

Heinitz named mayor behind 6-0 council vote (5-19-21)



Jim Heinitz is the new mayor of Brandon.

After nearly three months without a mayor, the six-member city council voted unanimously to appoint Heinitz as mayor effective immediately.

Aldерwoman Dana Clark made the motion to appoint Heinitz, and alderman Dave Kull seconded. Clark's motion was to appoint him as mayor effective immediately while allowing him the option to jump into the meeting or defer to interim mayor Barb Fish for the remainder of the meeting.

"No offense, Jim, but I think that's asking a lot," Fish interjected.

During the discussion portion of the motion, alderman Tim Jorgenson weighed in with his continued support of candidate Chuck Parsons but said he believes that Heinitz is "very capable."

Alderman Jack Parliament—also a mayoral candidate—said he believes the position should be effective immediately.

"I believe we're going to go into executive session later, and the new mayor should be a part of that as well just for informational purposes," Parliament said.

Finance officer Christina Smith said she didn't have the Oath of Office prepared.

After further discussion, Fish weighed in with her concerns about making Heinitz's position effective Monday evening.

"My point is that it is not easy sitting in this chair and for someone to have to jump in and start running a meeting—Jim doesn't even know all of us yet," Fish said. "So, I think that that is really unfortunate for him."

Kull suggested that Heinitz be sworn in at the end of the regular meeting before the executive session so that his post would still be effective immediately but he wouldn't have to lead the remainder of the meeting.

Heinitz said he would feel more comfortable with that, as well.

The council voted 6-0 to appoint Heinitz, which was met with a round of applause.

After completing the remaining agenda items, Heinitz was sworn in by Smith and took a brief moment to address the council.

"I thought it was a pretty class act of all of those [candidates] involved," Heinitz said, referencing candidate Chuck Parsons' earlier endorsement of him along with Parliament's vote of confidence. "I think the passion that Mr. [TJ] Cameron (mayoral candidate) had for the position is admirable. I love people who have passion for what they want to do."

"And, Jack, I appreciate your support; I want you to know it means a lot," Heinitz continued. "As the oath said, I will faithfully and to the best of my abilities perform my duties. I want to thank Barb for not putting me up front tonight—that was the right thing to do. And, I'm excited and look forward to learning more and more."

In other news:

- The council unanimously voted to approve a temporary ordinance that will place a moratorium on any city-related permits or licenses related to Initiated Measure 26—medical cannabis—until the South Dakota Department of Health has developed its rules. The ordinance will become effective June 30
- Fish will remain as the council representative for the Park Advisory Committee, and Jorgenson for the Planning & Zoning Commission
- The council voted 4-2 to adopt the 2022-26 Capital Improvement Plan. The two dissenting votes came from David and Fish because the plan does not include any capital projects for the Parks Department in years 2025 and 2026 or the golf course in years 2023 to 2026.
- The groundbreaking for the Brandon Water Tower will take place on May 27 at 4 p.m.
- All 15 establishments seeking renewal applications for Alcoholic Malt Beverage Licenses effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 were approved. City administrator Bryan Read reported that none of the establishments had violations, including no sting violations.