

The Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Panama City Beach, Florida, and when permitted or required by the subject matter, the Panama City Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, held on September 23, 2019.

ROLL

VICE-MAYOR PHIL CHESTER

COUNCILORS:

PAUL CASTO

PHIL CHESTER

GEOFF MCCONNELL

HECTOR SOLIS

CITY MANAGER:

MARIO GISBERT

CITY CLERK:

MARY JAN BOSSERT

CITY ATTORNEY:

AMY MYERS

Vice-Mayor Chester called the Special Meeting to order at 3 p.m. with all Councilmen, the City manager, City Clerk, and City Attorney present.

Councilman Casto gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEM 1 CITY MANAGER HIRING PROCESS – DISCUSSION. Vice-Mayor Chester explained the meeting's purpose to discuss the City manager hiring process. Ms. Myers introduced Mr. Colin Baenziger with Colin Baenziger & Associates. She explained he is the City's executive recruiter for a new city manager.

Mr. Baenziger approached the podium and thanked the Council for the opportunity. He explained the proposed project schedule. He stated the first step is to collect information from the Council. He inquired what the Council is looking for in a city manager and what issues they want the City manager to address. He commented he wanted to get to know the Council better as well as what makes Panama City Beach a great place to live, work, and play. He stated all this information will be gathered to paint an accurate picture for the next City manager. He explained this information is compiled and placed in a brochure and distributed in the marketplace to candidates. He explained his company will advertise. He commented they have an email list of thousands of people who are interested in City manager jobs. He commented they will allow three weeks to advertise the position. He explained he will choose 12 to 15 candidates and perform background checks; the background checks and vetting takes about two weeks to process.

Mr. Baenziger explained that his firm will then notify the selected finalists and alternate to be interviewed. He explained that finalist will be given preparatory materials such as the current year budget and organizational charts. Once finalists are selected, Mr. Baenziger provided a suggested list and schedule of travel, meals, social outings, and receptions that the City should provide the finalists. He next explained a proposed method of interviewing candidates by rotating between the offices of individual one-on-one interviews of the Council to test the chemistry with candidates later being presented to the entire board for about 30 minutes each. He stated once a candidate is chosen the city attorneys will draw up a contract.

Councilman McConnell noted his approval of Mr. Baenziger's approach. The Council discussed a timeline for finalist interviews. The Council agreed to have the one-on-one interviews on December 12th at 1 p.m. and holding the Special Meeting on December 13th from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Councilman Casto spoke of the skills he wanted in a new city manager including great communication, business and political skills along with previous management experience and education. He commented the new city manager needs to meet certain educational requirements. Councilman Solis inquired about the market for city managers. Mr. Baenziger explained the more experienced managers are retiring but hopes to have eight to ten strong candidates from which to choose. He stated an option is to extend the deadline for stronger candidates.

Councilman Solis inquired about the retirement and pension benefits for the next city manager, he asked should it be flexible as possible. Mr. Baenziger recommended it to be flexible and to try to do a one-off option. Ms. Myers commented a separate agreement could be done. She explained the retirement consultant will be looking into employees being vested sooner than 10 years. Mr. Baenziger commented the average tenure for a city manager is eight years.

Councilman McConnell explained they are working for the residents and employees' best interest. He recommended the new city manager have proven prior experience in a larger city or county in order to bring the process and procedures up to the next level; be a strategic thinker; build morale within the departments; develop a process-oriented organization; be a positive ambassador in the community with state and local bodies. He commented the city is rapidly growing and he would like the new city manager to have a collaborative mindset to build and maintain constructive relationships in the entire organization.

Councilman Chester recommended the city manager have three to five years' experience as an assistant or city manager and to have great communications skills. He agreed with Councilman McConnell. He commented the new city manager needs to create a vision for the City.

Councilman Solis commented numbers could be deceiving. The new city manager needs to understand that the estimated population is 13,000 residents; during the summer there will be 60 – 150,000 transit population at any given time. He commented the 1.3 billion that is received in revenue is made during the summer. Councilman Solis discussed the unique financial picture of the City. The police and fire calls are two to three times greater than the county. The new city manager needs to know these things.

Mr. Baenziger spoke of the infrastructure projects. He explained the new city manager will need to be informed of the projects and segments of the CRA. He spoke of pay for the city manager; it may be more than what the current city manager makes. Ms. Myers stated the current salary range is around \$143,000.

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

READ AND APPROVED this 24th of October 2019.

IN THE EVENT OF A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FOREGOING MINUTES AND A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF THESE MINUTES, THE FOREGOING MINUTES SHALL CONTROL.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk