

MINUTES of 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 February 16, 2021.

Mayor Sheldon called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL

MAYOR MARK SHELDON
VICE MAYOR GEOFF MCCONNELL
PAUL CASTO
PHIL CHESTER
MICHAEL JARMAN

Others present were City Attorneys Amy Myers and Cole Davis, City Clerk Lynne Fasone, Directors and members of the public and press.

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

Mayor Sheldon called for approval, additions and/or deletions to the agenda. Hearing and seeing none, Vice Mayor McConnell moved to approve the agenda. Councilman Jarman seconded the motion. All were in favor of approval by a roll call vote (5-0).

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Vice Mayor McConnell	Aye
Councilman Jarman	Aye
Mayor Sheldon	Aye

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEM 1. DISCUSSION ITEM – APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CITY MANAGER.

Mayor Sheldon opened up Item 1 for public comment.

Michael Steinkirchner – Mr. Steinkirchner provided his thoughts on the termination of the City Manager, Council moving forward, taking ownership in the process, leaning on City Counsel for advice, and communicating with other elected official regarding mutual aid.

Jason (inaudible) – Mr. Jason provided his thoughts on the comment that Mr. O’Rourke was giving the City a black eye with the lack of mutual aid last September, the whistleblower lawsuit, the FBI investigation, and transparency.

Burnie Thompson – Mr. Thompson discussed Doug Sale attending the last city council meeting. Mr. Thompson noted he had his doubts about hiring the last city manager. Mr. Thompson made a public records request for Mr. O’Rourke’s whistleblower letter and any communication between the Council and city attorneys for the past 7 days. Mr. Thompson asked who was the subject of the internal

investigation and who was doing the investigation. Mr. Thompson asked under what authority the Mayor assumes the role of City Manager.

Mayor Sheldon called for further public comments. Hearing and seeing none.

Mayor Sheldon called for Council discussion on the appointment of an interim City Manager. Mayor Sheldon reported that in the past, Ms. Holly White was appointed interim City Manager and he felt that the additional responsibilities put a tremendous burden on her and Staff. Mayor Sheldon added that Ms. Holly did a tremendous job as interim City Manager. Mayor Sheldon reported the City recently had a phenomenal Director retire. Mayor Sheldon added that this person does not want to be City Manager but would be willing to fill the gap. Mayor Sheldon nominated Al Shortt as interim City Manager and opened the floor for discussion.

Vice Mayor McConnell concurred that Mr. Shortt would be a great candidate and inquired if anyone had spoken with him. Mrs. Myers reported that she had talked with Mr. Shortt and he had some certain terms, which she would share with Council if now was the appropriate time. Council concurred. Mrs. Myers reported that Mr. Shortt would serve for \$13,000 per month, no more than 90 days, would like a city cell phone, and no other benefits. Vice Mayor McConnell discussed Ms. White doing a fantastic job as interim City Manager the last time while under a great amount of pressure. Vice Mayor McConnell noted his support for Al Shortt.

Councilman Chester submitted Ms. White's name and Mr. Mel Leonard's name for interim City Manager. Councilman Chester noted that Mr. Leonard did not want the job.

Councilman Casto concurred that Ms. White did a great job. Councilman Casto reported that the City Attorney mentioned Al Shortt's name to him and offered his support for Mr. Shortt.

A brief discussion regarding Mr. Shortt only serving 90 days took place. Discussion regarding using a headhunter historically taking 6 months or more to fill the position. Discussion regarding using City resources to do internal vetting and scheduling interviews possibly taking less time took place.

Councilman Jarman concurred that Al Shortt would be a good fit to oversee the ongoing projects in the short term.

Vice Mayor McConnell moved to appoint Al Shortt as interim City Manager. Councilman Jarman seconded the motion. Mayor Sheldon called for further discussion. Mayor Sheldon thanked Ms. White for serving in the past and recognized that while Ms. White would do what was best for the City, she preferred not to serve as interim City Manager at this time. Mayor Sheldon asked Ms. Fasone to call the roll. All were in favor of appointing Al Shortt as interim City Manager by a roll call vote (5-0).

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Vice Mayor McConnell	Aye
Councilman Jarman	Aye
Mayor Sheldon	Aye

Mrs. Myers noted that Mr. Shortt expressed a willingness to start as early as tomorrow. Mrs. Myers recommended that, if Council was interested in that accelerated timeline, she would request a motion from Council to **authorize the Mayor to sign an agreement with Mr. Shortt** that could be worked up this

afternoon. **Councilman Casto so moved. Vice Mayor McConnell seconded the motion.** Mayor Sheldon called for discussion. Hearing and seeing none, Mayor Sheldon asked Ms. Fasone to call the roll. All were in favor by a roll call vote (5-0).

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Vice Mayor McConnell	Aye
Councilman Jarman	Aye
Mayor Sheldon	Aye

ITEM 2. DISCUSSION ITEM – SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE NEW CITY MANAGER.

Mayor Sheldon opened up Item 2 for public comment.

Michael Steinkirchner – Mr. Steinkirchner provided his thoughts on the hiring process and noted he was able to identify 16 candidates who were previously interviewed for the City Manager position. Mr. Steinkirchner recommended Council look at those candidates again.

Councilman Jarman recommended the City use NEOGOV and also look at previous candidates who may have applied. Councilman Jarman also recommended that after 14-days Ms. Fasone inform the Council on the number of applications received. Councilman Jarman further recommended a Council workshop to review the applications, as well as standing up an employee council to review, and lastly having the candidates interviewed by City Council.

Councilman Casto recommended that the Civil Service Commission handle this for the Council, as the Commission had done in the past. Councilman Casto further recommended that the NEOGOV software be used, with 5 finalists coming before Council, and that Ms. Lynne and Ms. Debbie assist in the process.

Councilman Chester concurred with Councilmen Jarman and Casto. Councilman Chester recommended that department heads be involved in the interview process.

Vice Mayor McConnell recommended that the City use the three websites that had been used previously to advertise the position. Vice Mayor McConnell further recommended reaching out to the top 10 candidates that applied the last time. Vice Mayor McConnell expressed concern with using the Civil Service Commission since they were supposed to be an independent body. Vice Mayor McConnell recommended using an internal hiring committee, organized by Ms. Fasone, and also using our HR Director.

Mayor Sheldon noted his support for all ideas expressed by Council. Mayor Sheldon asked Councilman Jarman if it was a conflict to have the Civil Service Commission involved in the process, having served on that Commission. Councilman Jarman noted that Civil Service Commission Secretary could review the applications for Council.

Councilman Casto asked Mrs. Myers for an opinion as to how the Civil Services Commission could be involved. Mrs. Myers reported that it was up to the Council, Council was not hiring a civil service employee, however Council could direct and authorize them to do this. Discussion regarding charter officers took place.

Vice Mayor McConnell recommended keeping this search separate from the Civil Service Commission. Councilman Jarman and Mayor Sheldon noted that this was Council's responsibility. Discussion regarding the Civil Service Commission Secretary vetting the candidates as far as background checks, and administrative items took place. Discussion regarding having Ms. Lynne provide candidate packets to Council took place. Councilman Jarman recommended that Council give interim City Manager Al Shortt the authority to direct the processes.

Mayor Sheldon asked if Council was comfortable with 1) having interim City Manager Al Shortt direct internal processes; 2) having Ms. Lynne put candidate packets together using NEOGO as well as processing background checks and contacting the top 5 previous candidates; 3) having Department Directors involved; and 4) having candidates interview with Council. Councilman Jarman recommended that Ms. Lynne report back to Council in 14 days with the number of applications/candidates received. Discussion regarding having Mr. Shortt report back to Council on the employee/department head committees took place. Council members concurred with this direction. Mayor Sheldon asked if that was everything. Mrs. Myers noted that Council would need to set a budget at some point. Council members concurred.

With nothing further, Mayor Sheldon adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent at 9:32 AM.

READ AND APPROVED this 22nd day of April, 2021.



Mark Sheldon, Mayor
City of Panama City Beach, Florida

ATTEST:



Lynne Fasone, MMC
City Clerk

* ACTION ITEMS NOTED WITH AN ASTERISK ARE TAKEN BOTH BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE PANAMA CITY BEACH REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY JOINTLY AND CONCURRENTLY.

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