

1 for principals and governors and senators, you know you how
2 -- you know the role of the staffer and the role of a
3 principal, so I know that role.

4 And I just want to make sure that I'm not looking
5 to be a sixth commissioner. You know, I know what I'm good
6 at, and I'm a convenor, and I'm a project manager and a
7 collaborator, and that's what I want to bring to the team; I
8 don't want to be the one making the decisions, I want to be
9 the one to help you guys to that decision point and help
10 convening that, so.

11 So that's why I'm interested in the role as a
12 staffer rather than a commission. And I feel I would not be
13 partisan at all, and I would not put my personal opinion
14 into the fold, I would just act on -- on behalf of you guys
15 as the Commission -- as the Commissioners.

16 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Any other questions?

17 COMMISSIONER LERNER: I'd just like to ask one
18 quick, one more little question, please.

19 So I've addressed this about the applicants, so I
20 have kind have a twofold question whether or not you feel
21 you have any past or current conflicts of interest that
22 might impact the -- the Commission's ability to get things
23 done; and then I'll follow up with one other quick one after
24 that.

25 MR. ABARZUA: I think that's -- yeah, that's an

1 easy one. I would say, no, I don't have any past issues
2 that would pop up or anything that would hinder me from
3 doing the best job as an executive director. I think my
4 expertise and my -- and my experience fit the mold of what
5 the Commission is looking for in an executive director, and
6 I would love for the opportunity.

7 COMMISSIONER LERNER: And then my follow-up would
8 be is if you could -- how can -- like, what is one thing you
9 could see yourself doing that would help us succeed?

10 MR. ABARZUA: I think the one thing I see myself
11 doing is -- is filling out a really great staff. I think I
12 know from a staffing perspective and being on the staffing
13 side, I know what it takes to -- to be impartial but also to
14 contribute to a team.

15 So leading that team of the staff and being a
16 leader in the sense of that; and I think also, too, and I've
17 talked about it in the previous section of the interview
18 was, you know, the project managing side of it and my
19 experience on those governor's goals council and coming up
20 with complex solutions to complex issues; and being able to
21 manage, you know, different executives, different levels of
22 executives and different levels of government, whether it
23 was county, city, and state.

24 You know, dealing with people of power and people
25 of -- you know, on the Commission you guys being able to get

1 to the finish line, I'm confident I can do that.

2 But I think at the end of the day, again, I'm going
3 to be the coach of the team and the coach of the staff and
4 then communicating to the public, I think those are all the
5 strong points I can contribute.

6 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you.

7 MR. ABARZUA: Thanks.

8 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Any other questions from our
9 Commissioners?

10 Thank you so much for joining us. We're -- we're
11 very appreciative for your interest and for your service to
12 our state.

13 MR. ABARZUA: Thank you so much. Appreciate it.

14 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. Thank you.

15 (Whereupon Mr. Abarzua exits the meeting.)

16 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: And, with that, I believe we
17 will move to Item No. IV, which is discussion and possible
18 action on executive director interviews and hiring of
19 executive director.

20 The Commission may vote to go into executive
21 session, which will not be open to the public for the
22 purpose of discussion or consideration of personnel matters,
23 including matters related to executive director candidates,
24 A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1), for discussion or consideration of
25 records exempt by law from public inspection, including the

1 receipt and discussion of information or testimony that is
2 specifically required to be maintained as confidential by
3 state or federal law pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(2), as
4 well as to obtain legal advice specifically related to
5 executive director candidates, A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3).

6 With that, I -- I would suggest that we begin our
7 deliberation in the public session and we move into
8 executive session to discuss those items that are sensitive
9 and in any way could impact our applicants in a negative
10 way.

11 And I would like to remind the public and the
12 Commissioners, we had a robust discussion this morning, we
13 do not want to repeat that entire conversation, and so this
14 should be additive information to what we have learned
15 subsequent to the first round.

16 Let's start with the first candidate, Tom
17 Augherton. Any additional comments on the -- the positive,
18 negative, you know, side?

19 COMMISSIONER YORK: This is Commissioner York. I
20 felt that the timeline description of the process that he
21 added this afternoon was helpful.

22 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER LERNER: This is Commissioner Lerner.
24 I felt that he added more information a little bit about his
25 history and work, and that was helpful as well.

1 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. We'll move on to
2 candidate number two, Keely Hartsell, any additional
3 comments or thoughts?

4 COMMISSIONER LERNER: This is Commissioner Lerner,
5 I was appreciative of the question Commissioner York asked,
6 that helps give some extra insight on how somebody who has
7 been in a position with one party could potentially be
8 nonpartisan in the position.

9 I felt that she -- she answered the question of how
10 she's worked with others across the aisle as part of that;
11 and where her -- where she sees herself in terms of her role
12 being staff, I felt that was additional information.

13 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: And I'd also like to share
14 that in my due diligence in -- in consulting with anybody
15 who knows this candidate, that I've heard remarkably
16 wonderful things about her in terms of her ability to -- to
17 work with all sides, get things done, be laser focused, and
18 so I do want to make sure that -- that we emphasize some of
19 those positives that -- that we've heard.

20 If there's no further comment, let's discuss
21 candidate number three, Kristina Gomez.

22 Additional comments?

23 COMMISSIONER MEHL: I think she continued to show
24 that she's a very credible candidate and showed some
25 strengths in her answers.

1 COMMISSIONER LERNER: And this is Commissioner
2 Lerner, and I was appreciative of the question about her
3 history in Arizona as well, understanding the longevity that
4 she's been here and sort of family ties; and then -- and
5 then the piece about lack of conflicts of interest was
6 positive.

7 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: I, too -- I, too, felt that I
8 had no doubt that she would be able to embrace our mission
9 unbiased and -- and in support of our collective efforts.

10 If there's no further feedback back, let's move to
11 candidate four, Brian Schmitt.

12 Any further conversation?

13 COMMISSIONER MEHL: I thought he actually came
14 across stronger in the second interview than he did in the
15 first, and I actually thought he handled the question on his
16 full-time work versus what was not -- not full-time work
17 quite well; and I continue to be very impressed by this
18 candidate.

19 COMMISSIONER LERNER: And I -- I do feel he came
20 across stronger this time, but I do have concerns about --
21 about not everything being on there. I do understand why he
22 did it, though.

23 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: One thing that I want to
24 mention in this public sphere is I felt this candidate was
25 very understated. Meaning, that when I did my due diligence

1 and -- and asked for feedback from people in the state,
2 including people that are, you know, closest with our late
3 Senator McCain going back way -- way back when, not from a
4 policy perspective, but a character perspective; and, you
5 know, I -- I just heard things like honest,
6 process-orientated, focused on legitimacy, deep Arizona
7 ties, somebody that's able to work across all political
8 spheres; and so I was struck by -- you know, we have two
9 ears and one mouth, and I might say that this candidate
10 maybe said the least, but I'm not sure that's a negative.

11 You know, in terms of somebody who would put the
12 Commission above, you know, all other interests, I think
13 this is a candidate that deserves very serious
14 consideration.

15 Any other -- any other thoughts or comments before
16 we move on to the next candidate?

17 Okay. With that, we'll move on to Trevor Abarzua.
18 Positives, negatives, any concerns? Thoughts?

19 COMMISSIONER YORK: This is Commissioner York. I
20 thought he handled the question of -- of applying for
21 commissioner and his thought process on really realizing
22 that probably wasn't the best fit for him, I thought that
23 was a novel answer and it made sense to me; it's an
24 ambitious young man --

25 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Yeah.

1 COMMISSIONER YORK: -- I have no doubt, and so...

2 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: I agree; a very talented
3 young man.

4 If there's no further conversation, I'm going to
5 move that we go into executive session to discuss any items
6 that is best left to the stres- -- to the discretion of
7 executive session, and we will very shortly resume to our
8 public meeting to continue the agenda and hopefully hire an
9 executive director to today.

10 Anything else anybody wants to share before we move
11 to executive session?

12 Okay. We'll see you in executive session; and to
13 the public, we will see you soon.

14 (Whereupon the proceeding is in executive session
15 from 4:16 p.m. until 5:12 p.m.)

16

17 * * * * *

18 (Whereupon the proceeding resumes in
19 general session.)

20 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. Let's just give a
21 minute for our counsel to make sure that they are on -- on
22 the line so we can move forward with Agenda Item No. IV on
23 our afternoon agenda.

24 Pam, are -- are you there?

25 MS. PEISER: I am.

1 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. Excellent.

2 With that, welcome, everybody. Thank you for your
3 patience. We'll move on with Agenda Item No. IV, discussion
4 and possible action on executive director interviews and
5 hiring of executive director.

6 We have just resumed from the executive session.

7 With that, we will discuss the candidates and move
8 to make a motion.

9 We had robust discussion in the morning and the
10 afternoon, both in public and executive session. We'll do
11 a -- a brief review, if there's anything that anybody wants
12 to add of the five applicants.

13 First with Mr. Augherton, any further conversation?

14 Ms. Hartsell?

15 Ms. Gomez?

16 Mr. Schmitt?

17 And Mr. Abarzua?

18 Thank you to all of our applicants, they were
19 remarkably outstanding and all people that we feel that
20 would well represent us.

21 We will go for a vote unless is there's any other
22 further conversation from our Commissioners.

23 Is there any further conversations before we take
24 it to a vote?

25 Okay. We will go through each applicant, we will

1 vote "aye" or -- or "nay" on the applicants; if there is
2 more than one, we'll come back and revisit that.

3 So, with that, we'll take applicant number one, Tom
4 Augherton.

5 Commissioner York.

6 COMMISSIONER YORK: Nay.

7 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: I'm sorry, I actually --
8 Commissioner York, thank you, you were -- you were correct.
9 I meant to say Commissioner Watchman, but you're first and
10 now Commissioner Watchman.

11 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Commissioner Watchman, nay.

12 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: And Commissioner Mehl.

13 You're on mute.

14 COMMISSIONER YORK: Muted.

15 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Nay. Nay, sorry.

16 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.

17 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye.

18 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: And Commissioner Neuberg is a
19 nay.

20 So with that, we'll move on to candidate two, Keely
21 Hartsell.

22 Commissioner Watchman.

23 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Nay.

24 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.

25 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Nay.

1 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.

2 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye.

3 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.

4 COMMISSIONER YORK: Nay.

5 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is an

6 aye, but that is in the negative.

7 We'll move to Kristina Gomez.

8 Commissioner York.

9 COMMISSIONER YORK: Nay.

10 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Watchman.

11 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Aye.

12 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.

13 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Nay.

14 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.

15 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye.

16 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is a no.

17 And, with that, we'll move to candidate number

18 four, Brian Schmitt.

19 Commissioner Watchman.

20 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Nay.

21 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.

22 COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.

23 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.

24 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Nay.

25 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.

1 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Aye.

2 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is an
3 Aye.

4 And with that, we'll move to the last candidate,
5 Mr. Abarzua.

6 Commissioner Watchman.

7 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Nay.

8 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.

9 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Nay.

10 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.

11 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Nay.

12 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.

13 COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.

14 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner is --
15 Commissioner Neuberg is a nay.

16 And, with that, I believe the only candidate that
17 received a majority vote was Brian Schmitt.

18 Yasmin or legal counsel, can you please confirm?

19 MS. RAMOS: This is Yasmin; I confirm.

20 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. With that, I would
21 like to make a motion that we recommend Brian Schmitt to be
22 a candidate, for ADOA to begin to move forward with making
23 an offer to the candidate consistent with state personnel
24 system policies and procedures.

25 I will take a vote, with that, we'll move to --

1 move forward with the hiring of Mr. Schmitt.

2 Commissioner Watchman.

3 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Nay.

4 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.

5 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Aye.

6 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.

7 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Nay.

8 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.

9 COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.

10 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is an
11 Aye.

12 And, with that, the motion approves to advance the
13 candidacy of Mr. Schmitt.

14 It is now in the hands of ADOA to move forward with
15 the offer and to do due diligence with ensuring all
16 policies, you know, are adhered to.

17 And, with this, I -- I would like to just further
18 state, you know, in -- in the robust discussion that we had,
19 as the independent chair, I'm very comfortable with this
20 decision. I know that this was hard, there were people
21 of -- of multiple perspectives.

22 In terms of going back, you know, in the history of
23 our state with soliciting opinions from all sides with who
24 could represent us, from an honest perspective as -- as a
25 staff member, not as a voting member, who will have no say

1 in -- in the lines of the districts, I feel that with the
2 checks and balances and -- and the information that we
3 received, I'm very comfortable with this choice, and that we
4 collectively commit to the entire state that this will be a
5 process of -- of transparency, legitimacy, and diversity.

6 The diversity is not just in name only, diversity
7 is for the sake of -- of representing the constituent groups
8 of -- of our state; as well as I think all data, all science
9 shows, that better decisions are made when there is not
10 "group think," and when there is a collective expression of
11 opinions.

12 And I feel very confident that this choice will
13 embrace that spirit of wanting collective comments buy-ins,
14 sentiments, ideas for us to be able to move forward.

15 With that, we will move on to Agenda Item No. V,
16 which is closing of public comments. Please note, members
17 of the Commission may not discuss items that are not
18 specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant
19 to A.R.S. 38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public
20 comment will be limited to directing staff to study the
21 matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the
22 matter for further consideration at a later date.

23 With that, we will entertain a motion to adjourn.

24 COMMISSIONER YORK: This is Commissioner York. I
25 motion to adjourn.

1 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Do we have a second?
2 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Commissioner Mehl seconds.
3 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. With that, we'll take
4 a quick vote.

5 Commissioner Watchman.

6 VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Aye.

7 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Mehl.

8 COMMISSIONER MEHL: Aye.

9 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Lerner.

10 COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye. Aye.

11 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: York.

12 COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.

13 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: And Commissioner Neuberg is
14 an aye.

15 And, with that, our afternoon meeting is adjourned,
16 and we will see you all next time.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER YORK: Thank you, Chairperson.

19 (Whereupon the proceeding concludes at 5:22 p.m.)
20
21
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARIZONA)


) ss.

COUNTY OF MARICOPA)

BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me, Angela Furniss Miller, Certified Reporter No. 50127, all done to the best of my skill and ability; that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to print under my direction.

I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the outcome thereof.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-206. Dated at Litchfield Park, Arizona, this 29th of March, 2021.



Angela Furniss Miller, RPR, CR
CERTIFIED REPORTER (AZ50127)

* * *

I CERTIFY that Miller Certified Reporting, LLC, has complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-201 and 7-206. Dated at LITCHFIELD PARK, Arizona, this 29th of March, 2021.



Miller Certified Reporting, LLC
Arizona RRF No. R1058

Miller Certified Reporting, LLC