

COMMISSION WORKSHOP

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Mayor Chastain called the workshop to order to discuss the City Manager and Executive Assistant Positions. Present were Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer, Commissioner Travis Woods, Commissioner Danny Nugent, Commissioner Wilbur Waters, Police Chief Jeff Johnson, Deputy Clerk Brenda Wiggins, City Manager Tom Ernharth, and Fire Chief Gary Wise. City Clerk Ricky Thompson and City Attorney Dan Sikes were absent.

Mayor Chastain turned the workshop over to Mr. Ernharth.

Mr. Ernharth stated his last day will be January 6, 2017 and we need to know what to do with the position going forward.

He did advertise for the assistant position and received seven applicants; however since he is leaving there was indication from the commission to put the hiring on hold and allow the new city manager do the hiring.

Commissioner Nugent suggested advertising for the City Manager position and have one of the girls that is familiar sit side by side with Mr. Ernharth and learn. We should hire an intern City Manager and permit that person to be a candidate for the position so we have a position covered until we get one hired. That could take a while to hire someone.

Commissioner Woods suggested postponing the hiring of the assistant but keeping the applications allowing the new city manager to hire his or her assistant.

Mayor Chastain added he understands the way of thinking but the window to having someone in that office is very large right now. If we had either the City Manager or Assistant the window wouldn't be as large.

Commissioner Waters added that we need hire the assistant and have he or she on board. How long will it take for us to hire a City Manager but the assistant can be learning while the search is being done. Let Mr. Ernharth with someone sitting in with him hire the assistant.

Commissioner Mortimer agrees with that idea; the positions are critical to the functioning of the city. To find a good assistant in the office to help with the transformation she is supportive of that.

She ask Mr. Ernharth if he felt comfortable about hiring the assistant?

Mr. Ernharth responded yes, with the people we have here in the office he believes we can do the interviewing process well. Out of the seven applicants there were three or four really good candidates.

Commissioner Mortimer asked if the applicants were all outside current employees?

Mr. Ernharth responded yes.

Mayor Chastain asked if the board wished to look for a City Manager or a City Project Manager?

Consensus of the board was City Manager.

Commissioner Woods asked to back up to the assist position; he made a comment at the last meeting that Terry Anderson has been in the City Manager's office for several months and recently was transferred back to purchasing department. She could be moved back up here until the positions are filled then she can move back to purchasing; she is very knowledgeable of the city to assist.

Mayor Chastain added he doesn't disagree but it would be rough of whoever becomes the city manager if the assistant doesn't fit well with the new city manager.

Commissioner Mortimer added it is rare that an assistant will be conducive to the boss. The City Manager is in charge and the assistant is here to do a job no matter who the city manager is.

Commissioner Waters ask if the commission would have the final say for the hiring of the assistant?

Deputy Clerk Wiggins responded the commission doesn't hire any position other than the City Manager position. The employees under the jurisdiction of the City Manager are hired by the City Manager.

Mayor Chastain summarized the workshop as follows;

We are moving forward with hiring a new city manager.

Mr. Ernharth will conduct the interviews and hire the assistant.

Terry Anderson will come up from purchasing and work with the new assistant to assist with training then return to purchasing after the hiring of the new city manager.

Commissioner Nugent asked if an interim city manager will be hired?

Mayor Chastain responded on the agenda to night is a motion to advertise for city manager. So we will be moving forward with hiring the city manager. He asked what the salary range for advertising will be?

Commissioner Mortimer asked if the range is for the interim city manager or city manager. Due to the process of getting a full time city manager and it is so long would it be wise to do an interim city manager and allowing this person to apply for the city manager?

Commissioner Woods responded he doesn't feel we need an interim city manager. The salary for the city manager position should be \$60,000 to \$80,000.

Mayor Chastain added he will meet with the department supervisors beginning the New Year once a week at 7:30 AM to see what is on the table and if the departments need help with anything. He suggested someone within sit in as the interim until the new city manager is hired.

Deputy Clerk Wiggins explained the timeframe to advertise and receive applicants for the City Manager position. The ad can go to the Telegraph, Gainesville Sun, Florida League, and the City's Website.

Our policy is to advertise for 2 weeks and the close is 14 days from the first advertisement.

We will run the advertising for in house simultaneously with the outside ads. We could possibly have resumes back by Janaury 9th for you all to review.

Mayor Chastain commented that anyone applying will do their homework and look at the charter, which the way it is set up makes the city manager job tough. The only way to change that is a referendum.

Commissioner Mortimer added that Mayor Chastain was reading her mind.

Commissioner Waters added he would like the charter to stay as is. Also to have someone sit as an interim how could that person attend the FMPA meeting and such and be taken away from his everyday job.

Mayor Chastain added most of those meetings are done via telephone now.

Deputy Clerk Wiggins ask for clarification that the position to advertise is for the City Manager?

Mayor Chastain stated that will be done at the time in the regular meeting. She ask what the time frame to advertise.

Commissioner Woods added that to hire an interim is a waste of time.

Commissioner Mortimer ask for a committee to be put together to do the pre selection of the city manager and narrow the choices down for the commission to interview.

She would like a couple of business people from our community.

Hearing none he requested a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Waters made the motion to adjourn, second by Commissioner Nugent; passed 5-0.

Tommy Chastain, Mayor
Commissioner Daniel Nugent
Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer
Commissioner Wilbur L. Waters
Commissioner Travis V. Woods

Attest: _____
Ricky Thompson, City Clerk