

**Transcription: Excerpt of May 5, 2003 Sultan Council Meeting  
Discussion and Decision on Ord. 811-03, City Administrator  
(Combining City Administrator with City Planner Positions)**

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**[Note: Rob Criswell was acting Mayor Pro Tem]**

**Criswell** Okay, we'll table that one. Now we'll go to item five. Number four has been scratched off...uh....Ordinance, uh, 811-13 city administrator.

**Male** That's correct.

**Criswell** I'll ask for a little clarity on Number four

**Porter** That would be on the next agenda there.

**Criswell** Okay, where we at with this one? This number five?

**Graafstra** Well, it's not on the agenda until somebody makes a motion to reconsider it. And you had to be on the prevailing side to make that motion to reconsider.

**Champeaux** I will make the motion to reconsider.

**Criswell** Got a second?

**Boucher** Second.

**Criswell** Okay, I have a motion and second. And I guess we'll go for discussion now.

**Graafstra** You need to vote on the motion for reconsideration.

**Criswell** I thought we're going to discuss it first.

**Graafstra** Okay. Sorry.

**Criswell** *[laughing, then an unintelligible comment]*

**Graafstra** I don't think you discuss a motion to reconsider.

**Koenig** No.

**Graafstra** I don't think it's debatable.

**Koenig** No, it's not.

**Graafstra** I don't think it's debatable. You just, you gotta vote.

**Criswell** How do we do that? We're going to vote.

**Graafstra** That's right.

**Criswell** This is it. Okay, Bruce?

**Champeaux** Aye.

**Criswell** Dusty?

**Boucher** Aye.

**Criswell** Perry?

**McPherson** No.

**Criswell** Jim?

**Porter** Aye.

**Criswell** Jeff?

**Everett** No.

**Criswell** Mark?

**Raney** No.

**Criswell** Brennan?

**Deveraux** No.

**Criswell** And aye *[adds his own vote]*. Okay. Now what do we do?

**Graafstra** It's back to being an action item on your agenda at this point in time. So --

**Criswell** Okay. Now what?

**Graafstra** Somebody would need to make a motion --

**Champeaux** I'll make a motion to adopt Ordinance 80--811-13.

**Champeaux** Second.

**Criswell** I have a motion and second. Any discussion?

**Everett** [8]11-13? I think it's "03".

**Champeaux** Oh, it's, it's wrong on the, uh, on that, it's wrong on the, on the council, on the agenda, but it's correct in the, um, on the, in, in, in, in the packet. On the agenda it's dash-11. I mean, dash, dash-13, I'm sorry.

**Koenig** Is your motion for introduction or adoption?

**Champeaux** My motion is for adoption. I would like to amend my motion to have it (sic), the ordinance 811-03.

**Porter** Oh-three?

**Champeaux** Which, which one is correct? Is it 03 or --

**Koenig** It's "03".

**Champeaux** Okay.

*[extended silence]*

**Criswell** Any discussion?

**Graafstra** Was there a second?

**Criswell** Yeah.

**Raney** Now, Bruce, your motion was to adopt this tonight without first reading?

**Champeaux** Yes. Because actually that was brought to the meeting, um, a couple weeks ago, and there was some questions which I actually agreed, and

since then the council has gotten the information to deal with it, it was asking for, so I kind of look at last meeting as first reading and this meeting we can set it for adoption.

**Raney** That information that we're talking about was the personnel information?

**Champeaux** Yes.

**Deveraux** I'm [unintelligible] on this, wait until the next meeting to vote. Not necessarily to [unintelligible] till this vote's taken [referring to the May 20<sup>th</sup> election]. This looks like something that's probably going to be a pretty big deal. I don't know which way to vote, though, and I'm not even allowed to vote, but this is probably not something we should be discussing before that [the May 20<sup>th</sup> ballot].

**Raney** Well, I certainly agree with Brennan. I just think that this is the cart before the horse for a lot of reasons, and I don't know what the hurry is other than for political reasons to have this passed tonight. I don't think there's any, any pressing work that needs to be started by a city administrator in the next couple of weeks. And I certainly can see that there'd be political gain for having a city administrator in place so that people can be confused. And that, I just, uh, I...I just don't think that this serves anything but political purposes, and that's not what we're supposed to do. We're supposed to decide what's right and best for this city. We have not interviewed any candidates yet. All of us haven't. I understand that this can--this candidate has been interviewed. I don't know by whom and when. The public hasn't had a chance to be part of the process of selecting the administrator. I just think that this is flawed process, if nothing else.

**Champeaux** Well, we had, we had talked about, um, putting somebody in as city administrator way back when I first came on the, on the city council. And we had actually even budgeted for it in this year's budget. Um...I think, I think it could be looked at possibly as for political gain. I, I happen to agree wholeheartedly with what Dusty said at the last meeting, is, is, is the time is definitely now to put somebody in, *especially* if this proposition passes. 'Cause there will be probably a six-month period where there will be nobody in charge, while we...

**Deveraux** That's not necessarily true.

**Champeaux** While we, while we go through the whole process of looking for a manager/administrator, whatever. Which I'm sure that, that if we put this person in place, he'll have a chance also to apply for the position. But you will no longer have an acting mayor. And this process of, of, of going out and advertising and finding somebody is not going to take two weeks to a month. It's going to be a long, drawn-up process. Which, which I feel, like Dusty stated, is, is even more reason why somebody should be in place for that period of time.

**Everett** Well, I'm just trying to get out on the table. RCW 35A.13.150 -- this is the council-manager -- or the, the manager-council form of government, if adopted, "The council may designate a qualified administrative officer of the City or town to perform the duties of manager, (1) upon the adoption of the council-manager plan, pending the selection and appointment of a manager." We have that option already in, in the law, that if this goes through, if the vote goes, we're covered. We just, we just appoint a qualified administrative officer. But the key word is "qualified." We're covered. We don't need this [*referring to Ord. 811-03*].

**Boucher** You'll have a city administrator-manager.

**Everett** But --

**Boucher** Hold on a minute. I'm sorry. You have a city administrator-manager after May 20<sup>th</sup> at some time. And I, you know, so qualified, frankly, I think Rick is qualified. That's my opinion. Now, others may differ. He's a known commodity, in my mind. Safe. I think it's good to, uh, not get the, the cart ahead of the horse, but at least get the horse saddled up and warmed up and ready for that May 20<sup>th</sup> interim period. And I think that Rick will allow that. And if we do, if Prop. #1 passes, we then post for the city manager position, which Rick is certainly welcome to apply, and also then go through the interview and selection process in the meantime, but yet have somebody in city hall for any day-to-day meetings of the City, which, frankly...is, had been problematic over the last year. And I, I agree with Bruce -- who agrees with me -- [*laughter*] very wise, actually! But this is something that was been discussed for quite some time and we did put it in the budget and a matter I hope to see. But the timing would not be my preferred timing, just for the sake of Rick, because I think this does do Rick a bit of a disservice because it puts him in [an] unfair light. And I think this is a case where need...particularly the need now and the potential need when we begin the interview process after the 20<sup>th</sup>, serves us putting him in now.

**Everett** Well, I, I'd like to point out that the mayor would -- if this appointment went through, the mayor would still be mayor, until 10 days after the election. Okay, he's still the mayor. He doesn't become a council member, or wouldn't become a council member until 10 days after the election is certified. And we do have a council meeting the day after the election. I just need to point that out. There's no need to pass this on, on the first reading tonight. There's just no need for it.

**Boucher** And that's, that's just where we disagree. And I see this as something that should have been dealt with a long time ago...

**Everett** Sure.

**Boucher** ...and...you're saying there's no reason *to* do it, and I'm saying, well, there's no reason *not* to do it, and in fact, many reasons why we should.

We need somebody with an administrative past to coordinate the day-to-day operation of the City.

**Raney** Dusty, don't you think that that person, saddled up and ready [*City Clerk Laura Koenig turns the tape over, the remainder of Mark's sentence was not recorded*] on the 21<sup>st</sup>, which would be before the election was certified? We'll certainly have results that are, that will have, we'll have an idea of what the form is going to be. And, uh, that person can be appointed, in place, while we're still under their thumb, if that pass--if that passes. And then we're ready. We're, we have that person in place. We haven't lost anything, and there's a transition. And what will we gain in two weeks, other than the potential to confuse people? There's no pressing work in the next two weeks that must be done by an interim or a, or a standing city mayor -- or a city administrator.

**Champeaux** Passing this ordinance does not put Rick Cisar as city administrator...as, as far as I know. That would be by [*unintelligible*] only. I know we had talked to you about this today, um, even if this ordinance is passed tonight, it still has to, it still has to be published and it still has to be, sit for five days.

**Koenig** The ordinance well actually not be valid until five days after publication. If I send it to the paper tomorrow, it will be published on Friday, and therefore you would not actually have a valid ordinance that you could appoint somebody under before next Wednesday or Thursday.

**McPherson** I guess it really amazes me that Cisar would actually want to get into this situation at this point. That *really* does. If I was Cisar, and that's just my own personal opinion, man, I wouldn't touch this thing with anything in the world, as far as after this is over with [*laughter*]. I mean, it makes, it makes the council look bad, it makes the mayor look bad, it even makes Cisar look bad, and I think that's kind of sad. That we have to go to that extent to try to get someone in. And I have a lot of respect for Cisar. I think he's a very good planner. But I -- this is just absolutely amazing to me.

**Champeaux** Well...[*pauses*] I have not, you know, talked about political maneuvering and doing this just for the sake of -- 'cause the election's coming up. I have not heard that, uh...that side being stated by people who are not in favor of this proposition. If it has, um, you know, I don't know by who and I, hopefully it won't continue because as far as I'm concerned this is not political maneuvering in trying to defeat this proposition. I would be more than, more than fine on passing this tonight and asking the mayor if he would hold off appointing him until after, after the election. [*unintelligible*] the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Raney** This doesn't require him to do that, though.

**Champeaux** You still --

**Criswell** We can ask him to do that, though.

**Champeaux** We could ask him to do that. You know, because it's not going to be -- he -- because if it's not going to go for appointment until the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>, or 16<sup>th</sup> anyway, and the election's on the 20<sup>th</sup>, appoint him on the 21<sup>st</sup>, then.

**Raney** So I'm a voter sitting out there confused by all of the "yes", "no" and "maybe" signs. You see a headline in the paper on Sunday, the 18<sup>th</sup>, "Sultan Appoints City Administrator." What does that do to the average person who's out there trying to make heads or tails of this thing?

**Criswell** Why would there be a headline? It's not a good deal. *[laughter and comments]* Unless somebody made a big deal out of it.

**Raney** No, it *is* a big deal, Rob.

**Deveraux** *[unintelligible]* not a headline. It's going to be in the papers.

**Raney** And, and I can see where that just, will confound people and confuse them. And it, it definitely would benefit one argument in this situation. It would, it would allow people to say -- and they will, I guarantee you they will say it -- "Why do we need a city manager? We already have a city administrator? He's saddled up and ready."

**Criswell** Well, in all respect to that...um, the city already has an administrator, in effect. We already have Laura for administrator.

**Raney** Right.

**Criswell** So how can, how, why, why can you say that all of a sudden now we have an administrator when it's already, we're supposed to have one in line already.

**Raney** If this ordinance is specifically designed for a specific person in mind, he can be appointed anytime after the 15<sup>th</sup>. From what I understand.

**Koenig** Mark?

**Raney** Yes?

**Koenig** Actually, that's wrong.

**Raney** Okay.

**Koenig** The city administrator is appointed by the mayor but confirmed by --

**Raney** Right.

**Koenig** -- the council. So at the very earliest, the confirmation of any appointment would be May 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Raney** And that's why I said the headline would be, "City administrator *appointed* by the mayor." That confuses people. They think that we've got a city administrator now.

**Deveraux** I'm confused --

**Criswell** Well, I, I personally don't see the mayor getting, dialing, calling up the newspapers, telling everybody he...*[laughter]*.

**Boucher** He can trust our local news.

[laughter]

**Criswell** Sure, you're [unintelligible]. You know what it sounds like?

**Porter** Sounds to me like the "yes's" here seem to think that there's a big advantage in *not* having....

**Boucher** Did you say the "yes's"?

**Porter** ...[unintelligible] the no --- Yeah. So why not the ones that are voting against it, why not give them a little advantage? So, anyway, I was just going to repeat that, Laura. You said that five days after that, is that the beginning of the advertisement of the ending of the advertisement.

[someone laughs]

**Champeaux** Is that *working* days?

**Koenig** It is five working days after the ordinance is published, it is valid.

**Porter** Published. You said "advertised" awhile ago, but that --

**Koenig** Well, it's, it's actually published.

**Porter** It has to be advertised so many days, then?

**Champeaux** Five working days after the advertisement is published. And you had said that you didn't think the advertisement would probably be published until Friday?

**Koenig** If I send it in tomorrow, it would go out in Friday's paper.

**Criswell** Or Monday.

**Koenig** But counting Saturday.

**Champeaux** Was it total days or business days? Working?

**Koenig** Calendar days.

**Raney** I'll stick with my argument that I see that doing this tonight on first reading, it merely serves political purposes, since the ordinance allows for us to do this on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and cover that position -- on the 21<sup>st</sup> -- and cover that position, and still accomplish the same goal with respect to the benefit of the citizens of this town.

**Porter** Well, I'd like to [unintelligible] however we want.

**McPherson** Call for the vote, let's [unintelligible] Let's saddle the horse.

**Criswell** That's right. Saddle it up.

**Criswell** Let's jump in with both feet.

**McPherson** I'd like to have a -- I agree with Bruce down there. He said that we had the, had it budgeted for the administrator since the first of the year. Right? Well, then, why haven't we tried to hire one since the first of the year,

instead of having the mayor as the administrator, so to speak? So I'm, I'm very curious about that. Why? You know, all of a sudden we gotta do it in a, just a matter of moments here, but yet we've it budgeted since the first of the year and we all agree on the budget, am I right?

**Male** Um-hm [*affirmative response*].

**McPherson** Yeah. And we haven't put anything -- really, uh, to look for an administrator. So we find -- we get Cisar to get into this...which I, I still feel that, I feel kind of sorry for the entire city in a situation like this. Really sad.

**Raney** Were, were any of the council members involved in any interviews with him? Discussions with him about this job?

**Criswell** I, I've talked to him about it. I mean, as far as an interview, no. I've never been to an interview with Mr. Cisar, whether it be [for] the planner or anybody, anything else. I have talked to him about the position. And I did question him if he, he would be interested in it, but that's as far as my conversation with him went. He did pronon--uh--present his qualifications to me, but, uh, I mean, as far as, as --

**Raney** [simultaneously] That's got all the components of --

**Criswell** -- an interview, no, I didn't interview him.

**Raney** But that's got all the components of an interview, there.

**Criswell** Well, I mean, if you want to know at the same time -- One time I asked him, well, you know, "Would you be interested in that if it, if it came to ya?" And I don't know, a couple weeks later, he come up with, he, he showed me what, some of the things he'd done. But as far as asking for, for an interview, no. I don't think there's been an official interview that I know of.

**Raney** It sounds to me like you were granted a privilege that the rest of us weren't.

**Criswell** If so, he, he granted it. I didn't ask for it.

[*tittering from the assembly*]

**McPherson** I feel that he should be interviewed by the, by the council in the public, before it's even voted on.

**Deveraux** We should table this for the next meeting.

**Champeaux** Well...we have been -- we, we have been since the beginning of the year, looking at hiring a city administrator, but Donna Murphy was put in charge of, um, starting that process, um. We also, at the March 30<sup>th</sup> council retreat, the mayor did bring it up to us, to the council members, and the majority of us did agree to, um, look into this situation with Rick Cisar, with, with Rick Cisar, and we're now six weeks beyond that and, you know, we're saying everything's coming down the pike [at] the last second.

I mean this has been an ongoing process over the last two or three months.

**McPherson** Bruce, you know as well as I do it's coming down to the last second for a reason. And it's not the reason for an administrator, let's be honest about it.

**Male** If only we had the prop. #1 vote in September, we wouldn't have *[unintelligible]* --

*[some laughter, and simultaneous comments]*

**McPherson** If we would have moved that up another 14 months, every one of us would be happy. It just, it just takes all of the citizens 14 months, at least, to make up their mind as to what they want to vote on. It really is sad.

**Deveraux** If we'd had it in April, as someone suggested... *[that person was Brennan]*... it could have been already taken care of and we could be moving along.

**McPherson** That's right. Hey, I agree with you, Brennan.

**Boucher** Impetuous youth.

**Porter** Speaking of moving along, call for the question.

**Male** *[unintelligible]* is answered.

**Boucher** Let her run or put it back in the stable?

**Criswell** Anybody want to run it around one more time?

**Deveraux** I'm good.

**Criswell** Dead horse. Okay, I'm going to start with Perry. *[unintelligible]*.

**McPherson** No.

**Criswell** Jim?

**Porter** Yes.

**Criswell** Jeff?

**Everett** No.

**Criswell** Mark?

**Raney** No.

**Criswell** I guess I can ask Brennan.

**Deveraux** No.

**Champeaux** Yeah.

**Criswell** You guys don't know. Dusty?

**Boucher** Yes.

**Criswell** Aye *[voting for himself]* So we have three nay's and four aye's. Sorry, Brennan.

**Deveraux** Yeah, I know.

**Criswell** Would've been a tie, otherwise. I would like for the council to ask the mayor to hold off until after the 20<sup>th</sup>.

*[inaudible comments]*

**Boucher** Good choice.

**Deveraux** Now, he can appoint. He just can't approve it.

*[inaudible comments]*

**Deveraux** Well, the papers don't know that. He said he would appoint *[unintelligible]*.

**Criswell** Okay. Moving right along.

**During councilmember comments, the following exchange occurred:**

**Criswell** How about you, Mark?

**Raney** Yeah, actually, I do. I think if we're serious about asking the mayor to, uh, hold off on appointing anybody until after the election, that the council should have a letter sitting on his desk when he comes back with all of our signatures on it. Or at least the signatures of the members who would support that. And I think that would be a good idea. It would be a way to take some of the political aspect of that out, and allow for some, some thinking and some time here has passed.

**Criswell** Sounds good to me.

**Champeaux** I will do that.

**Boucher** I will sign that letter.

**Raney** Who, who will write the letter?

**Boucher** Laura.

**Criswell** Can we get -- *[laughter, then simultaneous comments]* I don't know how -- just let us know when it's done and we can come in and -- I, I would be willing to come in and sign it.

**Koenig** Well, it will be done tomorrow, because I'm only here for two days and then I'm gone for 10 days, so.

**Criswell** Okay. I will, I will --

**Koenig** *[simultaneously]* It will be ready tomorrow.

**Criswell** -- make sure to get in and sign that, Mark. Thank you.

**Champeaux** And I will stop in after work also and sign it.

**Criswell** Anything else?

**Raney** No sir. Thank you.

**Deveraux** Yeah. I find it amusing how, like, multiple people are coming up and accusing certain council members of playing, you know, political games and, and that's very true. But at the same time, we're all -- that, that's what politics is, it's just a big game. And they're just on *[sounds like he says, "our"]* side. And it's just -- that, that's all, we're playing the same game. We're just on the other side and we agree with us. You can't blame 'em for playing a game.

**Voices** Very true.

**Criswell** Anything else? In the matter of Rick Cisar...I, I think that question was brought to him about where it's going to put him....personally, as far as taking that job. And I, and I, and I think he was aware of all the consequences when he talked about doing this. Uh...and he's not appointed yet. I mean, he was just one that we'd, we'd talked about. But he is perfectly aware of the, the consequences. And I, and I, and I agree, too, that it's a bad position to put anybody in, but he is aware of that, that position. And, uh....guess that's all I had. I want to thank everybody for their precip--particip--yeah--for being here! *[laughter]*

*[end of transcription]*