



City of Eustis, Florida

City Hall
10 North Grove Street
Post Office Drawer 68
Eustis, FL 32727-0068

Meeting Minutes – Final* City Commission Workshop

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

4:00 PM

City Hall

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Bob

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE

Present: 5 - Linda Bob; Albert Eckian; Michael Holland; Karen LeHeup-Smith; and Kress Muenzmay

I. Workshop Item

14099 City Manager Recruitment Firm Interviews

Mayor Bob announced that Commissioner LeHeup-Smith had informed staff she would be late and had indicated the Commission should start without her.

Dianne Kramer, Acting City Manager, explained the directions to the candidate firms and the process to be used. She noted that Ann Isaacs, Human Resources Director, has conducted background checks and references on the firms and would provide that information following each presentation.

Renee Narloch, Vice President of Bob Murray and Associates, provided personal information regarding her background and an overview of the company and responses to the list of questions provided by the City.

Commissioner Muenzmay arrived at 4:16 p.m.

Commissioner LeHeup-Smith arrived at 4:19 p.m.

Mayor Bob opened the floor to questions from the Commissioners.

The Commission asked the following questions: 1) If the City hires Murray and Associates, would Ms. Narloch be the staff member working with the City; 2) the number of staff members in their office; and 3) how the firm locates contacts who may have critical comments about the candidate noting that the candidate may have had to take strong stances on an issue.

Ms. Narloch responded as follows: 1) Confirmed she would be working directly with the City, if selected; 2) Staff members include one full-time and two three-quarter time personnel; and 3) Critical comments about candidates - She indicated that is one of the biggest challenges they face. She stated they ask a lot of questions of each candidate and conduct research beforehand including reviewing newspaper articles and viewing Commission meetings and they ask questions about why they left other positions. She explained she looks for information that supports what the candidate has said. She further explained that when they speak with the candidate's references they ask about why the candidate left their position. She commented on how she further researches specific problems and assesses what may have occurred.

The Commission then noted their November workshop where the Commission compiled a list of top characteristics for a city manager and asked if Ms. Narloch would want that list with Ms. Narloch stating that would assist with development of the profile. She commented on the need to identify the best fit for the City. She noted that if a candidate has changed jobs every two to four years, then they probably haven't transitioned through a Commission changeover.

The Commission then asked the following: 1) what is the average time in a position for a City Manager; and 2) how to describe the most successful candidates for a city manager.

Ms. Narloch stated the average span is approximately six years. She noted that the right person who can adapt to changing situations might remain longer and added that it also depends on where the person is in their career. She described the most successful city manager candidates as "very smart, very talented...creative, strategic."

The Commission informed Ms. Narloch that the City has been involved in a long-term lawsuit and emphasized the need for the City to have someone who will be able to handle that situation. They then commented on information they had received that indicated all of the recruitment firms have a list of candidates that continually don't make the final selection.

Ms. Narloch responded that her firm starts every search fresh and if the candidate doesn't have the required skill set, then they will not be included in their recommendation. She acknowledged that the same people may apply for different jobs; however, if she doesn't feel the applicant is strong enough, then she will not put them forward. She then commented that she loves to find new talent. She added that, if selected, she will be driving back and forth from Tallahassee, not flying, which should reduce the expenses.

Ann Isaacs, Human Resources Director, reviewed positive comments from the references she checked as follows: 1) very easy to work with; 2) very flexible; 3) very capable and organized; and 4) met all obligations. Negative comments included the following: 1) slow to return phone calls and email with Ms. Isaacs noting Ms. Narloch's explanation regarding not being available while flying; 2) not always on time; and 3) at one place, she did not bring forward some items in a candidate's background that caused a problem. She stated that the common theme for all three firms was the cities wish they had brought forward a larger applicant list.

The Commission discussed the ethics of contacting people who are already employed at other cities and confirmed that none of the three firms was the one used by the City for the previous city manager search.

Ms. Kramer stated time was allotted for the Commission to discuss each candidate.

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission to hold discussion until after all of the candidates had given their presentations.

Colin Baenziger, Colin Baenziger and Associates, introduced Rick Conner noting that Mr. Conner previously served as Interim City Manager in Fruitland Park. Mr. Conner distributed copies of the presentation and additional materials to the Commissioners. Mr. Baenziger commented on their tour of the City and the need to market the City to candidates. He reviewed his personal background and stated that his company has completed approximately 70% of the City Manager searches in Florida since 2005 for searches where the cities utilized a search firm. He reviewed their process for soliciting and reviewing candidates, checking references and background checks and provided additional information based on the questions provided by the City.

Mayor Bob opened the floor to questions from the Commissioners.

The Commission asked the following questions: 1) the estimated life span for a City Manager; and 2) what they attribute to their success in the Central Florida area noting their searches for the cities of Leesburg, Fruitland Park, Mount Dora, and Tavares.

Mr. Baenziger responded as follows: 1) ICMA (International City Manager's Association) says about six years; and 2) it pertains to getting to know the clients. He expressed frustration with the amount of time it took for the Leesburg search.

The Commission continued their questions as follows: 3) at what point they conduct the background checks and how the City can limit that expense noting the \$750 charge per background check; and 4) what Mr. Baenziger sees as the trait most common in defining a successful city manager.

Mr. Baenziger responded as follows: 3) the background check is done after the City has determined which candidates they want to see in more depth with the City determining the number so they control that cost; and 4) He stated that integrity is the key trait as the Commission has to trust the manager. He added that the manager has to understand politics without participating in it and they have to get things done, have good people skills and relate well to the Commission and the public.

The Commission cited the City's involvement in a long-term lawsuit and indicating they will be looking for someone that can handle that situation.

Mr. Baenziger noted the City's question from the questionnaire regarding recruitment of minority and women candidates. He stated that between 2009 - 2011, the majority of the candidates they placed were females or minorities. He commented on their efforts to recruit those candidates.

Ms. Isaacs provided the positive comments she received from the Baenziger references as follows: 1) professional; 2) diligent; 3) very hands on; and 4) very engaged. She stated that the only negative was that they did not bring forth a good initial pool of candidates; however, they did go back and re-recruit and did not charge for the additional search. She added the comment that the candidates seemed to get better with each search. Regarding the City of Leesburg, she stated the City indicated that the Leesburg search took so long due to the Commission being "very picky".

Ms. Kramer noted they were ahead of schedule and asked if the Commission wanted to go ahead and have some discussion.

The Commission discussed various attributes of both Ms. Narloch and Bob Murray & Associates and Mr. Baenziger, attributes of a good city manager and the possible impact of the former City Manager on the City's lawsuit.

Rollie Waters, President of Waters Consulting Group, provided a Powerpoint presentation regarding their professional background and processes, reviewed their responses to the City's questionnaire, and cited the City's need for someone with good economic development and public works skills.

Mayor Bob opened the floor to questions from the Commission.

The Commission asked the following questions: 1) the average life span for a city manager; 2) what type of response his firm would provide since their office is located in Dallas; 3) the single trait most important or most common for successful city managers; and 4) who does best in transitioning between Commissions.

Mr. Waters responded as follows: 1) that the ICMA says three to five years due to the changing needs of the city and changes in elected officials; 2) they would work as closely with Human Resources as the City wants. If they need to be on site, they will do that. He explained that the first task will be to meet with the Commissioners individually to find out what each of them sees for the City and its manager; 3) Regarding traits for a successful manager - In the past it was lack of risk taking and a strong financial background; however, the new people coming into the profession are more risk takers and more entrepreneurial. He stated that the more senior managers probably would have a strong accounting background, be apprehensive about risk taking and approach the job more methodically; and 4) Most successful at transitioning - He stated those managers have resiliency and don't take the changeovers personally. He noted that a city may want to change managers in five or six years due to needing a different type of manager at that time.

The Commission asked if the firm has placed anyone in Florida with Mr. Waters stating they have placed 14 to 15 positions in Florida recently. It was noted that they had placed the new Sanford City Manager and Police Chief.

Ms. Isaacs reviewed the reference comments she obtained regarding the Waters Consulting Group as follows: 1) very professional operation; 2) quality work; 3) they do aggressive recruiting; and 4) they have a national reach, not just Florida. She noted that one reference did say they wished they had received more candidates to choose from but it was not due to the lack of effort on the part of Waters.

II. Commission Discussion

The Commission discussed the various candidates and their individual rankings, whether or not to proceed with the City Manager search immediately and the need to provide continuity and stability for the City and the employees. The individual Commissioner rankings were as follows:

Commissioner Muenzmay - Waters first, Baenziger second and Murray third.

Commissioner LeHeup-Smith - Baenziger first, Waters second, and Murray third.

Vice Mayor Eckian - Baenziger first, Waters second and Murray third.

Commissioner Holland - Waters first, Baenziger second and Murray third.

Mayor Bob - Waters first, Baenziger second and Murray third.

The Commission asked Ms. Kramer how long she would remain as Acting City Manager.

Ms. Kramer responded that, when originally asked to serve as Acting City Manager, she stated she would do whatever the Commission wanted. She explained that she would not apply for the permanent position because she is not willing to dedicate another five years. She added that she is willing to serve in the position for a couple of years and agreed with the need for stability. She stated that, if a new manager is hired, she would assist that person and help provide that stability.

The Commission discussed the possibility of not proceeding with the search immediately, obtaining an opinion from the City Attorney regarding the City manager residence requirement, the difference in laws between Florida and other states if the Commission hired a firm from out-of-state, and the individual Commissioner rankings of the firms. A recommendation was put forward to contract with Waters but to alter the timetable and begin the search in June with an estimated start date for a new city manager of October 1st.

Ms. Kramer informed the Commission that a resolution would be presented at the next Commission meeting for a budget amendment to cover the cost of the search firm and related expenses. She explained the Commission does not have to actually approve the contract since it would be for less than \$50,000. She noted that the altered time table would probably be better for a new city manager.

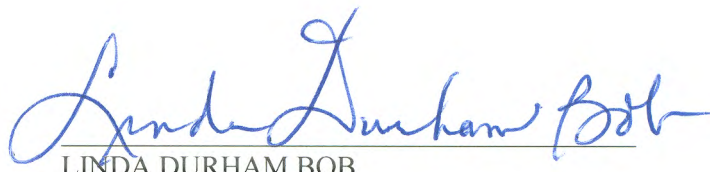
III. Public Input - None

IV. Commission Direction

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission for staff to process a contract with the Waters Consulting Group with the intent of beginning the actual search in June with an anticipated start date of October 1, 2014.

V. Adjournment - 6:12 p.m.


MARY C. MONTEZ
City Clerk


LINDA DURHAM BOB
Mayor/Commissioner

*These minutes reflect the actions taken and portions of the discussion during the meeting. To review the entire discussion concerning any agenda item, go to www.eustis.org and click on the video for the meeting in question. A DVD of the entire meeting or CD of the entire audio recording or verbatim transcript of the meeting can be obtained from the office of the City Clerk for a fee.