

Council appoints Hansen despite dissenting views

The Lincoln City Council appointed George Hansen as Lincoln police chief Monday, despite dissenting views presented by citizens at a two-hour public hearing.

Many of those testifying appeared in favor of Acting Police Chief Dale Adams or a member of the Lincoln Police Dept.

(LPD). Hansen currently is public safety director in Sunnyvale, Calif.

The council vote was split four to three in favor of Hansen, with members Max Denney, Sue Bailey, Bob Jeambey, and John Robinson voting for him, and Steve Cook, Dick Baker, and Bob Sikya voting against.

Hardest decision

Chairman Max Denney said, "I think this is the hardest decision I've ever made."

James Ackerman, president of Bankers Life Insurance Co., and former FBI agent, appeared and said that the nomination appears to the public as "a vote of no-confidence in the present department's work."

Harmon Ogren, retired FBI agent and police officer trainer for Lincoln, said in his experience with selection boards such as the one choosing Hansen, he finds that they normally consist of people with status similar to the applicant's.

Members of Lincoln's selection committee were Pierce Brooks, a police administrator; Fred Holbert, UNL criminal justice professor; R.D. Anderson, president of Norden Laboratories; Lela Shanks and Bob Jeambey, a city council man.

Ogren cited a Los Angeles Police Dept. survey that showed what he called an "overwhelming" number of cities whose police chief came from within the department.

Military Police background

Hansen's background as a retired military man may have its drawbacks, Ogren said.

"I don't equate in any way the duties of military police with those of a police chief," he said.

Former city attorney Norman Krovshka said he couldn't understand why Hansen didn't appear before the Council for public hearing.

"He ought to have been permitted to be interrogated, to dispel citizen's doubts and questions, so people would think 'If our man didn't win, a good one did,'" he said.

Lu Pansing, Lincoln School Board member, told how Adams created the "Officer Resources" program in which policemen visit schools to promote understanding of law and order to students.

'Compassionate, interested'

"I just don't feel that with Hansen's confirmation we would get the same sort of compassionate, interested police work as this," she said.

On the other side of the issue, Stuart Wetzler, suspended Lincoln police officer, said, "We don't want Dale Adams. It's that simple."

"We are not going to have to live under the psychological pressure of Dale Adams' regime," he said. "I support Mayor Boosalis' nomination."

R.D. Anderson, president of Norden Laboratories and chairman of the selection committee, said the committee conducted interviews of six candidates and unanimously chose Hansen as "superior to all other applicants."

Hansen qualified

Mayor Helen Boosalis told the council she thinks that there was no candidate qualified for the job except Hansen.

"If he is not confirmed, we will have to start the selection process all over again," she said.

"I want to say that the easiest thing would have been if the present chief could have met the qualifications. But, in all candor, I could not make that decision," Boosalis said after the meeting.

She also said that many calls and letters indicated most of the controversy was "a question of (Adams') popularity."

Boosalis said she thinks that Adams could learn from Hansen, eventually acquiring skill to become chief. She said she hopes he will stay with the department.

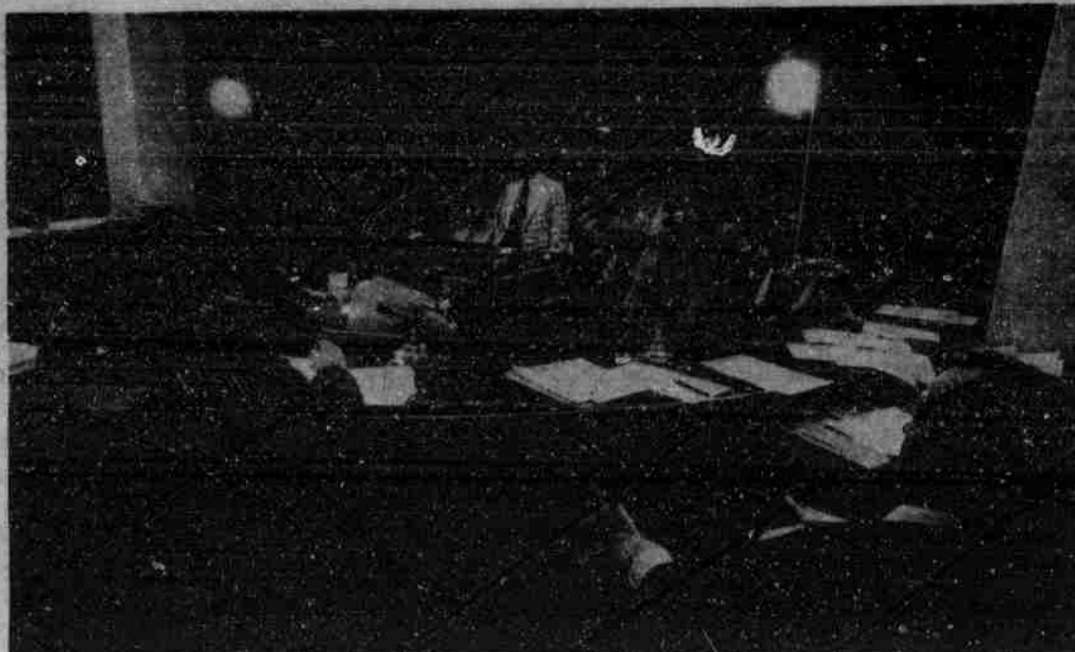


Photo by Ted Kirk

Suspended Lincoln Police Dept. Officer Stuart Wetzler appeared before the City Council meeting Monday to speak against acting Police Chief Dale Adams.

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| <p>8 a.m.-10 p.m.—Lincoln Liberty Life-Nebraska Center for Continuing Education (NCCE)</p> <p>8 a.m.-5 p.m.—Principles of Occlusion—NCCE</p> <p>9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.—Builders Activities Mart—Nebraska Union Main Lounge</p> <p>10:30 a.m.—Business Education 120-Union Auditorium</p> <p>Noon—Office of Business and Finance Luncheon—Union 203</p> <p>3:30 p.m.—Environmental Health Majors—Union 216</p> <p>4:30 p.m.—All University Fund—Union 337</p> <p>5 p.m.—Fees Allocation Board—Union 243</p> <p>5:30 p.m.—Gamma Lambda—Union Harvest Room</p> | <p>6:30 p.m.—ASUN Senate Meeting—Union 202</p> <p>7 p.m.—UNL Chess Club—Union Harvest Room</p> <p>7 p.m.—UNL Wildlife Club Union South Conference Room</p> <p>7 p.m.—Inter Fraternity Council Judicial Board—Union 216</p> <p>7 p.m.—Inter Fraternity Council Pledge Trainer Seminar—Union 222</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—Nebraska Union Board—Union 203</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—NU Meds meeting—Union Auditorium</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—Math Counselors—Union 225</p> <p>7:30 p.m.—Mexican American Student Association—Union 232</p> <p>8 p.m.—Nebr. Public Interest Research Group—Union 343-347</p> <p>8 p.m.—Union Program Council "Keith Berger-Mimist"—Union Ballroom</p> <p>9 p.m.—Kappa Psi—Union 222</p> |
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