



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

Special Meeting to Act on Solicitor Appointment

Public Comment Provisions during COVID-19: The meeting will be live streamed. The link to the meeting can be found on the city website with the agenda and legislation at <https://www.allentownpa.gov>. Council will receive comments on the legislation prior to the meeting and will consider all comments from city residents. All comments must include your name and address, including your city, and be emailed to Michael.Hanlon@AllentownPa.gov by 2 PM on the date of the meeting. Comments can also be registered using the ecomment provision on each agenda item found on the city website. Comments received from city residents by that deadline will be forwarded to the Mayor and Council members prior to the meeting and will also be noted at Courtesy of the Floor or Public Comment periods of the meeting. These timely received comments will also be posted on the City's webpage as a supporting document to the meeting. Any comments received on the meeting day, after the 2:00 pm deadline, will be forwarded to the Mayor and Council as soon as practicable. In addition, if you would like to speak during the meeting, please send your name, address, including municipality, and telephone number to the email address above indicating what issue you would like to speak on or call the office at 610.437.7555 and do the same, and you will be called during the meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Candida Affa, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, Ed Zucal, Ce-Ce Gerlach, and Joshua Siegel

RESOLUTIONS FOR FINAL PASSAGE (To be Voted On):

[15-4153](#)

R38

R38 Assistant City Solicitor - Sarah Rotz

Attachments: [R38 Assistant City Solicitor - Sarah Rotz](#)

[Sarah Rotz 2021 resume](#)

[Resolution #30158](#)

Mayor Ray O'Connell thanked Council and stated that it is his pleasure to bring Sarah Rotz in front of them tonight, taking her from a Right to Know Officer to Solicitor. Obviously, they went through the Budget Season and the whole nine yards. She has been with us now over a year. He thanked

Council for taking the time for the Confirmation tonight.

Mr. Matthew Kloiber thanked Mayor O'Connell for appointing Attorney Rotz and thank you Council President Guridy and Council for conducting this Hearing. You met Attorney Rotz at last year's Budget Hearing, her is pleased to re-introduce Attorney Rotz and ask Council to confirm her as Assistant Solicitor, respectfully. A little over a year they were interviewing for two positions within the officer. One was for a part-time Assistant Solicitor position that have been vacant for a bit of time and the second was for a new Right to Know Officer position. Sarah applied for the part-time Assistant City Solicitor position. By that point, she was the last person we interviewed for either of those positions and it was clear to both Associate Solicitor Fran Fruwirth and he that she was the best candidate for both. Our greatest need at the time was the Right to Know Officer so we asked if she would consider applying for the job and we were pleased that she agreed to do that so we hired her in that position. She has been a part of the Solicitor's Office as a Right to Know Officer for about a year. She has done a terrific job in that role. During that time, we also worked in legal topics for her to research just to see what her legal skills are and background would be to see if it will work as an Assistant City Solicitor. Her legal research and writing skills are excellent. She has been involved in some of our discussions and legal topic and made important contributions that have enriched our legal analyst in the work that we have done in the city. With her confirmation, we will be able to put her to work in city legal matters. We really can't do that now. That is only Assistant City Solicitor's can do after they are Confirmed. A Right to Know Law Officer does not have to be an Attorney. With her Confirmation, if Council were to do that, we would be able to get her to do legal work. We can send her to court. We can have her formally review legal matters. We can send her to Council meetings. We can have her assist in advising boards and departments. We can have her assist in reviewing legal analysis of contracts. With the charge that we have of handling as many city cases internally as possible while still advising the different branched of government and also the boards and departments, having her on board as Assistant Solicitor will help us a great deal in fulfilling those roles. He stated that he knows the importance that our city officials place on trying to hire our own residents. Sarah was the best qualified person for this position when we interviewed for it. She is also an Allentonian. If she fulfills that role. She attended Union Terrace Elementary School, Raub Middle School, and Allen High School. She is a city residents and she committed to the city to make it better. She is respects and liked in the Solicitor's office. She knows the citizens of Allentown will be well served by expanding her role in the office and allowing her to fully utilize her skills, knowledge and training for the benefit of the city. For these reasons, he respectfully asked that Council Confirm her for this position. He turned it

over to Sarah for her to talk on behalf of her own Confirmation.

Ms. Sarah Rotz stated good evening. Can you hear me? She thanked Mayor O'Connell for the appointment and thanked Solicitor Kloiber for the introduction, Mr. Guridy and Council for allowing her the opportunity to speak tonight. She was fortunate to begin to work for the City of Allentown in the Solicitor's office just over one year ago as the Right to Know Officer. This position is one that she quickly found to enjoy and thrive in. She stated that she was born and raised in Allentown and grew up here attending UT Elementary School, Raub Middle School, and graduating Allen High School in 2001. She stated that she completed her Bachelor's Degree in 2005 at DeSales University where she major in Political Science and Law and Society. She moved to New England in 2005 to attend Law School at Roger Williams University School of Law. After graduating from law school, in 2008 she practiced law in Rhode Island and Massachusetts for approximately six years focusing on bankruptcy, family law and personal injury. The opportunity presented itself and she made the decision to move back to the Lehigh Valley in 2014. She stated that she is very close to her parents and twin sister. She and her sister take advantage of the wonderful Park System here in Allentown almost every day to walk their dogs and enjoy nature. She stated that after she moved back to Allentown, she began commuting to Philadelphia for her job. She worked on large, complexed civil litigation cases focusing on discovery. She wanted to live and work in Allentown, but it ended up taking time to find a position that she knew she could flourish in and use her experience to the fullest potential. That position is the one she is in now and she hopes to add the extra duties and responsibilities of an Assistant City Solicitor to her position so that she can serve the city to the best of her ability. She considers herself to be dedicated, open - minded and spirited. She has an innate sense of right and wrong that was instilled in her and her sister by their parents. She enjoys the exchange of ideas and opinions. Something in that Mr. Kloiber encourages all of them to do every day. She loves coming into work every day to the Solicitor's office. Over the last year, she has been excited and astounded at the breadth of the issues and subject matters that flow through the Solicitor's office. Each Solicitor and staff member in the office has impressed her with their knowledge and dedication. She has created efficiencies within the Right to Know process which will allow her seamlessly add additional duties onto her plate. She believes that the Mayor has appointed her and Solicitor Kloiber has advocated for her for this position for her because they both see how committed she is to work hard for the city she grew up in and live in now, her hometown Allentown. She thanked them for their consideration.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Ms. Rotz and stated great presentation. He asked if there were any comments from the dais.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked Mr. Kloiber how do we know she is not going to send her sister to work.

Ms. Sarah Rotz stated not a thought.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated he thought she said twin sister, but they are not identical.

Mr. Matthew Kloiber stated that from his time having twins he's gotten pretty good in distinguishing them.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated likewise. And, as far as the half hour lunch break, does she ever exceed that.

Mr. Matthew Kloiber stated most of the time she is eating while working at her desk. He has to force her to actually take lunch.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that is the exact answer he was looking for.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Mr. Zucal and asked any other comments.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated he sees that she was ranked the top Bankruptcy Petitioner Attorney by volume in the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. He hopes that this is not any future preview of what we are worried about here. He was a little concerned. He thought Matt knew something that Council did not.

Ms. Sarah Rotz stated no. She stated that she has no plans of bankruptcy in the city.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that it is exciting that she is from Allentown. She was born, raised and she lives here in Allentown. She has always said that since the beginning that we have to make sure that we hire within the city. We do have great people here with a lot of education, intelligence and hardworking individuals here in the City of Allentown. She believes that is a plus.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated thank you. Anybody else? He stated thank you for your presentation. Your skills and accolades are preceding. We certainly have an opportunity to vote on it today right at this meeting. Unless anybody else has something else to say, we can do that right now.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that there were no comments from the public.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she is thrilled to say yes.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated welcome.

Ms. Sarah Rotz thanked Mr. Guridy, Council for letting her be here tonight.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated welcome onboard.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated yes, welcome onboard.

Mr. Matthew Kloiber thanked Council.

Mayor Ray O'Connell thanked Council and stated that they are getting a fine young lady. Very professional and very well qualified and very respected. You did the right thing and he knew they would do the right thing. She is a great kid. He stated that everybody is a kid to him.

Ms. Sarah Rotz stated that she does not know how young she is anymore.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that they are happy to have her here and if they did not think she was the best, she would not be here.

Mayor Ray O'Connell stated that with Matt Kloiber, Fran Fruhwirth, Adam and Jorge, adding Sarah is one heck of a team. We made a commitment a while ago to try not to ship everything out. We got five of them now and they are doing a great job under this guys leadership. It is a good strong team. We have a basketball team now right with five. He thanked Council and stated to Sarah he knows she will do a terrific job.

Yes: 7 - Candida Affa, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, Ed Zucal, Ce-Ce Gerlach, and Joshua Siegel

Enactment No: 30158

ADJOURNED: 5:41 PM