

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING

APRIL 16, 2011

Mayor LaCascia called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and recessed until more Council members were present; he advised he would wait until 8:30 a.m.

Mayor LaCascia reconvened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Mayor LaCascia advised this will be very informal – just questions going back and forth.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Joe LaCascia, Vice Mayor Trudy Block, Councilor Nancy Adorno, Councilor Mike Blethen, Councilor Don Kimsey, Attorney Tom Cloud – absent; City Clerk Patricia Jackson was present.

Interview Candidates for City Manager

Mayor LaCascia advised Mr. Janke was first on the list to be interviewed; however on Thursday morning he sent an email to the City advising he was on his way to catch a plane to attend a funeral for a friend of his; therefore, he had requested a phone interview. The City Clerk sent this to Council to find out if they would want to conduct a phone interview, but not everyone responded. The first order of business will be to discuss whether or not we want to allow a phone interview. Mayor LaCascia stated his personal opinion is that it would be awkward under circumstances like this for Mr. Janke, or anyone else; however, it will be left up to the Council as to whether or not they would allow it or not. The consequence in not doing a phone interview would be a disqualification because you wouldn't have an opportunity to speak to Mr. Janke. Discussion took place as follows:

- Councilor Kimsey advised it is unfortunate he could not be here; he would much rather for him to be here, but doesn't necessarily think it should disqualify him. He thinks Mr. Janke would rather be here if he could. Mayor LaCascia advised if Council wants to make a decision by the end of the day, and does not do a phone interview, he would be disqualified.
- Councilor Adorno commented that funerals are things we have to deal with and they are unpredictable; however, she did let us know. She has no issues with interviewing him over the phone; she would prefer to give him the opportunity.
- Vice Mayor Block advised this is not a family member; she feels you cannot hire someone unless you are face to face; Council should move forward without a phone interview. Council has worked too hard during the year to do a phone interview with someone we haven't met.

- Councilor Blethen feels if you want a job, you should be in front of Council. If it is a family member, that would be understandable, but it is not. He prefers an interview face to face, which has been expressed before with all of the candidates. Councilor Blethen said no to a phone interview.
- Mayor LaCascia advised he has already stated his position to Council (he read the email). Council has one shot at brilliance and the candidates were reduced down to three. Mayor LaCascia advised he gave up a New Orleans vacation to be here because this is an important decision. He feels that if Mr. Janke left on Thursday he could have been back on Saturday (today) and Council could have shifted his interview until later. Mayor LaCascia voted no to a phone interview.

Mayor LaCascia recessed at 8:39 a.m. until the next candidate, Matthew Brock arrives; his interview is scheduled for 9:30 a.m.

Mayor LaCascia reconvened the meeting at 9:34.

Mayor LaCascia introduced Mr. Matt Brock, candidate for City Manager, and advised this will be very informal. Mr. Brock made a few opening remarks and gave Council some background information on himself. Mr. Brock also commented he should have never left Dundee, and why he would like to come back to Polk County; he feels he would be a good fit for Polk City. He would like to work for a minimum of four years, and he doesn't think there is anything he hasn't done; he is confident in his abilities.

City Council then interviewed Mr. Brock and had various questions and comments:

- Mayor LaCascia feels he has got caught up to speed (commented about Resume)
- Councilor Kimsey asked Mr. Brock to tell Council what he knows about Polk City; Mr. Brock touched on the City's financial situation and thinks Council has handled themselves very well. Mr. Brock advised he read about the impact fees – Council should have been made more aware on a weekly or monthly basis. Discussion followed with Council regarding that situation.
- Councilor Blethen asked about his ideas on moving forward; Mr. Brock advised he hasn't researched the city planning issues; he can come in and assess the situation and bring different options. Mr. Brock also advised the biggest issue is financially.
- Vice Mayor Block asked how many budget cycles Mr. Brock has gone through; he advised about 15 or so. Discussion then went to the utilities and being outsourced; Mr. Brock advised he can't imagine the City could find anyone with more experience – he went on discuss his experience.
- Councilor Kimsey advised the Council is expecting to make a decision today, and asked Mr. Brock when he could start; Mr. Brock advised in about two weeks. Councilor Kimsey then asked about his expectations of salary; Mr. Brock advised in the mid 70's. Councilor Kimsey spoke of the City's services and things being outsourced; he feels that is too high. Mr. Brock advised he was making \$25,000 more than that in a previous city with the same scenario.

- Vice Mayor Block spoke about the opportunity with Polk County and how Mr. Brock thinks we can get re-connected with them. Mr. Brock spoke briefly about economic development (hasn't researched specifically); once he knows what the goals are, with will set down with various people.
- Councilor Blethen asked about grant writing; Mr. Brock advised he has experience in grants.
- Mayor LaCascia mentioned seasonal citizens and asked about dealing with having to pay for everything the city does; Mr. Brock advised the City has the responsibility to provide services; it can't be provided if it is not funded. Mayor LaCascia then discussed the debt service and dealing with customers who are never satisfied with the answers they are given. Mr. Brock advised it is hard to please everybody all the time – you keep trying and do the best you can.
- Mayor LaCascia then spoke about the community as a whole, and seasonal residents – they don't have a good community feeling about the City, and paying taxes – they don't feel they are getting anything. Mr. Brock advised they do get something for their taxes and explained. He advised they control their destiny in planning and community development; that is what people should be looking for to focus on long-term future.
- Councilor Adorno asked about his management style and what he looks for in the people he is working with. Mr. Brock advised he thinks about Dundee; he was happy with the way he gave Department Heads and employee's latitude to do their job and not micro-manage. He feels there are times that you can "over manage" some people, and that some problems will take care of themselves.
- Councilor Adorno then asked about his attributes. Mr. Brock advised he has addressed those, but he likes to involve employees and he would have a meeting with the employees to tell them who he is and how he likes to operate; he would like to get to know them and their families. Mr. Brock then referred to Dundee and how he keeps in touch with employees.
- Councilor Kimsey feels it is important to be a people person.
- More discussion took place between Council and Mr. Brock regarding communication, trust, community involvement and needing volunteers, the budget process and public hearings, the number of people attending this meeting and them being interested in what takes place, citizens being heard at public meetings, citizens getting involved with what takes place. When discussing the budget, Mr. Brock advised he would look at that his first week on the job; he then discussed what would take place and when. Mr. Brock advised he would meet with Vice Mayor Block to get caught up with everything that is taking place. Mayor LaCascia commented the City Clerk should be added to the mix; she was relied on very heavily. Discussion then took place regarding the proposed bond.
- Councilor Adorno asked Mr. Brock why Council should hire him. Mr. Brock advised he has a lot offer; he has experience, he is qualified, and thinks he is a good City Manager.
- Brief discussion took place regarding Mr. Brock's relationships at the County level and with other cities.

Mayor LaCascia recessed and reconvened at 10:40. At this time Mr. Doug Haag was introduced. Mr. Haag did not give an opening statement, and Council went straight to the interview process as follows:

- Councilor Blethen asked about change and moving forward with Polk City. Mr. Haag advised his approach to management in a new position is spending a lot of time listening and learning; he would like to meet one on one with Council to see what each of your views and visions are for Polk City. He would like to validate the mission statement and vision statement to make sure he understands he is doing the job Council wants him to do. His priority is to spend time with Council and getting perception on the bond issues.
- Mr. Haag gave Council his background information; he served in Sunny Isles as the Assistant City Manager and Finance Director and has dealt with several controversial issues -- he went over one of those issues with Council and his approach in handling the situation; fact sheets were done and he met with residents with an action plan. He was able to channel and refocus their energy to move forward and make progress, not butt heads. He also advised one of his strong areas is water and sewer.
- Councilor Blethen asked about Mr. Haag's response time in generating information to the public; Mr. Haag advised not that long.
- Councilor Blethen asked about his experience with grant money; Mr. Haag advised one of his responsibilities was seeking out grants, applying for grants, compliance and monitoring of grants (he received about 8 to 9 million in grant money in about three years – mostly recreation).
- Councilor Kimsey asked about his association with small municipalities such as Polk City. Mr. Haag advised he was a consultant and then became finance officer for Lauderdale by the Sea, which has a population of about 6,000.
- Mayor LaCascia asked what his current title was; Mr. Haag advised he is currently the Interim Director of Finance and Budget, and he answers to the City Manager. Mayor LaCascia then asked what the highest position he has served in; Mr. Haag advised Assistant City Manager for Sunny Isles Beach. Mayor LaCascia asked if his current salary was \$84,000 with benefits, and Mr. Haag advised that was correct.
- Mayor LaCascia advised he knows Polk City is not prepared to pay that kind of money, and asked why he would consider this position if it means taking a step backwards in compensation and residing in Polk City. Mr. Haag advised he is at a point in his career where he is looking for a place to settle down with a nice community atmosphere; he is looking for challenges to take his career to the next level. He advised he has spent time in the Lakeland area, and he and his wife like this area.
- Mayor LaCascia asked if Mr. Haag had applied for any other positions; Mr. Haag advised North Carolina and a couple in Florida.
- Vice Mayor Block asked if he had been through municipal budget process; Mr. Haag advised he has been involved in many budget processes – that is his primary responsibility.

- Councilor Adorno asked about Mr. Haag's involvement with utilities; Mr. Haag advised he is not an expert, but had hands-on experience in Michigan with three different cities, and one of those cities also had electric. Councilor Adorno asked what size population; Mr. Haag advised 30,000 people.
- Vice Mayor Block asked if during the budget process, was there anyone in a State of Crisis, and if so, what were the solutions. Mr. Haag advised yes, they were in Sunny Isles Beach, and explained what took place.
- Councilor Blethen asked what their millage rate was; Mr. Haag advised 3 mills.
- Councilor Blethen asked what Mr. Haag's management style was; Mr. Haag advised he has not managed people his entire career; however, he has an open management style – he pushes staff and lets them do their job, and he doesn't like to micro-manage.
- Councilor Kimsey asked what he knew about Polk City; Mr. Haag advised there is a lot of concern with the contention – where some residents have signed a petition to dissolve the City. He is not coming into this blind; he has been through something similar to this in the past.
- Councilor Kimsey asked Mr. Haag what kind of contract he would expect if he were hired. Mr. Haag advised in Sunny Isles he belongs to organizations that have certain professional, ethical qualifications; he would set down and work out something mutually acceptable. He does not have any preconceived notions or requirements. Councilor Kimsey asked when he would be able to start if chosen; Mr. Haag advised he needs to give a two week notice, and he would need to have time to find a place – three to four weeks. Mr. Haag believes the City Manager should live inside the City.
- Councilor Blethen asked about salary and what his take is on benefits – people paying a portion and 401 Programs. Mr. Haag advised all municipalities struggle with that. He then gave Council information on how it was dealt with in Sunny Isles; changes were made with health insurance, retirement, etc. without any increases.
- Mayor LaCascia asked about the overall budget; Mr. Haag advised the General Fund was 28 million, but the total budget was 50 million. Mayor LaCascia commented the budget here is around 3.8 million. Discussion then took place regarding population figures, the economic background, utilities and annexations in Sunny Isles. There was not a lot of room to grow.
- Councilor Adorno asked about his most outstanding attributes, and how he would apply those. Mr. Haag advised if they were to speak with his employees, they would tell them they like him, he is outgoing and sociable, he has a good sense of humor, and he keeps a very positive and professional work environment. He gets key staff involved – they drop rank and look for the best solution; he is not shy about making tough decisions. Mr. Haag is a strong believer in team environment; he looks to Council to let him know how they wish for him to communicate – he doesn't think you can have enough communication. He believes his management style shows who he is as a person.
- Councilor Blethen asked is Council boss or the citizens; Mr. Haag answered both are. Councilor Blethen then asked what Mr. Haag's impression was concerning the number of people present at today's meeting; Mr. Haag advised

you can't have enough public input, and given the circumstances he doesn't think you can have enough openness and transparency (if get information from somewhere else it is not accurate). Transparency is open information, and as a City Manager you step back and understand Council's perception and issues, then come up with answers; Mr. Haag thinks some things can be done fairly quickly, but the process continues over a period of time until folks stop butting heads and open up (people agree to disagree).

- Mr. Haag advised he is very interested in this position; it is a tremendous opportunity, and he and his wife would love to relocate here. He feels he has the strengths and skills to handle the on-going issues Polk City is facing, and he has a lot to bring to the table – 30 plus years in municipal and service providers.

Mayor LaCascia called a recess at 10:30 and reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

Mayor LaCascia asked Council how they would like to proceed with making a decision, and asked if they would like to rate each candidate 1 to 10 and put it on a piece of paper and give to the Clerk for tallying – it could be a very quick process. Vice Mayor Block commented she doesn't see the need for additional discussion. Councilor Kimsey asked about the process Mayor LaCascia suggested; Mayor LaCascia restated his suggestion. Councilor Blethen advised Council could do it verbally.

Councilor Blethen made a motion to make Matt Brock the number one choice; the motion was seconded by Councilor Kimsey. Under discussion, Council discussed the both candidates, and what qualities stood out.

Roll Call: Councilor Adorno-aye, Vice Mayor Block-aye, Mayor LaCascia-aye, Councilor Kimsey-aye, Councilor Blethen-aye

Ayes-5

Nays-0

The motion carried.

Mayor LaCascia advised the next step would be to negotiate a contract with terms and conditions.

Councilor Kimsey made a motion for the Mayor to negotiate a contract. Vice Mayor Block feels the City Attorney should negotiate, and Councilor Kimsey advised he would not be opposed to the Attorney. Councilor Blethen seconded the motion for the Mayor to negotiate a contract.

Under discussion, Councilor Adorno asked about the Mayor and the City Attorney working together. Councilor Kimsey advised the Attorney could look over the Mayor's shoulder. Mayor LaCascia advised he would take direction from the Council – Council would set the salary range, terms and conditions, sick days, car allowance, etc. The Mayor would take an offer to him and then come back. Discussion then took place

regarding the salary limit and what is in the budget. After further discussion, Vice Mayor Block suggested a meeting on Monday (April 18) to discuss the contract – she would like to be involved as well. Lengthy discussion took place regarding putting together a contract and who should be involved. Councilor Kimsey advised he could not be at a meeting on Monday as he will be out of the State.

Councilor Blethen made a motion to amend his motion for the Mayor and the City Attorney to negotiate a contract; Councilor Adorno seconded the motion for amendment. Vice Mayor Block would like discussion of Mayor and Attorney in front of Council. Councilor Kimsey commented the contract would be negotiated based on Council's direction. Councilor Blethen withdrew his motion and Councilor Adorno withdrew her second.

Councilor Adorno asked for clarification regarding input from City Attorney. Vice Mayor Block commented Council would send the Mayor with a package based on what Council wants to give the City Manager. The Mayor will go to the candidate and then come back to Council

Roll Call of original motion:

Mayor LaCascia-aye, Vice Mayor Block-nay, Councilor Adorno-aye, Councilor Blethen-aye, Councilor Kimsey-aye

4-ayes

1-nay

The motion carried four to one.

Mayor LaCascia then asked about salary; Councilor Kimsey advised Mr. Brock wants around \$70,000, and Councilor Blethen discussed out of pocket regarding salary, benefits, retirement, vacation and sick time. Vice Mayor Block suggested going to Mr. Brock and asking what he wants for a contract; she would like to see salary based on a sliding scale. Councilor Kimsey commented he doesn't have a job, and if someone is unemployed, they may be willing take less money. Councilor Blethen feels the salary can be negotiated; it is now requested to be mid 70's to 80,000.

After a lengthy discussion regarding the City Manager contract as it pertains to salary, benefits, retirement, vacation and sick time, car allowance, etc., it was consensus of the City Council for Mayor LaCascia to meet with Mr. Brock regarding a contract and bring it back to City Council.

Councilor Kimsey made a motion to adjourn and the motion was seconded. Before adjournment, Kevin Bouffard, who is with the Ledger, asked if the Mayor was to negotiate a package and then bring it back to the Council. Vice Mayor Block advised it is her understanding the Mayor will ask what Mr. Brock's terms are and come back to

Council. Councilor Adorno asked if this will be known for Monday. This will be added to the Agenda for Monday's meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 upon voice vote.

Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk

Joe LaCascia, Mayor