



**CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Wednesday, March 1, 2023, * 6:30 pm

MINUTES

Present was:

Nicholas Fouraker, Mayor
District 1 Commissioner – Ed Gold
District 2 Commissioner – Anthony Carugno
District 3 Commissioner – Karl Shuck
District 4 Commissioner – Randy Holihan
District 5 Commissioner – Beth Lowell
District 6 Commissioner – Stan Smith
District 7 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Fouraker called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and City Clerk confirmed the quorum.

Also present were City Manager Francis, Attorney Geller, Chief Houston, DC Grimm, and Public Works Director Phil Price.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag

Comm Shuck gave the invocation and led the pledge to the flag.

3. Selection of an Interim City Manager

Mayor Fouraker opened discussion for the selection of an interim City Manager and confirmed receipt of the resumes of the 13 candidates.

Mr. Francis reported that after the last Council meeting, he contacted the ICMA Senior Advisor, Ken Parker. They spoke on the availability of City Managers in transition for interim and permanent positions. The City received ten qualified candidates from ICMA, a resume from a resident of the City, and one from April Fisher, Former Planner, and Interim City Manager.

He asked the Council for discussion on what is expected from an interim City manager, i.e.

- Will the interim City Manager attend all City meetings?
- Will the Interim City manager write grants, contracts, and policies?
- How long would they be in the position, or
- Will the Interim City manager keep things moving and be the rudder in the ship until a permanent City Manager is hired?

When the Permanent City Manager is in place, Mr. Francis recommended that the Council seek assistance from the ICMA Senior Advisor Group to help narrow down the search.

Mr. Francis recommended Council discussion to select five candidates from the list provided, schedule interviews, and simultaneously hire an executive search firm to start the process for a permanent City Manager. From the list, Mr. Francis said the following candidates have agreed to submit for an interim position consideration; Rosen, Drago, Powell, Whitson, Cavalli, and Fisher.

For clarification, Mr. Francis said the executive search firm would speak with Council and staff and hold a community forum to gather information. They will report and develop a community profile for candidate consideration. The firm will complete all media, review resumes, and report the top candidates to Council.

Mayor Fouraker said this had happened suddenly and that Council does not need to feel pressured to decide tonight. He stated that he has spoken to several municipalities and researched other cities undergoing a similar process. He added that an interim person would provide Council with a vigorous, transparent, comprehensive search.

Mayor Fouraker spoke on the process used in prior searches and asked for Council feedback,

Comm Partin said that for the interim position, he would like to consider someone who does not aspire to a permanent position. He agrees with the hiring of a consultant to assist with the process and coordinate citizen input.

Comm Gold spoke of the process of the last City Manager Search. He would like to hire an interim and advertise the position to allow for transparency. He said he worries about disqualifying a good candidate from the interim candidate list and would like to open the permanent position to them if they are a good fit. He would like to discuss not separating the candidates into two lists. Attorney Geller said the meetings are public forums and properly noticed for anyone to attend. He recommends placing the open position on the City's website and ICMA posting board.

Comm Carugno said that based on what has happened in the past, he would like to see a candidate who is not related to the City at all. He has reviewed and selected 5 out of the 13 candidates.

Comm Shuck said the Council does not know how long the interim will be in place; it could be 90 days or six months. The person hired as an interim may not want a full-time position or stay past 90 days.

Comm Holihan said he would like to maintain two categories of candidates, interim and permanent. The interim should hold the rudder and keep the ship afloat. Unfortunately, the Council will have to become more involved in the day-to-day until the permanent City Manager is in place.

Comm Lowell said that given the circumstances, an interim person would do a good job; however, Council must be clear with their expectations. If that person qualifies for the position and becomes the permanent City Manager, it should be considered.

Comm Smith said there are many moving parts, and the City needs someone immediately part-time to allow Council to search for a permanent replacement.

Comm Partin said that it is important to know who on the list do aspire to a full-time position.

Mayor Fouraker said that in deciding on an interim, the Council could motion as such and prohibit them from accepting a permanent position. The challenge is that they will have an advantage before submitting a national notice through a consulting firm. From a taxpayer's perspective, the process must be fair, vigorous, and comprehensive. In his perspective, the Council should hire an interim only to allow them to focus on a long-term employee. Mr. Francis shared his opinion and spoke on the hiring process using an executive search firm and not limiting the candidates.

After discussion, and for the record, Comm Carugno said he had been interrupted and asked for decorum. Council agreed to follow the format to carry on with a meeting, and if one does not have the floor, they should remain silent until the other is done.

Mayor Fouraker clarified the process and said he would like to see the Council's top 5 picks given to the City Clerk to compile the results to start the process and discussion. Or suggest another process for consideration.

Comm Carugno said he would like to schedule another meeting to discuss the process further. Council's consensus was to allow more time to review the resumes and submit their top five and move the process along.

After discussion, Comm Shuck motioned that each Commissioner provides a list of the top 5 candidates out of the 13 to the City Clerk no later than Thursday afternoon and convene a special meeting on Friday at 5 pm. Comm Carugno seconded the motion.

Comm Gold asked if the Council is restricted to 13 candidates. He would like to suggest other names for consideration. He has received interest from John Tremblay, has qualifications like April Fisher, and does not have ICMA credentials. Mayor Fouraker said he would never discourage any candidate from submitting a resume. If one is received before the next meeting, a Commissioner can request consideration.

The motion passes 4:3 with Comm Gold, Lowell Holihan, nay.

Comm Partin moved to reconsider and withdraw the previous motion.

Comm Smith seconded the motion, which passed 5:2 with Comm Shuck and Carugno, nay.

Comm Gold moved to discuss the selection process at the Tuesday meeting and is open for any interested candidates to submit a resume and letter of interest for the interim city manager position no later than Monday, March 6, 2023, at noon. In addition, he would like to have the job posting placed on the City's website and the City's Facebook page.

City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno expressed her concerns and suggested placing the Police Chief as Interim City Manager. Doing so will save the City considerable funds and allow the City Council to focus on hiring a permanent City Manager. Mayor Fouraker asked if it may cause undue stress to a new Police Chief.

Deputy Chief Grimm said that as a team, it is possible; as a rudder, not full-time. He is excited to become the Chief of Police however will accept the interim position to help during the vetting process. Mr. Francis has done a great job of teaching us all. The staff can hold down the fort if needed. The staff and the citizens rely on the Council's decisions.

Mr. Francis said he spoke to all 13 candidates and noted that some would share his philosophy if they came on board, and some are not available until the end of the month. He opined that he did not offer an in-house appointment because he did not want to place undue stress on a brand-new chief of police due to many open projects.

Comm Gold stated that he has confidence in Chief Grimm as interim and Sergeant Millis as acting chief to keep us afloat until the Council hires a permanent City Manager. Comm Carugno said, at the recommendation of the City Manager, that he would like to move forward with the list of 13 qualified candidates.

Comm Lowell asked if the City Manager could provide his top 5 candidates to Council. Mayor Fouraker said he does not think that would be appropriate since it has not been advertised. He added that the City Manager was helpful in providing the list; however, he was not directed by Council to create a candidate list. Comm Lowell restated her request and asked the City Manager, if he was comfortable, to send her his top 5 candidates. Comm Smith asked the same.

Mayor Fouraker opened for public comment.

Bobby Lance residing at 6615 Matchett Road, spoke in support of the suggestion to have the Chief of Police act as the interim.

Charlene Cross residing at 5260 Chiswich Circle, said she would like to see the list of outstanding projects on the City Manager's desk so that Council can appoint an interim from the list who can fill those shoes. Other than that, she is also in support of the discussion of hiring in-house because it will bring stability to the staff for the 90 days.

Sue Nielsen spoke of the process City Council had in place during the last City Manager search. She noted that at the last Council meeting. Mr. Francis did say that he was going to talk to potential candidates.

There being no further comments, Mayor Fouraker closed public comment.

Mayor Fouraker informed Council members to refrain from speaking and to wait to speak once recognized.

Comm Smith made a motion to turn in all the names to be considered for an interim City Manager by noon on Monday, March 6, 2023, to the City Clerk, advertise the job opening in all areas necessary to benefit the City, and add to the Tuesday agenda discussion and possibly vote on an interim City Manager.

Comm Lowell seconded the motion.

Comm Shuck said it might be wise to amend the motion to add direction to the City Manager to post the opening as discussed.

Comm Smith restated his motion to instruct the City Manager to post the job opening in all the normal channels so anyone interested can submit a resume no later than Monday, March 6, 2023. Comm Lowell agreed to second the motion as amended.

Comm Carugno asked if the posting should list the credentials for consideration. It can be a lot to look at if it is open to anyone interested.

Comm Gold said it does not leave much time to research all the submittals.

Mr. Francis said the staff would send out an agenda on Friday, and a separate email will be sent to Council on Monday after Monday on noon with the names of all resumes submitted for the interim city manager position.

The motion passed 4:3 with Comm Gold, Carugno, and Shuck, nay.

Discussion on the Process for Hiring a City Manager for a Permanent Role

City Manager Francis provided a list of steps for hiring an Executive Search Firm. He asked if Council would like to proceed with an RFP/RFQ or piggyback off the Oakland contract; approximately \$32,000. He said the go-to firm in Florida is Colin Baensiger. Mayor Fouraker said he spoke with staff in Oakland and said the Council was not doing any part of the search and moved to allow the Executive Search Company to manage the search, develop the contract, and warranty the selection when the recommendation is made to Council. He continued and read a summary of Colin and Baesinger's contract agreement.

Attorney Geller said Piggyback contracts are allowed in Florida Statute, and the hiring of an Executive Search Firm might save time and may be a good option.

After discussion Comm Gold moved to move forward immediately with the Piggyback option with Colin Baesiger & Associates and include in the contract the following, "The firm will then advertise where it will be seen by the most CMs (ICMA, FCCMA, the firm's website, etc.) and it will have a closing date, usually about a month."

Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 7:0.

4. Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Fouraker called for a motion to adjourn.

The motion passed unanimously at 8:36 pm.