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Las Cruces City Council unanimously approves Stuart Ed as new city manager

By: [Jamie Warren \(http://www.kvia.com/meet-the-team/jamie-warren/49185643\)](http://www.kvia.com/meet-the-team/jamie-warren/49185643) 
(<mailto:jamie.warren@kvia.com>)

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Las Cruces City Council and Ed (right)

LAS CRUCES, New Mexico - In a unanimous 7-0 vote, Las Cruces City Council voted in favor of Stuart Ed as the new City Manager.

The discussion and vote took 15 minutes.

Ed's contract must now be negotiated and then approved by city council. Ed replaces Robert Garza, who retired in May.

A news release sent out by the City of Las Cruces in mid-September, announcing Stuart Ed as the new city manager, caused some confusion.

After meeting in a closed session, the city sent out a press release stating: "The Las Cruces City Council selected Stuart Ed of El Paso as the new city manager."

The release further stated, "City Council is scheduled to consider a formal resolution selecting Ed as city manager at its Oct. 3 regular meeting."

It was that first line that has the Executive Director of New Mexico Foundation of Open Government believing there was a violation of the Open Meeting's Act.

"I would say that the consensus on offering a position for city manager would be considered an official act and that should've been done in an open meeting," Susan Boe said.

Mayor Ken Miyagishima said the Open Meetings Act clearly states council is allowed to meet and discuss the qualifications of a candidate in closed session. That final vote must be taken in open session.

"We meet in closed session, we discuss the qualifications of the candidates, if there's a candidate we like we reach out to them and tell them we're interested in giving you an opportunity to be our manager," Miyagishima said. "There'd be some negotiations. If it's something they're comfortable with, then we put it on council agenda."

At the time, Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Smith said the vote would most likely go to Ed, but said the other candidate, Dan Biles was still in the running. He added there seemed to be an apparent mix-up when the press release went out.

"What we had agreed to in the meeting as to how the press release should go out is not what went out and (the city attorney) is taking credit or blame if you want," Smith said. "For the fact that a mistake was made and how the press release went out because it was contrary of what we said we should be."

City Council did not discuss the issue during Monday's vote to confirm Ed as the new city manager.

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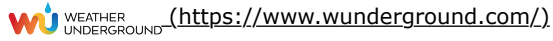


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