

City of Stanton
Special Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2018

1. **Call to Order: Pledge of Allegiance** - The City of Stanton special meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Mayor Ken Burris with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Mayor Ken Burris, Mayor Pro-Tem Williams, Jane Basom, Mike Mazzola, Chuck Miel, John Seaman.

Absent: None

2. **Agenda Approval** - Motion made by Miel second by Seaman to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote.

3. **Public Comments:** None

4. **Pre-Interview Business**

Jerry Richards will review the process for the interviews and selection process.

(Note- Times shown below are approximate)

5. **(9:00 a.m.) - Interview #1** – Daniel Craymer

Confidential Draft Interview Questions

Stanton City Manager

July 21, 2018

Candidate #1 Daniel Craymer Interviewer Stanton City Commissioners

Overall Impression/ Ranking

Introduction and initiation by **Mayor**

Welcome Mr. Craymer

- 20+ questions; allotting about an hour to get to know you and for you to get to know us
- We will each ask you a series of questions, some of us taking notes to help differentiate your responses from others
- Provide you with time at the end to ask us questions and to make a closing statement

Most of the first several questions are designed to allow the candidate to take the stage and for you to begin to learn who they are.

- *Look for succinctness of thought; what accomplishments candidate prioritizes; professional demeanor*
- *Pay attention to consistency of responses as applying to other answers.*
- *Begin to gauge fit and desired attributes: communication style (clear, concise); energy, enthusiasm, optimist, transparent, creative problem solver*

1. Welcome Mr. Craymer To start, please give us a brief summary of your experience. Tell us why you applied to Stanton and how you think your style and expertise will be the right fit for us? My experiences have been High School Grad, Grand Haven, MSU 1 yr., then went on to be a Hunting Guide out west, Paramedic, then went into law enforcement with Walker, while there worked on grant writing and received my bachelors' while working, at Walker I worked on Policy & Procedures, managed people, incidents and or proposals. While working investigative work I came to Stanton/Big Rapids often and enjoyed Stanton in this work, a nice community, there was just something about driving through Stanton.

2. From your resume, it appears you have a career filled with accomplishments. Tell us about two of which you are the proudest. *(Evidence of personal priorities, e.g. employee development, partnerships; projects/infrastructure; creative solutions; telling the community's story, etc. Pay attention to "I vs. We")*

Probably SRT team up and running with approvals of programs. Neighborhood watch with grants program.

3. Have you ever been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned before termination action... Tell us about that. While working with the federal contractor they rescinded the contract for handwriting being illegible/hard to read.

➤ Follow-up **IF YES:** What did you learn about yourself and how did that experience change or shape your current management style? **IF NO:** Why are thinking about leaving your current position/community?
My management style didn't change much, the federal government didn't have any leeway for this.

4. What do you think will be your biggest challenge in moving into the job if you are chosen? *(Self-awareness, honesty, understanding of the job)*
Probably getting comfortable with day to day stuff, not including police stuff. I would look at it as running a household, I'm confident.

5. If offered the position in Stanton, what do you intend to do to be sure you are a part of the community and in touch with the residents and community leaders? *(Will they move to the community, join service clubs, volunteer)*
Being available, being out and available in the community, maybe with a neighborhood watch. As city manager carry out the will of voters and council.

6. What is the most challenging problem or situation you have faced in your career, and what did you learn from the experience that will be helpful in successfully managing the City of Stanton? When promoted to sergeant a buddy wasn't answering the radio and I had to write him up, I treat all people the same whether they are friend or not.

Next series attempts to gauge commitment for this position in the City of Stanton (did candidate do homework and learn the right things?)

- *Fit check: community liaison with service clubs and public, organized, good office skills, sets goals and priorities, builds relationships, open minded, upbeat personality, available, common sense approach, comfortable in small town setting, transparent in working with City Commission and employees, follows thru*
- *Skill Check: government finances and budgeting; HR and labor relations, Economic and Central Business District Development, planning and placemaking, provides options based on research and best practices*

7. If appointed City Manager, what do your first three months look like in Stanton? (*Check against "prides" from #2 and other personal priorities*)

I would like to know people on a 1st name basis, get out in the community, and be comfortable to talk with the people, council and find out goals and achieve them.

➤ Follow-up if not answered above:

- Who do you meet with as soon as possible? (*Who signifies natural priorities: employees vs. residents vs. business leaders vs. commission members etc.*)
- What are the most important things you will try to learn? (*Relationships vs. data; Community and company culture vs. asset analysis; Political environment, etc.*)

8. How would you intend to build relationships within the business community? What actions have you taken in your past experiences that helped you understand the challenges business and industry faced in your community? Get out in the community, have coffee and get to know people. Private enterprise to thrive and survive. Get comfortable with people.

9. From what you have learned about us, what do think our two biggest challenges will be in the next three years? How would you tackle them and what steps will you follow? (*Challenges: Residential housing, blight, Redevelopment Ready Certification thru MEDC, filling vacant spaces in the downtown and commercial areas, Funding to complete Veterans' Park, increasing community involvement in city government, improving community perception of city leadership and organization*)

The Veteran's Memorial Park, what is the commissions goals and direction for him with guidance and advice.

Next group of questions speaks to the culture of the City of Stanton organization and how candidates may fit in with the City Commission and with the existing employees. Look for

- *Fit check: people person, transparent, open minded, small town comfort level, passionate, sound judgement, self-starter*
- *Skill Check: excellent communicator, listener, facilitation skills/ability to achieve consensus; team builder; can work with civic partners*

10. What is the most important skill a city manager can have when it comes to Manager/Commission relationship success? Tell us about a time you had to rely on that talent to build or improve relationships. Develop relationships, discuss and develop a consensus. He went from labor to lawyer and had to listen and understand how to take complaints and be an active listener.

11. How would you keep Commission Members informed and updated.? How would you determine what information should be communicated to them?

The council should get all information available weekly in a meeting or phone call with a weekly synopsis, if there is an emergency then I would get in contact immediately.

12. Are you a more of a manager or a leader? Can you describe how you exemplify the best of that quality?
(Watch for self-identifying terms: wants to be a member of the team; big-picture thinker; gathers input before decisions; hires right people and delegates; organized;)

In a leadership position it is easier to be manager if you are a leader. Example: Police academy wanted me to be a leader, I said no due to too much going on, in 2 months I agreed and was elected president of the academy for my class.

13. Describe your management style and give us an example from your work experience. Does it vary with different people or circumstances?
Yes, it definitely varies, some people need constant reassurance and some people don't need any and can just get the job done without it, you just adjust management styles with every person.

14. An important role of the city manager is to work with the City Commission to develop long term goals and plans to move the City forward. What suggestions would you have to facilitate this process in Stanton?
Getting input from people in the community and the council and carrying out and setting the policy and being available.

15. What is the minimum number of years you would see yourself staying in the Stanton Manager position if you are chosen to be our next manager.?

I would say 5 to 7 years and that kind of depends on you, I am not looking at this as a stepping stone. I would be here as long as you'll have me, I have a 13-year-old at home still.

The next series attempts to get to additional specifics on the professional skills needed in Stanton. Skills Check: financial acumen; organizational review and optimization; human resources functions; grant writing; promotion; economic development tools; long-range visioning and planning

16. What size budgets have you been responsible for in the past and what are the most critical keys to a successful budgeting process?

The critical keys to a successful budget is to put priority and goals with payroll first, the full budget in Walker was maybe 5 million.

17. What experiences have you had supervising employees and what have you found to be the biggest obstacle in employees reaching their full potential?

Managing people can be kind of tricky sometimes, communication is #1, does this person know their expectations, clarify for them if they don't know.

18. How would you evaluate the performance of appointed department heads and the activities which they have responsibility and how do you ensure both supervisors and employees are working effectively and productively?

(Goal-setting, performance evaluations; training and mentoring; best practices measurement)

Policy & procedures, good job descriptions/responsibilities, set criteria, tools, and communicate with employees.

19. What has been your experience (positive and negative) of stricter code enforcement and blight control measures in maintaining attractive neighborhoods and business districts? How would you react to the citizen or business who claims they are "being picked on"?

Unfortunately, I have had a lot of experience with this. Show them in black and white, everyone has the same standards, it is very important to keep up on this for the community.

20. Have you had the opportunity to develop long-term, public works facilities expansion and repair strategies? What information and data would you recommend the City pursue in developing such a strategy?

Not direct experience with this. I would research this and get all the information I could before diving right in, look at it with a household management feel, and have 25% of it in a contingency plan for budgeting.

21. What experiences have you had in securing and administering grant funds? **And**, looking at the state and federal landscape going forward, what projects and external funding streams would you suggest pursuing here in Stanton?

I wrote all the grants in total for my career as sergeant, police grants are easy and private grants are harder and I didn't do many of them.

22. What is your experience in applying technology to government practices and program, and how have you used computer and information technology to improve operations in your work settings?
Everything is done on secure sights, direct communication on social media, if he doesn't have direct experience he would have his son teach him.

23. Economic development and redevelopment, including the Central Business District, can take many forms. Tell us about your experience in the field including working on Redevelopment Ready Community Certification. More importantly, what is your philosophy and what approach will you suggest for us?

Master Plan should be gone through every 5 years, start in the Planning Commission. It is very important to stick with the Master Plan, but you can spruce it up and certainly changes should be made if a lot of changes must be made for Zoning Permits. I haven't worked with Redevelopment Ready Community Certification.

24. We have news media coverage and expect them to independently inquire into your background if you are chosen to be our next city manager. Are there any events in your professional or personal life which would be *awkward* or *embarrassing* to us, or you, if reported upon in the media?

No, I'm a pretty conservative person and don't feel there would be anything for myself or the council.

Mayor: Now it's your turn to ask us questions and to make any final comments if you wish.

Look for clues in the candidate's questions that are thoughtful and looking for a community with Stanton's unique attributes and administrative, political culture.

Where do you see the Community in the next 3 years? Commissioner Basom: Having a Veterans' Park, New trees downtown and having a Redevelopment Ready Community Certification.

Commissioner Williams: Having positive community involvement.

What are the day to day responsibilities? Make sure everything is running smooth, keeping in touch with employees and commission.

Mayor: Thank you. Our consultant will advise you of our selection decisions and further steps in the process.

Mr. Craymer was done at 10:00 a.m.

6. (10:15 a.m.) – Interview #2 - Chelsea Stratil

Confidential Draft Interview Questions

Stanton City Manager

July 21, 2018 Candidate #2 Chelsea Stratil Interviewer Stanton City Commissioners

Overall Impression/ Ranking

Introduction and initiation by **Mayor**

Welcome Ms. Chelsea Stratil

- 20+ questions; allotting about an hour to get to know you and for you to get to know us
- We will each ask you a series of questions, some of us taking notes to help differentiate your responses from others
- Provide you with time at the end to ask us questions and to make a closing statement

Most of the first several questions are designed to allow the candidate to take the stage and for you to begin to learn who they are.

- *Look for succinctness of thought; what accomplishments candidate prioritizes; professional demeanor*
- *Pay attention to consistency of responses as applying to other answers.*
- *Begin to gauge fit and desired attributes: communication style (clear, concise); energy, enthusiasm, optimist, transparent, creative problem solver*

1. Welcome Ms. Chelsea Stratil to start, please give us a brief summary of your experience. Tell us why you applied to Stanton and how you think your style and expertise will be the right fit for us?

I was a graduate from Spring Lake High School, Ferris State University in Political Science, Central Michigan University in Public Administration. I have a recreation background with upwards of 40 employees for 9 years, I became assistant general manager at 14 years old. I have worked as a City Manager at the County of Muskegon, Mercy and Shelby, for almost 3 years.

2. From your resume, it appears you have a career filled with accomplishments. Tell us about two of which you are the proudest. (*Evidence of personal priorities, e.g. employee development, partnerships; projects/infrastructure; creative solutions; telling the community's story, etc. Pay attention to "I vs. We"*)
 1. Serving at our local VFW in Grand Haven
 2. Volunteer cheer coach for 3 years and still follows the girls
3. Have you ever been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned before termination action...Tell us about that. Yes, the departure from Shelby Township was on good terms.
 - Follow-up **IF YES:** What did you learn about yourself and how did that experience change or shape your current management style? **IF NO:** Why are thinking about leaving your current position/community?
4. What do you think will be your biggest challenge in moving into the job if you are chosen? (*Self-awareness, honesty, understanding of the job*)

Stanton has agricultural roots, the younger community, you need to love where you live and have pride in your community.
5. If offered the position in Stanton, what do you intend to do to be sure you are a part of the community and in touch with the residents and community leaders? (*Will they move to the community, join service clubs, volunteer*)

I'm a talker, building relations, business owners, employees and residents. I have an open doors policy, am always available, get to their level and have pride in your community.
6. What is the most challenging problem or situation you have faced in your career, and what did you learn from the experience that will be helpful in successfully managing the City of Stanton?

Upon my arrival in Shelby, a police officer had been embezzling and was very well liked and she had to terminate him and that was very tough for me.

Next series attempts to gauge commitment for [this position in the City of Stanton](#) (did candidate do homework and learn the right things?)

- *Fit check: community liaison with service clubs and public, organized, good office skills, sets goals and priorities, builds relationships, open minded, upbeat personality, available, common sense approach, comfortable in small town setting, transparent in working with City Commission and employees, follows thru*
 - *Skill Check: government finances and budgeting; HR and labor relations, Economic and Central Business District Development, planning and placemaking, provides options based on research and best practices*
7. If appointed City Manager, what do your first three months look like in Stanton? (*Check against "prides" from #2 and other personal priorities*)
Getting to know ordinances and residents, getting to know your employees and show where I'm coming from or getting things when needed. Have an open house with a meet and greet.
- Follow-up if not answered above:
- Who do you meet with as soon as possible? (*Who signifies natural priorities: employees vs. residents vs. business leaders vs. commission members etc.*)
 - What are the most important things you will try to learn? (*Relationships vs. data; Community and company culture vs. asset analysis; Political environment, etc.*)
8. How would you intend to build relationships within the business community? What actions have you taken in your past experiences that helped you understand the challenges business and industry faced in your community?
Very involved with business owners. Getting to know businesses one on one and what makes them successful.
9. From what you have learned about us, what do think our two biggest challenges will be in the next three Years? How would you tackle them and what steps will you follow? (*Challenges: Residential housing, blight, Redevelopment Ready Certification thru MEDC, filling vacant spaces in the downtown and commercial areas, Funding to complete Veterans' Park, increasing community involvement in city government, improving community perception of city leadership and organization*)
Diversity is so much and smaller. I would be challenged by Parks and Recreation. I would like to get involved with Stanton Old Fashion Days.
Next group of questions speaks to the culture of the City of Stanton organization and how candidates may fit in with the City Commission and with the existing employees. Look for
- *Fit check: people person, transparent, open minded, small town comfort level, passionate, sound judgement, self-starter*
 - *Skill Check: excellent communicator, listener, facilitation skills/ability to achieve consensus; team builder; can work with civic partners*
10. What is the most important skill a city manager can have when it comes to Manager/Commission relationship success? Tell us about a time you had to rely on that talent to build or improve relationships. Documentation of diary items to build relationships.
11. How would you keep Commission Members informed and updated.? How would you determine what information should be communicated to them?
Update every 2 weeks, 2 months to all 7 members.
12. Are you a more of a manager or a leader? Can you describe how you exemplify the best of that quality? (*Watch for self-identifying terms: wants to be a member of the team; big-picture thinker; gathers input before decisions; hires right people and delegates; organized;*)

I'm a mix between a manager aspect to satisfy employees with an open-door policy which then goes into being a leader.

13. Describe your management style and give us an example from your work experience. Does it vary with different people or circumstances?
Yes, it does vary in management you have to find the boundary of needs, I do huddles for 15-20 minutes, what can I do to help, let me step in when needed but don't over step.
14. An important role of the city manager is to work with the City Commission to develop long term goals and plans to move the City forward. What suggestions would you have to facilitate this process in Stanton?
Evaluation of what's there now, where the community sees this going forward, last thing was I worked on Redevelopment Ready Community Certification.
15. What is the minimum number of years you would see yourself staying in the Stanton Manager position if you are chosen to be our next manager?
I was at the camp for 9 years, I was in the dorms for 3 years because I loved where I lived and wanted to be there. I would say I minimum of 5 years, but I could see myself being a lifer if you wanted me.
[The next series attempts to get to additional specifics on the professional skills needed in Stanton.](#)
Skills Check: financial acumen; organizational review and optimization; human resources functions; grant writing; promotion; economic development tools; long-range visioning and planning
16. What size budgets have you been responsible for in the past and what are the most critical keys to a successful budgeting process?
2 or 3 million budgets. I was solid by year 3 on budgets and very particular.
17. What experiences have you had supervising employees and what have you found to be the biggest obstacle in employees reaching their full potential?
There are two parts, education and job description.
18. How would you evaluate the performance of appointed department heads and the activities which they have responsibility and how do you ensure both supervisors and employees are working effectively and productively? *(Goal-setting, performance evaluations; training and mentoring; best practices measurement)*
Use other municipalities resources, like list servers, MML, doing research. Work on solid evaluations together vs. on your own.
19. What has been your experience (positive and negative) of stricter code enforcement and blight control measures in maintaining attractive neighborhoods and business districts? How would you react to the citizen or business who claims they are "being picked on"?
I have lots of experience, us team work, go to them personally, show them a sense of pride, provide examples to why there's a problem.
20. Have you had the opportunity to develop long-term, public works facilities expansion and repair strategies? What information and data would you recommend the City pursue in developing such a strategy?
21. What experiences have you had in securing and administering grant funds? **And**, looking at the state and federal landscape going forward, what projects and external funding streams would you suggest pursuing here in Stanton?
I just started doing grants more improving on them.
22. What is your experience in applying technology to government practices and program, and how have you used computer and information technology to improve operations in your work settings?

I encountered a lot of resistance with technology, social media could be an asset, I had GIS and power point courses in college.

23. Economic development and redevelopment, including the Central Business District, can take many forms. Tell us about your experience in the field including working on Redevelopment Ready Community Certification. More importantly, what is your philosophy and what approach will you suggest for us? RRCC, she is very passionate about this and wants to know if everyone knows all the benefits from this program.
24. We have news media coverage and expect them to independently inquire into your background if you are chosen to be our next city manager. Are there any events in your professional or personal life which would be *awkward* or *embarrassing* to us, or you, if reported upon in the media? If you google my name you will see my name with the police chief embezzlement case and on social media with her cheer girls.

Mayor: Now it's your turn to ask us questions and to make any final comments if you wish.

Look for clues in the candidate's questions that are thoughtful and looking for a community with Stanton's unique attributes and administrative, political culture.

What needs are you currently addressing with the community? Commissioner Williams: Redeveloping downtown and Veterans' Park.

What are you looking for in a City Manager, ambition, knowledge? Commissioner Seaman: longevity

Commissioner Miel: both, Commissioner Basom: longevity, experience, ambition.

Mayor: Thank you. Our consultant will advise you of our selection decisions and further steps in the process.

Summarized Impressions _____

Positives _____

Red Flags _____

Ms. Stratil was done at 11:17

7. (11:30 a.m.) – Interview #3 – Mr. Vester Davis

Confidential Draft Interview Questions

Stanton City Manager

July 21, 2018 Candidate #3, Vester Davis Interviewer Stanton Commissioners Overall Impression/ Ranking

Introduction and initiation by **Mayor**

Welcome Mr. Davis

- 20+ questions; allotting about an hour to get to know you and for you to get to know us
- We will each ask you a series of questions, some of us taking notes to help differentiate your responses from others
- Provide you with time at the end to ask us questions and to make a closing statement

Most of the first several questions are designed to allow the candidate to take the stage and for you to begin to learn who they are.

- *Look for succinctness of thought; what accomplishments candidate prioritizes; professional demeanor*
- *Pay attention to consistency of responses as applying to other answers.*
- *Begin to gauge fit and desired attributes: communication style (clear, concise); energy, enthusiasm, optimist, transparent, creative problem solver*

1. Welcome Mr. Davis To start, please give us a brief summary of your experience. Tell us why you applied to Stanton and how you think your style and expertise will be the right fit for us? Been in Grand Haven for 10 yrs., Grand Rapids Public Schools, Arbor Service, GVSU Bachelor of Science,
2. Master of Public Administration, nice, generous. From your resume, it appears you have a career filled with accomplishments. Tell us about two of which you are the proudest. *(Evidence of personal priorities, e.g. employee development, partnerships; projects/infrastructure; creative solutions; telling the community's story, etc. Pay attention to "I vs. We")* 1st Road Construction project in entirety conceptual to completion. 2nd employee recognition program
3. Have you ever been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned before termination action... Tell us about that. No Follow-up **IF YES:** What did you learn about yourself and how did that experience change or shape your current management style? **IF NO:** Why are thinking about leaving your current position/community? Tough decision, but transition to another leadership role for more opportunities.
4. What do you think will be your biggest challenge in moving into the job if you are chosen? *(Self-awareness, honesty, understanding of the job)*
Deer, Opportunity to take on a little bit more & to grow where you are the focus.
5. If offered the position in Stanton, what do you intend to do to be sure you are a part of the community and in touch with the residents and community leaders? *(Will they move to the community, join service clubs, volunteer)*
The most important is to go out of the office and not stay in the office, live in the community, let people know who and where you are and that you are available.
6. What is the most challenging problem or situation you have faced in your career, and what did you learn from the experience that will be helpful in successfully managing the City of Stanton?
Going back to the deer issue, how better for the public, city council, and residents

Next series attempts to gauge commitment for this position in the City of Stanton (did candidate do homework and learn the right things?)

- *Fit check: community liaison with service clubs and public, organized, good office skills, sets goals and priorities, builds relationships, open minded, upbeat personality, available, common sense approach, comfortable in small town setting, transparent in working with City Commission and employees, follows thru*
 - *Skill Check: government finances and budgeting; HR and labor relations, Economic and Central Business District Development, planning and placemaking, provides options based on research and best practices*
7. If appointed City Manager, what do your first three months look like in Stanton? *(Check against "prides" from #2 and other personal priorities)*
Getting to know staff, council, and have an open-door policy and deal with all issues or that first impression is everything, getting to know residents, business district and owners
 - Follow-up if not answered above:

- Who do you meet with as soon as possible? (*Who signifies natural priorities: employees vs. residents vs. business leaders vs. commission members etc.*)
- What are the most important things you will try to learn? (*Relationships vs. data; Community and company culture vs. asset analysis; Political environment, etc.*)

8. How would you intend to build relationships within the business community? What actions have you taken in your past experiences that helped you understand the challenges business and industry faced in your community? Survey, attend DDA, what are we working toward, RRCC obtain, already did this in Grand Haven and achieving goals with grant opportunities.

9. From what you have learned about us, what do think our two biggest challenges will be in the next three years? How would you tackle them and what steps will you follow? (*Challenges: Residential housing, blight, Redevelopment Ready Certification thru MEDC, filling vacant spaces in the downtown and commercial areas, Funding to complete Veterans' Park, increasing community involvement in city government, improving community perception of city leadership and organization*) Investment with downtown, how do we make the downtown with investments, Derby Lake how do we get them folks to come to Stanton

Next group of questions speaks to the culture of the City of Stanton organization and how candidates may fit in with the City Commission and with the existing employees. Look for

- *Fit check:* people person, transparent, open minded, small town comfort level, passionate, sound judgement, self-starter
- *Skill Check:* excellent communicator, listener, facilitation skills/ability to achieve consensus; team builder; can work with civic partners

10. What is the most important skill a city manager can have when it comes to Manager/Commission relationship success? Tell us about a time you had to rely on that talent to build or improve relationships. Listen to what the council and communication on a weekly to monthly basis. How we achieve these things for the greater good of the community.

11. How would you keep Commission Members informed and updated.? How would you determine what information should be communicated to them?

Weekly report formally or informally. The more communication the better (no surprises). Example homeowner had property damage from city but found out it was from the utility company(communication)

12. Are you a more of a manager or a leader? Can you describe how you exemplify the best of that quality? (*Watch for self-identifying terms: wants to be a member of the team; big-picture thinker; gathers input before decisions; hires right people and delegates; organized;*)

Leader whose leading people and manage/work people, keep to honesty, be open

13. Describe your management style and give us an example from your work experience. Does it vary with different people or circumstances?

Management style, team work, I am part of the team and professionally, requesting necessary tools or funds.

14. An important role of the city manager is to work with the City Commission to develop long term goals and plans to move the City forward. What suggestions would you have to facilitate this process in Stanton?

Annually, work sessions for goal settings and have top goals to work towards, how to reach that goal by working together with staff/commission.

15. What is the minimum number of years you would see yourself staying in the Stanton Manager position if you are chosen to be our next manager.?

As long as you will have me, minimum 5-10 years

The next series attempts to get to additional specifics on the professional skills needed in Stanton.

Skills Check: financial acumen; organizational review and optimization; human resources functions; grant writing; promotion; economic development tools; long-range visioning and planning

16. What size budgets have you been responsible for in the past and what are the most critical keys to a successful budgeting process?

300,000 for City Managers-solely, 10 million whole group, Rental Property owned by Grand Haven and work within budget to make them appealing. Critical keys to a successful budget is everyone has opportunity to reflect on their critical keys.

17. What experiences have you had supervising employees and what have you found to be the biggest obstacle in employees reaching their full potential?

Interns, 8 employees, understanding and must accomplish, performance reviews, evaluations. Did I give correct directions?

18. How would you evaluate the performance of appointed department heads and the activities which they have responsibility and how do you ensure both supervisors and employees are working effectively and productively?

(Goal-setting, performance evaluations; training and mentoring; best practices measurement)

Look to see if you can have weekly meetings, communication, evaluate, and hear feedback surveys for employees, just seeing what is going on.

19. What has been your experience (positive and negative) of stricter code enforcement and blight control measures in maintaining attractive neighborhoods and business districts? How would you react to the citizen or business who claims they are "being picked on"?

Community development interim for 3-4 months, communicate and move forward, to comply and be helpful, to connect and use your resources to be compliant.

20. Have you had the opportunity to develop long-term, public works facilities expansion and repair strategies? What information and data would you recommend the City pursue in developing such a strategy? I have not had that opportunity. Work with staff/team to develop a strategy.

21. What experiences have you had in securing and administering grant funds? **And**, looking at the state and federal landscape going forward, what projects and external funding streams would you suggest pursuing here in Stanton?

Lots of street reconstruction, recreation grant, lighthouse grant.

22. What is your experience in applying technology to government practices and program, and how have you used computer and information technology to improve operations in your work settings?

IT, Facebook, social media, self, reporting tool for citizens, communication with public, drone, to local newspaper (no recognition), good things that re happening.

23. Economic development and redevelopment, including the Central Business District, can take many forms. Tell us about your experience in the field including working on Redevelopment Ready Community Certification. More importantly, what is your philosophy and what approach will you suggest for us?

Knowledge has grown tremendously, working with economic developer to come up with plan and become certified. Remain small town feel but become certified.

24. We have news media coverage and expect them to independently inquire into your background if you are chosen to be our next city manager. Are there any events in your professional or personal life which would be *awkward* or *embarrassing* to us, or you, if reported upon in media? No, I had an opportunity to move with another city and declined for personal reasons.

Mayor: Now it's your turn to ask us questions and to make any final comments, if you wish.

Were there any questions that I may have not answered/correctly? Commissioner Basom: Are you planning to relocate or move closer? I have a 5-year-old and would like to expand my family and put down roots, I would like to relocate and be as close as possible to work. Commissioner Miel: not at this time.

What is your communication style? stability, no reason to leave if everyone is happy?

Look for clues in the candidate's questions that are thoughtful and looking for a community with Stanton's unique attributes and administrative, political culture.

Mayor: Thank you. Our consultant will advise you of our selection decisions and further steps in the process.

Summarized Impressions _____

Positives _____

Red Flags _____

Mr. Davis was done at 12:28 p.m.

8. (12:30 p.m.) – Lunch Break

9. (1:30 p.m.) – Interview #4 – Mr. Justin Lakamper

Confidential Draft Interview Questions

Stanton City Manager

July 21, 2018 Candidate Justin Lakamper Interviewer Stanton City Commissioners

Overall Impression/ Ranking

Introduction and initiation by **Mayor**

Welcome Mr. Justin Lakamper

- 20+ questions; allotting about an hour to get to know you and for you to get to know us
- We will each ask you a series of questions, some of us taking notes to help differentiate your responses from others
- Provide you with time at the end to ask us questions and to make a closing statement

Most of the first several questions are designed to allow the candidate to take the stage and for you to begin to learn who they are.

- *Look for succinctness of thought; what accomplishments candidate prioritizes; professional demeanor*
- *Pay attention to consistency of responses as applying to other answers.*
- *Begin to gauge fit and desired attributes: communication style (clear, concise); energy, enthusiasm, optimist, transparent, creative problem solver*

1. Welcome Mr. Justin Lakamper, to start, please give us a brief summary of your experience. Tell us why you applied to Stanton and how you think your style and expertise will be the right fit for us?

I had an internship with the City of Plymouth, in the office I am currently in 7 people work there, I always have had a goal to be a city manager.

2. From your resume, it appears you have a career filled with accomplishments. Tell us about two of which you are the proudest. *(Evidence of personal priorities, e.g. employee development, partnerships; projects/infrastructure; creative solutions; telling the community's story, etc. Pay attention to "I vs. We")*

MTA degree and my term position.

3. Have you ever been terminated, asked to resign, or resigned before termination action... Tell us about that.

No

- Follow-up **IF YES:** What did you learn about yourself and how did that experience change or shape your current management style? **IF NO:** Why are thinking about leaving your current position? The organization that I work for I can't go any higher and I would like to move back to Michigan.

4. What do you think will be your biggest challenge in moving into the job if you are chosen? *(Self-awareness, honesty, understanding of the job)*

Getting acquainted with the commission and getting the lay of the land.

5. If offered the position in Stanton, what do you intend to do to be sure you are a part of the community and in touch with the residents and community leaders? *(Will they move to the community, join service clubs, volunteer)*

Communication with the businesses, residents and go out to community events.

6. What is the most challenging problem or situation you have faced in your career, and what did you learn from the experience that will be helpful in successfully managing the City of Stanton?

My job right now is fully funded by the government. Be very firm about staying with the rules and having to do that has made me better.

Next series attempts to gauge commitment for this position in the City of Stanton (did candidate do homework and learn the right things?)

- *Fit check: community liaison with service clubs and public, organized, good office skills, sets goals and priorities, builds relationships, open minded, upbeat personality, available, common sense approach, comfortable in small town setting, transparent in working with City Commission and employees, follows thru*
 - *Skill Check: government finances and budgeting; HR and labor relations, Economic and Central Business District Development, planning and placemaking, provides options based on research and best practices*
7. If appointed City Manager, what do your first three months look like in Stanton? (*Check against "prides" from #2 and other personal priorities*)
- Move here, managing the team with individual meetings, any issues with the staff, businesses and council and what the city wants to accomplish.
- Follow-up if not answered above:
- Who do you meet with as soon as possible? (*Who signifies natural priorities: employees vs. residents vs. business leaders vs. commission members etc.*)
 - What are the most important things you will try to learn? (*Relationships vs. data; Community and company culture vs. asset analysis; Political environment, etc.*)

8. How would you intend to build relationships within the business community? What actions have you taken in your past experiences that helped you understand the challenges business and industry faced in your community?

As a contractor getting permits and as open and active in that community.

9. From what you have learned about us, what do think our two biggest challenges will be in the next three years? How would you tackle them and what steps will you follow? (*Challenges: Residential housing, blight, Redevelopment Ready Certification thru MEDC, filling vacant spaces in the downtown and commercial areas, Funding to complete Veterans' Park, increasing community involvement in city government, improving community perception of city leadership and organization*)
- Business development is always a challenge.

Next group of questions speaks to the culture of the City of Stanton organization and how candidates may fit in with the City Commission and with the existing employees. Look for

- *Fit check: people person, transparent, open minded, small town comfort level, passionate, sound judgement, self-starter*
 - *Skill Check: excellent communicator, listener, facilitation skills/ability to achieve consensus; team builder; can work with civic partners*
10. What is the most important skill a city manager can have when it comes to Manager/Commission relationship success? Tell us about a time you had to rely on that talent to build or improve relationships. Inter personal relations. The council sets rules, the city manager implements it and be up front and to the point without being rude.
11. How would you keep Commission Members informed and updated.? How would you determine what information should be communicated to them?
- How do you prefer? Calls, emails, how often? He doesn't want to be micro managing.

12. Are you a more of a manager or a leader? Can you describe how you exemplify the best of that quality? *(Watch for self-identifying terms: wants to be a member of the team; big-picture thinker; gathers input before decisions; hires right people and delegates; organized;)*

Leadership positions, but you can't have one without the other, led by example. Let them know that you can get down and dirty just like them and let them know what you expect.

13. Describe your management style and give us an example from your work experience. Does it vary with different people or circumstances?
Everything varies with circumstances, skills and being able to find who is going to do well at one job and not another.

14. An important role of the city manager is to work with the City Commission to develop long term goals and plans to move the City forward. What suggestions would you have to facilitate this process in Stanton?
Veterans' Park, redevelopment in all positive steps that are beneficial to residents and potential new residents. Bicycle trail is a huge opportunity.

15. What is the minimum number of years you would see yourself staying in the Stanton Manager position if you are chosen to be our next manager?
At least 3 years minimum but that is not the highest amount.
[The next series attempts to get to additional specifics on the professional skills needed in Stanton.](#)

Skills Check: financial acumen; organizational review and optimization; human resources functions; grant writing; promotion; economic development tools; long-range visioning and planning

16. What size budgets have you been responsible for in the past and what are the most critical keys to a successful budgeting process?
Involved with 1.6 million euro, 5 to 100,000 euro on the contractor side, 1,000 to 20,000 euro. Goal setting, I wish to accomplish how much you have getting it to work with the amount you have.

17. What experiences have you had supervising employees and what have you found to be the biggest obstacle in employees reaching their full potential?
Contracting experience is the biggest motivation, personal issue, and communication.

18. How would you evaluate the performance of appointed department heads and the activities which they have responsibility and how do you ensure both supervisors and employees are working effectively and productively?
(Goal-setting, performance evaluations; training and mentoring; best practices measurement)
Regular performance review in 6 to 12 months with goals and reevaluate, more frequently in the beginning.

19. What has been your experience (positive and negative) of stricter code enforcement and blight control measures in maintaining attractive neighborhoods and business districts? How would you react to the citizen or business who claims they are "being picked on"?
Code enforcement is important. Make sure you can help those people get to that enforcement and make it a balance and first be helpful.

20. Have you had the opportunity to develop long-term, public works facilities expansion and repair strategies? What information and data would you recommend the City pursue in developing such a strategy?
No not in direct process. Best practice is to reach out to a community that has done it and do research.

21. What experiences have you had in securing and administering grant funds? **And**, looking at the state and federal landscape going forward, what projects and external funding streams would you suggest pursuing here in Stanton?
Plymouth gets grants for the Police Department. MPA finance courses, but I haven't actually applied for a grant.

22. What is your experience in applying technology to government practices and program, and how have you used computer and information technology to improve operations in your work settings?
A couple examples with that are Plymouth community director to implement a phone and email points to free up workers time, while trying to implement online forms.

23. Economic development and redevelopment, including the Central Business District, can take many forms. Tell us about your experience in the field including working on Redevelopment Ready Community Certification. More importantly, what is your philosophy and what approach will you suggest for us?
Multiple year process, attend workshops, self-identify assets. It is important to bring in business and start with working with current businesses.

24. We have news media coverage and expect them to independently inquire into your background if you are chosen to be our next city manager. Are there any events in your professional or personal life which would be *awkward* or *embarrassing* to us, or you, if reported upon in the media?
No, I don't think so.

Mayor: Now it's your turn to ask us questions and to make any final comments, if you wish.

Look for clues in the candidate's questions that are thoughtful and looking for a community with Stanton's unique attributes and administrative, political culture.

Thank you for letting me be before you.

Take the time to look at transferrable skills and not just City Manager skills that I may be lacking.

What do you expect in the commission of a City Manager?

Commissioner Mazzola: Have someone stick around more than 6 months.

Commissioner Basom: I would like to not start over every two years.

Commissioner Williams: The Veterans' Park with the Rotary's help complete 4 ball fields and disk golf.

City Manager Bill Cousins: weekly report and a Revenue/Expenditure Report monthly.

Mayor: Thank you. Our consultant will advise you of our selection decisions and further steps in the process.

Summarized Impressions _____

Positives _____

Red Flags _____

Mr. Lakamper was done at 2:00 p.m.

10. (2:00 p.m.) – Break

11. (2:15 p.m.) – Commission deliberates and makes a determination to select a “lead Candidate” for the Stanton City Managers Position (2 suggested motions)

The commissioners deliberated and made a determination to select a “lead candidate” for City of Stanton City Manager

Basom: Chelsea & Vester
Mazzola: Vester & Craymer
Miel: Vester & Chelsea
Burris: Vester Davis
Williams: Vester & Chelsea
Seaman: Vester

- a. Motion made by Mazzola second by Seaman to "Move to extend a conditional offer of employment to Vester Davis and direct the MML to complete a background investigation and conduct further reference review." Motion was passed by voice vote.
- b. Motion made by Seaman second by Mazzola to "Move to authorize Lori Williams to initiate discussions with Vester Davis on terms of a mutually acceptable employment agreement. Such contract will be presented to the full commission for approval prior to signature and execution." Motion was passed by voice vote.

12. Public Comments:

Ray Holloway, 312 Ridge St, Wonderful day and great news, thanks.

Jerry Richards, with MML, commented good positive things are coming to Stanton. Jerry will contact Vester Davis and let him know of the offer as soon as the meeting is done.

13. Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Basom wants an incentive put into the contract if he stays within the community.

14. Adjournment

Motion made by Mazzola second by Miel to adjourn meeting at 2:41 p.m. Motion passed by voice vote.

Ken Burris, Mayor
Lori Braman, Clerk