

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES WORKSHOP

MARCH 7, 2011

Mayor Joe LaCascia called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Joe LaCascia, Vice Mayor Trudy Block, Councilor Nancy Adorno, Councilor Mike Blethen, Councilor Don Kimsey, City Attorney Tom Cloud and City Clerk Patricia Jackson. Also present was Mark Durbin, who is with the Range Riders.

Review of City Manager Candidates with the Range Riders

Mayor LaCascia turned the workshop over to Mr. Mark Durbin, who is with the Range Riders. Mr. Durbin advised that he and Dick Simmons made a separate list of candidates and merged the two lists in order to come with their top ten recommendations for City Manager. This was a very subjective process and there were approximately 15 to 20 candidates who were good enough; they had a hard time coming up with the top ten. It is Mr. Durbin's recommendation to get down to five people at tonight's workshop; he recommended interviewing three to five candidates after a background check. He will be happy to put some questions together, and he will also be happy to be here during the interviews if he is available. Mr. Durbin then went over the Range Riders top ten list as follows:

- Michael MacDonald – he has been with his last city for 10 years; he couldn't find any particular issues
- Caryn Miller – Acting City Manager at Flagler Beach and is currently doing CRA / grant writing

At this time Mayor LaCascia asked to do one candidate at a time in case of any questions or comments.

- Matthew Brock – he knows him and he is a good individual. He was hired as the first City Manager of Grant-Valkaria – it didn't work out, but there were no particular issues, and he has Florida experience. Attorney Cloud asked why he left Live Oak and why he doesn't list anything after 2005. Councilors Blethen,

Kimsey and Adorno also had Matthew Brock on their list. Vice Mayor Block was concerned nothing was listed for the last six years, Attorney Cloud feels his Resume should have been updated, and Mayor LaCascia advised there was a letter attached to his Resume.

Attorney Cloud asked Mr. Durbin the statistics on the longevity of City Managers; Mr. Durbin advised 5 to 5 ½ years. Mayor LaCascia commented on his expectations – he thought the candidates would look at Polk City and tell Council what they could do for Polk City.

- Judith Jankosky – She is currently in Arcadia and also served as a Planner in Lady Lake and worked as an Attorney. Attorney Cloud mentioned she worked in Legal Aid for four months; she is the Assistance City Manager in Arcadia. Mr. Durbin advised she comes from a planning background. Mayor LaCascia, Vice Mayor Block and Councilor Block had her on their lists.
- Michael MacDonald – Mr. Durbin advised he has no Florida experience, but he left him on the list because he has been with his last city for almost ten years; he also read Commission minutes and sees where Mr. McDonald had a good relationship. It was a mutual agreement to part ways. Mayor LaCascia asked if five of the ten people are in Florida, why go outside the State. Some discussion took place about the learning curve coming from out of State. Attorney Cloud commented that all of a sudden he wants to come to Florida. Vice Mayor Block advised he made her list – she looked at the list of things he has done. Councilor Kimsey and Councilor Blethen advised their list of candidates are from Florida. Mr. McDonald was not on anyone else's list.
- Caryn Miller—She is currently in Flagler Beach and is the Community Redevelopment Director and does grant writing; she has Florida experience. Attorney Cloud advised she virtually has no experience (Acting City Manager in Flagler Beach from 2010 to present). It was noted she has outstanding references. Vice Mayor Block, Councilor Kimsey and Councilor Blethen had her on their lists
- Emory Pierce – He is in Brooksville and was recently terminated as the Public Works Director; he stated in his cover letter why he was terminated. Mr. Pierce worked a long time under one City Manager and when the new City Manager came on board it didn't work out. He has water and sewer experience. Mayor LaCascia reviewed his educational background, but was concerned about his financial background. Councilors Kimsey and Adorno had him on their lists. Councilor Adorno liked his Resume. Mayor LaCascia commented he was "light" on education, Councilor Adorno feels his Resume is not full of "fluff", and

Councilor Blethen advised he does have a BS in Business Administration. Attorney Cloud asked how many Public Works Directors do you see transition; Mr. Durbin advised it used to be typical, but not lately. Mayor LaCascia advised he misspoke about his education. Councilor Adorno feels he has a proactive approach dealing with citizen complaints and meets with them. Mr. Durbin advised Mr. Pierce doesn't want to be in the FRS, if he can opt out.

- Blake Proctor – He has been in North Carolina for about five years; however, he does have Florida experience. He also has experience with water and wastewater, and his salary is in line with what the City is looking for. Mayor LaCascia advised he is now on his list; he has good education and the demographics where he is currently is close to Polk City, and he has grant writing experience. Vice Mayor Block advised Mr. Proctor is on her list – he has held several City Manager positions in several States; he also has water and sewer experience. Vice Mayor also mentioned the cost of moving and the Florida Statutes. Councilor Kimsey doesn't think that has any bearing; however, he did not choose anyone out of the State of Florida. Mr. Proctor was not on the list of Councilors Kimsey, Blethen or Adorno.
- Marvin Ray – He used to be in White Springs; he has good administrative experience and has economic development. White Springs is similar in size to Polk City – wish he was in Florida. Mr. Ray was on Councilor Blethen's list.
- Bill Veach – He is currently working for the State of Florida, and has worked for a couple of cities in Florida – he did a good job. Vice Mayor Block asked why he wanted to leave employment of the State; Mr. Durbin advised he didn't know unless it is because of what the Governor is currently doing. Mr. Veach has a good reputation. Vice Mayor Block advised he is on her list – she looked up Flagler Beach and other things. She advised whoever we get is going to have a “backbone” to have to do the right thing. Mr. Veach is also on the lists of Councilors Kimsey and Adorno. Councilor Blethen understands the reasoning behind him being put on the list, but questions the salary.
- Bill Waldron – He was previously the City Manager in Plant City, and currently has his own consulting business; he had a good reputation, and he was exonerated in Plant City (he resigned as City Manager); he also has experience in planning. Councilor Blethen, Councilor Kimsey, Councilor Adorno and Vice Mayor Block had Mr. Waldron on their lists. Mayor LaCascia felt reluctant based on experience, and once he became a consultant, it was a different situation. Attorney Cloud asked if his entire city experience was with Plant City. Mr. Durbin advised he was also with Southwest Florida Water Management District. Councilor Adorno commented that once he left Plant City for the private sector that he wasn't cut out for consultant work. Attorney Cloud mentioned his background in development.
- William Scott Janke – Mayor LaCascia advised Mr. Janke was on his list, and he was on the list of Councilor Adorno and Councilor Blethen.

- Mayor LaCascia advised his strongest candidate was Michele Reapsmith (Number 43); he spoke of her qualifications and educational background – he feels her financial qualifications are impeccable. Councilor Kimsey noted she had previously worked in Sarasota. Vice Mayor Block didn't put Ms. Reapsmith on her list – she thought she may cost too much. Councilor Blethen mentioned education as well; Vice Mayor Block would like to meet her.
- Barry Baker – Councilor Adorno brought up Barry Baker; Attorney Cloud advised he has a very impressive resume. Mr. Durbin thought his resume was very good, and he suggested to call and speak with him; he has not worked full-time since 2006. Vice Mayor Block advised she “googled” him, and it seems that people liked him a lot. Mr. Durbin commented there was nothing wrong with picking up a phone and calling people. Mr. Baker was on the list of Councilor Adorno, Vice Mayor Block and Mayor LaCascia.

At this point Mayor LaCascia asked when the City is moving into this stage is it common to do a phone inquiry and interview. Mr. Durbin advised some type of background check needs to be done; he also asked if the City was going to pay someone's way. Mayor LaCascia feels if someone is applying for a job, they should be able to pay their expense (candidate). Mayor LaCascia then asked if it was typical for a city to pay; Mr. Durbin advised most cities he is familiar with does pay. Vice Mayor Block advised to call and see what the salary expectations are; Mayor agreed it is a very relevant issue. Mayor LaCascia also commented anyone who wants to look at Polk City should already know longevity is tentative with the possible recall and with Council person saying they would lead the way for abolishment in possibly two years. Mayor LaCascia commented he would negotiate a one or two year buy-out – they would want to be protected. Mayor LaCascia asked if we talk about it or wait and see. Attorney Cloud advised we wait and see. Discussion took lace regarding this, the job market, and possibility of dissolution. Attorney Cloud suggested waiting and seeing; do the interviews then worry about it. Councilor Blethen feels we should do the interviews. Vice Mayor suggested we call and ask what the bottom line would be; Mayor LaCascia feels we should do that before we invite them in. Mr. Durbin suggested we get information before the next meeting; it was the consensus that the City Clerk would call the candidates.

At this time Mayor LaCascia advised we should finish the list; Adorno mentioned getting the list down. The City Clerk will see if those candidates are still interested and get their salary and benefit information; this will be done by next Monday. It was decided to complete the list.

- James Gleason -- Councilor Blethen asked about Mr. Gleason. Attorney Cloud advised he knows him personally; he has a lot of guts to go through what he did in Ocoee. Mr. Gleason is on the list of Councilor Blethen, Kimsey and Adorno, and he is on Vice Mayor Block's list.

Mayor LaCascia asked that Michele Reapsmith be added to the list to call, and Vice Mayor Block asked that Michael MacDonald be called as well. The City Clerk will put a list of candidates together with the information that was requested by Council, in addition to what the City has budgeted (with benefits) for a new City Manager.

The City will do background checks once the list is narrowed down. The task at hand is to find out if the candidates are still interested in the job, their salary expectations, benefit expectations and travel expectations (reimbursement); Attorney Cloud will find out if the City will have to enroll the new City Manager with the Florida Retirement System. Council thanked Mark Durbin for the great job he did.

The meeting was adjourned.

Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk

Joe LaCascia, Mayor