important;
- One candidate was particularly appreciated and well-suited to the position, though it would have been valuable to use an outside consultant for the City Manager search;
- Unless an internal candidate has obvious faults, hiring internally allows for the selection of a candidate that has extensive knowledge of the City's residents, relationships, and processes. This knowledge is very important;
- The City was very fortunate to have three very qualified candidates;

- CM Markus ran a great City Manager search process which was transparent, had public engagement, and integrated Commission and Staff feedback;
- Birmingham has many business leaders, tends to be conservative in its approach to leadership, and those qualities are reflected in Birmingham's success. For these reasons, it was important to consider what an outsider candidate might bring to the City, and what an insider candidate may not be able to bring to a City; and,
- The candidate search and vetting process was very good, and those involved in conducting the process deserved thanks;
- The City ended up with many overlapping candidates as similar cities running simultaneous searches using external search firms;
- The choice to have CM Markus conduct the search was not detrimental, and the search was run transparently and thoroughly;
- Even though the City had a well-mentored candidate with relevant experience, the Commission would have been willing to select a superior candidate had one been identified;
- ACM Ecker was the highest recommended candidate on Engage Birmingham;
- Part of being leader is having Staff willing to work with the leader. Staff shared great confidence in ACM Ecker. While Staff was open to the other two candidates, Staff comments demonstrated more concerns about Messrs. Bell and Wing's readiness for leadership; and,
- The Commission's sentiment regarding the candidates aligned with the sentiment of the Staff and community members who provided feedback. The selected candidate would be serving in a community with a unique, intense culture and very high expectations for service.

**MOTION:**

Motion by Commissioner Boutros, seconded by MPT McLain:

To select Jana Ecker as the next Birmingham City Manager subject to a mutually agreeable employment agreement establishing the terms and conditions of employment between the selected candidate and the City of Birmingham.

MPT McLain said she was very proud of the process, and stated that it was conducted transparently throughout. She stated that the Commission wanted the best fit for the community, and wanted to include everyone in the process. She opined that the Commission met those goals.

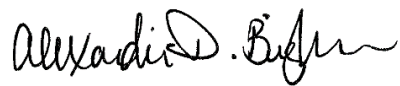
ROLL CALL VOTE:   Ayes,   MPT McLain  
   Commissioner Boutros  
   Commissioner Host  
   Mayor Longe  
   Commissioner Haig  
   Commissioner Schafer  
   Commissioner Baller

Nays,   None

Per CM Markus' recommendation, the Commission brought in the candidates, informed them of the outcome, and thanked them for their time.

**V. Adjourn**

Mayor Longe adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexandria Bingham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "B".

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Eichenhorn". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a large initial "L".

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist