

**TOWN OF DAVIE
WORKSHOP MEETING
FEBRUARY 22, 2005**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Mayor Truex, Vice-Mayor Paul, Councilmembers Crowley, Hubert and Councilmember Starkey. Also present were Interim Town Administrator Kovanes, Town Attorney Kiar and Town Clerk Muniz recording the meeting.

Human Resources Director Mark Alan explained that the PowerPoint presentation on recruitment and selection process options was provided by staff in response to Council's request for options for hiring a permanent town administrator. He indicated that the presentation highlighted points in a memorandum already distributed to Council. Mr. Alan explained that the recruitment and selection process involved pre-recruitment, recruitment, selection and post-selection.

Mr. Alan advised that elements of the pre-recruitment phase involved establishing qualifications and determining dimensions to be assessed during the process.

Mayor Truex asked if a "bye" could be created to forego the minimum qualifications that were established for organizations such as the FPAA. Mr. Alan indicated in the affirmative and explained that Council could determine the qualifications.

Mr. Alan advised that elements of the recruitment phase involved objectives, methods, and scope of recruitment and deadlines. He spoke of the need to attract diversity to the Town by recruiting locally, statewide or nationally. Mr. Alan recommended that Council focus its search statewide, but not exclude a national search. He spoke of the benefits of setting a specific application deadline.

Mr. Alan advised that one objective of the selection phase was to assess the knowledge, skills, abilities and willingness of individuals within the pool of applicants. The other objective was to identify backup candidates in case the first choice was not hired.

Councilmember Starkey asked what would prevent Council from receiving all the applications and then short listing the candidates. Mr. Alan stated that nothing would prevent this from occurring. He suggested that a hybrid of that concept could be utilized where Council could receive a recommended short list from another source. Mr. Alan advised that Council could interview candidates individually and then hold public interviews before Council made the final selection.

Mr. Alan advised that elements of the post-selection phase involved completing background, employment, education, and credit checks; providing an initial offer of employment; performing medical evaluations and screening; then doing contract negotiation and execution.

Mr. Alan advised that Mayor Truex had requested a presentation from an executive search firm and introduced Colin Baezinger of Baezinger and Associates.

Mr. Baezinger spoke of his firm's competencies. He advised that the selection of the town administrator was entirely the Council's process and cautioned that the process should be clearly defined from the beginning. Mr. Baezinger spoke of the advantages and disadvantages of using the in-house hiring process. He also spoke of the advantages and disadvantages of using the Range Riders volunteer recruitment group. Mr. Baezinger explained that using a recruiting firm could cost approximately \$17,500. He spoke of the importance of advertising, and outlined the various processes his firm employed in working with a municipality to select the right candidate. Mr. Baezinger indicated that his firm usually narrowed the pool down to the five best candidates.

Mr. Baezinger explained that his firm's process also involved holding a reception for the candidate, along with Council, committee chairs and members of the public, with the goal of seeing the candidate in a social setting. He advised that his firm also sent the candidate throughout the community with a realtor. Mr. Baezinger advised that some municipalities chose to have the candidate meet with staff. He stated that the next step involved one-on-one interviews with each candidate, followed by full

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interviews with Council in a later session where the public could be allowed to ask questions. Mr. Baezinger cautioned Council not to assume that every recruiter was the same. He advised that with his firm's process, candidates were usually hired within 75 days. Mr. Baezinger stated that Council should review potential recruiters under the same guidelines outlined for selecting the town administrator. Mr. Baezinger spoke of the challenges of hiring internal candidates for city management positions and explained that it was much easier to consider external candidates.

Vice-Mayor Paul asked for clarification that the process could take up to three months. Mr. Baezinger responded in the affirmative. He stated that his firm only accepted resumes by e-mail in order to keep them on file electronically, which opened up the process to the Council.

Councilmember Crowley asked how many applicants would be expected if the search were to be done statewide. Mr. Baezinger indicated approximately 30. Councilmember Crowley asked Mr. Alan about the Human Resources Department's staff time and ability to perform the search. Mr. Alan spoke of the staff time needed and the challenges of running several background checks. He stated that the bigger issue would be the perceived bias that Human Resources staff would have in participating in the selection of their future boss. Councilmember Crowley asked how Council could get more involved in the short list process. Mr. Baezinger advised that by using community groups, Council could be well involved.

Councilmember Starkey asked if Mr. Baezinger felt there were good candidates out there statewide. Mr. Baezinger responded in the affirmative.

Mayor Truex asked about ensuring diversity in the recruitment process. Mr. Baezinger spoke of different channels that could be utilized to ensure diversity in the process. Councilmember Starkey asked what Mayor Truex's intent was in including minority groups and wanted to know if he was looking for one particular ethnicity or group. Mayor Truex indicated that he merely wanted to ensure an open recruitment process. Mr. Alan felt the Town needed to reach out to certain communities that might not be traditionally involved in the recruitment process. He stated that this was not outside the norm in terms of the Town's philosophies.

Councilmember Starkey stated she was more inclined to be inclusive and not isolate or identify any particular minority group.

Doug Notman, 3051 Old Orchard Road, felt the process of selecting a town administrator should be transparent and open to all.

Mayor Truex recommended that Mr. Kovanes be considered a finalist and given a "bye" on some of the requirements. He felt that a recruitment firm should be used and that Human Resources should probably be excluded from the process.

Councilmember Starkey thanked Mr. Alan and staff for the presentation. She felt that selecting the town administrator was probably one of the most important jobs of Council. Councilmember Starkey wanted the process to be transparent and Council should take on the responsibility of short-listing many of the applications submitted. She felt Council should establish a timeline and range of experience it wanted to see in candidates, then go forward from there. Councilmember Starkey indicated that she did not mind taking the time to go through applications and hold several public meetings, as the individual selected would have to interact with residents and Council on a daily basis. She agreed with Councilmember Crowley that a statewide search was sufficient and felt the word needed to be spread.

Councilmember Hubert agreed with Mayor Truex that a firm should be hired and should perform a statewide search, but did not feel that Council should micro-manage the process. Mayor Truex felt at some level, Council did need a recruiter involved for certain elements such as background checks. He added that the Human Resources Department should not be involved.

Mayor Truex asked Mr. Alan how Council would go about selecting a recruitment firm. Mr. Alan advised there was a possibility that a recruitment firm might be allowed under the Town's provision for contracting outside professional services.

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Councilmember Crowley felt that Human Resources would be affected whether a firm was selected or not. He was open to suggestions from the rest of Council, but stressed that the search should be kept in Florida. Councilmember Crowley indicated he was in no rush as the Town had many competent directors who were “holding the fort down”.

Vice-Mayor Paul stated that if Council went through a search for recruitment firms, followed by a search for a Town Administrator, the process could take as long as eight months. Vice-Mayor Paul spoke of her previous experience with a national search and felt Council in some ways had to micro-manage the process because ultimately, Council was responsible to the residents. She spoke of the responsible work and dedication of Mr. Kovanes and pointed out that he was someone who everyone respected and got along with. Regarding diversity, Vice-Mayor Paul felt that before going through processes to search out different ethnic groups, the Town needed to revamp some of its own policies regarding diversity. She stated Council should not preclude any candidates who might surface from within the ranks. Vice-Mayor Paul indicated that she was not in favor of a recruitment search.

Councilmember Starkey did not feel Council was “micro-managing” and pointed out that selection of the town administrator was Council’s job to perform. She spoke of the free flow of information being enjoyed now that Mr. Kovanes was in place. Councilmember Starkey wanted to be sure that Mr. Kovanes would have the option of being included on the short list. She voiced her concern about the expenses and time involved in using a recruitment firm to search for candidates statewide.

Council agreed that Mr. Kovanes would be given a “bye.” Vice-Mayor Paul pointed out that it could take up to a year for an individual from outside the community to get in the flow of the community and the Town’s processes. She felt the longer it took, the more problems could develop internally with morale. Vice-Mayor Paul also felt that with Council making up the rules, it would be challenging for all to be in agreement.

Council agreed with Mayor Truex that Human Resources would be kept out of the selection process. Mayor Truex disagreed with Vice-Mayor Paul’s characterization of the last recruitment search performed. He suggested asking Human Resources to compile a list of third party search firms, in the event the Town did not have to bid this out. Mayor Truex asked that the topic of search firms be placed under Old Business at the March 16, 2005 meeting.

Councilmember Starkey spoke of previously established minimum criteria for a town administrator. She mentioned that she had asked Human Resources Assistant Director El Pagnier Hudson for the minimum criteria the Town had used over the past 10 years. Ms. Hudson distributed a chart showing names, tenures and salaries for previous town administrators.

Councilmember Hubert asked why the Town wanted to go out and search for the town administrator candidate if it would take eight months, when Mr. Kovanes was doing a find job. Mayor Truex felt it was unfair to keep the position in-house. He stated that if all positions were open, this position should be also. Mayor Truex felt it was not good government to exclude external candidates from consideration. Vice-Mayor Paul pointed out that Council had already established an open process.

Councilmember Starkey felt that Mr. Kovanes had provided stability and handled responsibilities very well so far. She pointed out that staff members who were doing their jobs well would also be considered in the long run.

Councilmember Hubert asked if Council could establish a timeframe as it was not right to have the process take one year while Mr. Kovanes temporarily filled the position. Mayor Truex agreed and felt Council should begin moving on this right away. Councilmember Starkey suggested that each Councilmember work on a list of minimum criteria and present their views at an upcoming meeting.

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Mayor Truex suggested that at the March 16th meeting, information on the Range Riders and executive search firms be presented to Council. Mr. Alan advised that some search firms could be invited to make brief presentations. After some discussion, Mayor Truex announced that a meeting would be held on March 16th with short presentations being given by executive search firms. Councilmember Starkey clarified that though firms would be giving presentations, Council was not committing that any search firm would be chosen.

Mr. Kovanes explained the Town's procurement guidelines. He indicated that staff would research whether recruitment firms qualified as professional services.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Approved _____

Mayor/Councilmember

Town Clerk