



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

5:45 PM

Council Chambers

Special Meeting: Human Resource Director Appointment

Special Meeting to Appoint a Human Resource Director

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Ed Zucal, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

[15-7462](#)

R 5

HR Director Appointment - Marty Velazquez

Sponsors: Affa, Hendricks, Mota, Napoli and Santos

Attachments: [R5 HR Director Appointment](#)

[General HR Charter and Code Provisions.docx](#)

[Marty Velazquez Resume.pdf](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated thank you and at this time he is going to turn it over to the mayor.

Mr. Michael Hanlon asked should he read Resolution R5 for the record.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated yes, that will be awesome, thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mike and stated now.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated yes, thank you Council President Hendricks and all members of City Council for holding this Confirmation Hearing tonight. He stated that he will be brief. He is just beyond thrilled to present Martin Velazquez as Marty Velazquez as his nominee for Director of Human Resources for the City of Allentown. He stated that he thinks some of them had an opportunity to meet Marty, some of you know Marty from his 12 years of distinguished service on this very City Council. The day didn't look exactly like that when you were serving, but he has demonstrated over these 12 years deep commitment to the city of Allentown and its people. While he served on City Council, he was at the same time building an extensive career at Wells Fargo where he developed extensive experience in Human Resources Management and very important, organizational

leadership and Marty is bringing that incredible combination of the private sector HR experience and intimate knowledge of our city government to this work. He understands Allentown's challenges and the opportunities and he combines that understanding with a professional background in Human Resources making him, in his opinion ideally suited to lead the HR department at the city of Allentown at this critical time. He stated that his leadership skills and professional experience and strong dedication to the city of Allentown will help them building a stronger and more affective workforce that ultimately serves or community. He stated that he respectfully request Council's support for his confirmation and will turn it over to Marty for remarks he would like to make before you will ask him some questions.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked the mayor and stated good evening Mr. Velazquez. He stated welcome.

Mr. Marty Velazquez stated that he is a sound tech and he didn't know to turn it on. He stated good evening Council President, members of Council and stated that it is actually kind of strange to be here because it looks so different, but there are some similarities. He stated he just wanted to share a brief summary of the background in general. He stated if they have any questions he will be happy to answer them. He spent 42 years, beginning with First National Bank of Allentown as an employer interviewer. He has extensive background and experience in employment. That includes from recruiting, to change management, to training and development, all the way through doing investigations in employee relations. Employee relations may mean different things to different people, but employee relations in the world that he comes from involves looking into all kinds of things. He has done Title Seven Investigations. He investigated complaints from all kinds of allegations. Making recommendations that responded to Pennsylvania Human Relations Charges. He had to do position papers supporting the banks position. On most particular situations, he represented the bank at various hearings and the like. After he left Council, he went into management. He managed the team doing very similar things including and he didn't mention the fact that he also supported managers in tough decisions on how to handle performance issues. Concerns that they are having Conflict Resolution between individuals and try to get people to play well together and maybe you could say and had hands on with those things. His management included any number of ER Consultants doing very similar things. Ensuring that we did things the right way. Some of the fundamental things that they will get when they were considering those kinds of cases are: what does policy say? what does the law say with respect to the policy and the issue that has been brought to their attention? What kind of risk could there be associated with that? Fact finding associated with looking into those cases and supporting decisions that

made sense while mitigating risks for the organization and even employees. He stated that he feels like he had quite an extensive experience doing those kinds of things. He stated that on a personal note that he really feels that and some of them know he is a man of faith and he feels that God put him in a position like that so he could do the right thing for people. He can be in a position that he can ensure that the issues were handled in a fair and equitable way so the outcome was the best overall not only for the organization, but also the employee. He stated there are lots of other things he has accomplished. He was the Affirmative Action and EEO Officer. He stated that he had to reply to audits. He had two successful audits during his time. He stated that he is very strong and a big believer in analytics. He thinks they should have the data. Data helps them determine what they are seeing, what's going on and then also making sure they communicate to leadership with changes that need to happen. We need to understand what we are seeing that is going on in those areas. He is also a big supporter and done a lot of training: sexual harassment, discrimination. The whole gamut of training to ensure they do the right thing in situations. He is a big supporter of making sure that employees know what he expected of them so that they can move in the right direction that managers also know and supported properly with training as well. At the same time he was considering running for City Council, he was on the Human Relations Commission in the city of Allentown at the time that he decided to run, he was actually the Chair of that Commission. He was involved in a number of diversity related groups like the NCBI (National Coalition Building Institute) that Phyllis Alexander introduced them to way back then and got involved with training there. He stated that they supported Latinos in the community and especially and he doesn't know if he can say, but, they actually helped ensure that they were educated around electoral process, had access to and actually registered and helped folks who couldn't make it to the polls and got them to the polls. He stated again, a number of other things that he was involved in.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Velazquez and stated that at this time he will open it up to anybody on the dais that has any questions or comments.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he will not be voting for him. He stated that he will be recusing himself. He stated as you know he ran for mayor a long time ago and stated that he worked the polls for him. He stated to be honest, he is straight up when it comes to that stuff. He stated that at some point in time he would like to have a nice conversation with him.

Mr. Marty Velazquez stated he would love to and stated thank you.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Zucal and stated Ms. Affa.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she remembers when he was on City Council. She stated that he served with integrity and stated that she is thrilled to have him on board as the HR Director. She stated God knows, the city needs one. She stated please don't let us chase you away. She stated congratulations, she hopes he makes it.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated Ms. Mota.

Dr. Cynthia Mota stated welcome and finally she got to meet him. She would see his pictures on the 5th floor. She stated that always hear a lot of positive things about him when he was serving here on City Council. She stated especially she heard a lot of great things about you with Julio Guridy. She stated to Mr. Velazquez that he is always mentioning you. She stated thank you for being here because we really do need someone in HR.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there was anybody else.

Mayor Matt Tuerk stated if he could add to it. He stated before Council votes, he wants to make sure that they understand that Mr. Velazquez will be a key member of this administration, will have the responsibility for delivering quite a few things that you all be looking for, including an upgrade to our Personnel Manual that was last updated in 2009 and is a matter of Ordinance so you will need to vote on that. He will be working to complete extensions to our contracts for SEIU and for the FOP. Hugely important issues for him and also be working to establish a culture here of excellence. The culture will be driven by example and be driven by activities. He stated that he is incredibly hopefully that they will support his candidacy as our HR Director.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mayor Tuerk. He stated that he would like to add that Mr. Velazquez is like a breathe of fresh air coming into this building. He stated that they have gone a long time without a Director. It is a sorely needed position. He stated that he has known Mr. Velazquez for a long time and in addition to your professional resume, he would say probably the most important part of your life is his coaching career at Union Terrace where he had the opportunity and the pleasure to coach with you. It is nothing more important than helping our youth in developing them into the adults they turn out to be today and tomorrow.

Mr. Marty Velazquez stated that you know he agrees and thanked Mr. Hendricks.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Velazquez for his willingness to join them. He sated that it is much appreciated. He stated that he will open it up to the public. He asked if there are any comments from the public.

Mr. Nelson Quinones stated thank you for the opportunity. He stated that he thinks that Marty Velazquez certainly is a great candidate as you already know and certainly some of you had experience in speaking with him at all. He stated that he grew up in this city in Allentown. He is the Lehigh Mission District Dean for the Lutheran Church. He thinks that having and welcoming back Mr. Velazquez certainly would emphasize the welcoming of the city itself too. He stated that he certainly encourage a positive vote for Mr. Velazquez. He stated actually he is being bias because Mr. Velazquez hired him when he was a student as a bank teller from Meridian Bank, but had great experiences with him. He wished him the best and wished everyone the best as well.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Quinones and asked is there anybody else. He stated seeing none, Mr. Clerk, if you would conduct the vote.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated thanked you and congratulated Mr. Velazquez and welcome to our team.

Yes: 6 - Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Natalie Santos, Ce-Ce Gerlach, Candida Affa, and Santo Napoli

Abstain: 1 - Ed Zucal

ADJOURNED: 5:57 PM