

# Editorial: City panel does right in search

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Amarillo city commissioners are doing precisely what they should do while meeting their sole hiring obligation.

On Friday, the City Commission revealed the names of five finalists for the city manager's job that was vacated with Alan Taylor's retirement in April.

They are interim Amarillo City Manager Jarrett Atkinson; San Angelo City Manager Harold Dominguez; Las Vegas, Nev., Deputy City Manager James Nichols; McKinney Deputy City Manager Jim Parrish; and Longview City Manager David Willard.

Atkinson, Parrish and Willard of course are familiar names to many Amarillo and Texas Panhandle residents.

Parrish served as Amarillo human resources director before departing for McKinney and Willard was Borger city manager and Hutchinson County judge before taking the Longview job. Atkinson has been filling in as city manager since Taylor's departure.

The process has worked well so far. The city hired a Fort Worth-area consultant to lead the search. The five finalists will come to Amarillo in the next few days for what amounts to a public audition; the city is planning a meet-and-greet reception Nov. 16, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts.

Mayor Debra McCartt has hailed the finalist field, which she said was selected after a "rigorous review and selection process."

The finalists will get a chance to examine the government infrastructure and be grilled by commissioners on why they should be chosen to run a city with an annual budget of approximately \$200 million, serving a population of nearly 200,000 residents.

This is no small task and it requires nothing but city commissioners' full attention and due diligence.

The current commission is showing a refreshing brand of resolve and attention to detail that this selection process deserves.

Whoever emerges as the commission's choice should be strengthened by a hoped-for rigorous process that he should be asked to endure.

So, too, would the city.