

8/22/2016



**SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL**  
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(509) 625-6255

Breean Beggs  
Council Member District 2

Dear Mayor Condon,

We request that you re-open up the Police Chief selection process to include a comparison between Craig Meidl and the other remaining applicants who have already been determined qualified by the selection committee. The selection committee would consider the same written and video questions answered by the other ten finalists and the selection committee would then endeavor to bring four finalists for a public vetting.

The perception that the announced process was short-circuited to the detriment of the much needed community support for a new chief is overwhelming based on emails to Council, public forum comments and sentiments documented by all media outlets. The new chief will need universal support to continue police department reforms and heal the relationship between the community and the department. The choice of a candidate outside the announced process and without comparison to the other candidates judged qualified by the selection committee will not provide that needed support and will likely provide a back door for criticism by people who aren't interested in moving forward.

We want to be clear that our call for completing the promised public process with a comparison between candidates is in no way an indication of a negative judgment on Craig Meidl's ability to perform the job. We have worked closely with him over the last few months as he has performed the duties of acting chief and found him to be very cooperative, talented and sincere. But neither the Council nor the general public have had the opportunity to compare him to other qualified candidates. Many of the ten final candidates presented with extraordinary qualifications and the public deserves the chance to compare all interested candidates who have been deemed qualified so that when you make your final choice, they and the Council will have a basis from which to judge that choice. Similarly, it would be helpful for Craig Meidl's chances of being confirmed by Council. Currently, he is only being compared to a hypothetical alternative who differs in the mind of every person and is probably unrealistic.

We have each met with you individually and believe we understand your logic of how you came to this decision. We don't question your intent but respectfully believe that there were and are additional options that will provide a robust pool of applicants who can be judged against each other in the selection process. As you know, the two of us spent many hours evaluating all applicants, responses to their written questions, video interviews and the thoughts of the broad based selection committee. Our committee initially selected ten candidates as more than qualified for the position. We were then asked to choose four candidates for interviews, but we did not affirmatively eliminate the remaining six candidates. In fact, the difference between the third and fourth ranked candidates and the fifth through seventh ranked candidates was quite narrow and could easily have been different on a different day.

Looking back, we realize that our recruiter could have chosen a different message to the six qualified candidates who weren't selected for the first interview day. Given his knowledge (that neither you nor our committee had) of past searches he could have anticipated that one or more people would have dropped out and instead could have communicated that the differences between the finalists were narrow and that they should consider remaining in the interview pool. In fact, the first person who dropped out of the pool gave us plenty of notice and could easily have been replaced. Given the unfortunate messages given to the pool of qualified applicants and the continuing uproar in the media, some of the remaining qualified applicants may not be willing to interview. We think it is worth

either yourself or someone from Council who is optimistic about the future of our department encouraging them to consider remaining candidates. All applicants knew that they would be operating in troubled waters so we doubt the recent controversy alone would be enough to discourage them.

We believe that the additional time to promptly complete the background checks and public interviews will not unduly delay the forward progress of the department. The delay is unfortunate but is a small price to pay for delivering a selection process that meets the terms that were originally promised to the public and gives the successful final candidate a much stronger platform from which to begin what will hopefully be a long term of successful service to our community.

Sincerely,



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Spokane Council Member Breean Beggs



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Spokane Council Member Lori Kinnear

Cc:  
Spokane City Council President and Members