



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Final City Commission Special Meeting

CITY COMMISSIONERS
Vanessa Carusone, Mayor
Linda M. Yates, Vice-Mayor
Christopher B. Hanks, Commissioner
Jill Luke, Commissioner
Debbie McDowell, Commissioner

APPOINTED OFFICIALS
Peter Lear, City Manager
Amber L. Slayton, City Attorney
Kathryn Peto, Interim City Clerk

Monday, October 1, 2018

11:00 AM

CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE 11-27-2018 MEETING

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The North Port City Commission Special Meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. in City Chambers by Mayor Carusone.

Present: Mayor Carusone; Vice-Mayor Yates; Commissioners Luke and McDowell; City Manager Lear; Assistant City Attorney Golen; Recording Secretary Hale and Police Chief Garrison.

Absent: Commissioner Hanks.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Commission.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – COMMISSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Luke, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote with Commissioner Hanks absent:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Carusone, Vice-Mayor Yates, Commissioner McDowell and Commissioner Luke

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS:

A. [18-664](#) 11:00 AM -11:45 AM Candidate Heidi Leatherwood.

Human Resources Manager Hope provided an overview and requested the Commission

limit questions to the same three questions each for each candidate.

Commissioner Luke asked the following questions of each candidate: (1) Describe a time when you helped a peer learn something new and how did you teach this person; (2) Give us an example of a time when you worked with team members in deciding how to split up work that had to get done; (3) What work standards have you established and how did you ensure that the standards were being met.

Vice-Mayor Yates asked the following questions of each candidate: (1) As a Charter Officer, and please indicate whether or not you have read the City's Charter, you do report and are accountable to the five member Commission, could you explain how you would handle a situation when an individual member of the Commission makes a request of you that you believe is outside the scope of your duties or in conflict with the Charter. Have you ever encountered that situation and what did you do; (2) How would you handle a situation when you become aware of a Commissioner or Charter Officer, whose conduct may be in violation of statutes and those standards and policies and have you ever encountered that; (3) Describe your credentials and your knowledge of Parliamentary Procedures and your experience in acting as a Parliamentarian for a governmental entity.

Commissioner McDowell asked the following questions of each candidate: (1) Could you share a specific situation where you were challenged with fairness on an ethical issue. How did it make you feel? How did you handle it and what was your final outcome; (2) How would you handle a public records request that could put you in a dilemma? Would you try to protect the City or would you follow the Sunshine Law; (3) Tell me something extremely unique about yourself and how it will help you with your job.

Mayor Carusone asked the following questions of each candidate: (1) Why Florida; (2) How familiar are you with technology: social media; websites; website development and how do you find ways to generally reach out to citizens; (3) Florida laws are unique (Public Records, Sunshine Meetings, the advertising, the Charter regulations and State statutes), how do you plan on jumping in and becoming familiar with those things, coming from another state?

Human Resources Manager Hope escorted City Clerk candidate, Heidi Leatherwood, into Chambers to begin her interview.

Subsequent to Ms. Leatherwood providing brief personal background information and work history, Commissioners asked the questions previously listed. Thereafter, Ms. Leatherwood was provided an opportunity for a closing statement.

Recess 11:51 a.m. - 12:14 p.m.

B. [18-668](#)

12:00 PM -12:45 PM Candidate Kelly Bogner.

Human Resources Manager Hope connected the Commission computers with Skype to hold the interview with City Clerk candidate Kelly Bogner.

Subsequent to Ms. Bogner providing brief personal background information and work history, Commissioners asked the questions previously listed. Thereafter, Ms. Bogner was provided an opportunity for a closing statement.

Recess 12:56 p.m. - 1:09 p.m.

C. [18-670](#)

1:00 PM -1:45 PM Candidate Ella Fast.

Human Resources Manager Hope connected the Commission computers with Skype to hold the interview with City Clerk candidate Ella Fast

Subsequent to Ms. Fast providing brief personal background information and work history, Commissioners asked the questions previously listed. Thereafter, Ms. Fast was provided an opportunity for a closing statement.

Recess 1:45 p.m. - 2:05 p.m.

D. [18-672](#)

2:00 PM - 2:45 PM Candidate Kathryn Peto

Human Resources Manager Hope escorted City Clerk candidate, Kathryn Peto, into Chambers to begin her interview.

Subsequent to Ms. Peto providing brief personal background information and work history, Commissioners asked the questions previously listed. Thereafter, Ms. Peto was provided an opportunity for a closing statement.

Following the interviews Assistant City Attorney Golen noted that the Commission should choose the applicant that is best qualified based on the duties of the position and not to consider their family situation or location think about the best person to fit the duties required for the job.

Recess 2:22 p.m. - 2:46 p.m.

RANKING DISCUSSION

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) the qualifications of a City Clerk that are unique to North Port and Florida; (2) pros and cons of each candidate were expressed; (3) the possibility of readvertising the position and fine tune the requirements; (4) a preliminary ranking; (5) the importance of knowing Florida Laws; (6) after it was suggested to offer the City Clerk position to Ms. Peto and the Deputy City Clerk position to Ms. Leatherwood, it was stated there are no issues from a human resource perspective preventing the Commission from making that offer to the two candidates; (7) the offer can be accompanied by a competitive salary and the Commission needs to decide on a range; (8) Vice-Mayor Yates expressed concern pertaining to offering the City Clerk position to Ms. Peto.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Luke, to direct the City Manager and Staff to make an offer to Kathryn Peto for the City Clerk position and a contract to come back before the Commission in a date for the future.

Discussion continued and City Manager Lear clarified that the contract will be based on the most recent contracts that are used and that the current Interim City Clerk's salary is at the base of the City Clerk position.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Luke, to amend the motion to specify that the contract shall come back in the new format that was recently approved by the Commission for other Charter Officers and that the minimum be \$95,679 and change as per the classification. The motion carried by the following vote with Commissioner Hanks absent:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Carusone, Vice-Mayor Yates, Commissioner McDowell and Commissioner Luke

A vote was taken on the main motion as amended, to direct the City Manager and

Staff to make an offer to Kathryn Peto for the City Clerk position and a contract to come back before the Commission in a date for the future and to specify that the contract shall come back in the new format that was recently approved by the Commission for other Charter Officers and that the minimum be \$95,679 and change as per the classification. The motion carried by the following vote with Commissioner Hanks absent and with Vice-Mayor Yates dissenting for reasons stated:

Yes: 3 - Mayor Carusone, Commissioner McDowell and Commissioner Luke

No: 1 - Vice-Mayor Yates

Vice-Mayor Yates voiced concern: [a] that the direction to fill the Deputy City Clerk position now is being rushed; [b] regarding the importance of these two Charter Officers and the potential of having two individuals in the highest ranking positions of the Department, neither of which are well versed in the critical knowledge regarding Florida statutes etc.; [c] a separate solicitation is needed for the Deputy City Clerk position.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Luke, that to extend offer to Ms. Heidi Leatherwood for the Deputy City Clerk position, starting at a range salary of \$80,000, and to make sure it is within the contract format for the previous Charter Officers. The motion carried by the following vote with Vice-Mayor Yates dissenting for reasons stated and with Commissioner Hanks absent:

Yes: 3 - Mayor Carusone, Commissioner McDowell and Commissioner Luke

No: 1 - Vice-Mayor Yates

There was a unanimous consensus to contact all applicants by the close of business today.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

5. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no Commission Communications.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL REPORTS:

City Manager Lear reported that the interviews for the Assistant City Manager are scheduled for October 2 and 3, 2018.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Carusone adjourned the North Port City Commission Special Meeting at 4:02 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Christopher B. Hanks, Mayor

Attest:_____

Kathryn Peto, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the City Commission Regular Meeting this ____ day of _____, 2018.