

The special meeting of the Lake Wales City Commission was held on August 23, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room at the Municipal Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael S. Carter.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Terrye Y. Howell; Jonathan Thornhill; John Paul Rogers; Michael S. Carter; Betty Wojcik.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** None.

**CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Judith H. Delmar, City Manager; Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk; Sandra Davis, Human Resources Director

**Agenda Item 1. Roll Call**

**Agenda Item 2. City Manager Candidate**

The Commission met to discuss the candidacy of Therese Leary, whether they thought she would be the right candidate for the future of Lake Wales; to determine the course of action the Commission wished to take; and to give direction to staff.

Commissioner Wojcik made the following comments:

- Commissioner Wojcik said she believed Ms. Leary was the right candidate for Lake Wales for the following reasons:
  - Her qualifications were exactly what we need.
  - Her service to other communities of the same and larger size as Lake Wales would serve the City well.
- Commissioner Wojcik said she heard there was a story circulating around that she, the Mayor, and Commissioner Howell accompanied Ms. Leary the day she was in town. Commissioner Wojcik stated officially for the record that the story was incorrect. She said the first time she met Ms. Leary was when the full Commission interviewed her, though she said she had been very impressed with her on that first occasion as well as during her phone interview.
- Commissioner Wojcik said she would have liked to have had the opportunity to interview Mr. Brown in person and was sorry that people had contacted him out of place.

Commissioner Howell made the following comments:

- Commissioner Howell said if the Commission unanimously chose not to open it up for new candidates, she would support hiring Ms. Leary for the following reasons:
  - She liked the answers she gave to their questions
  - Her attitude
  - She had come to Lake Wales and knew things about the city.
  - She applied for a position before and still wished to apply again.
- Commissioner Howell said she heard things about Ms. Leary that she had no way of verifying and was told the issues were political. She knew the positive things about Ms. Leary but was not aware of the negative things.
- Commissioner Howell said they need to make sure the Commission does not smother Ms. Leary if she comes, but give her breathing room. Ms. Delmar added that they would need to give her the time she needs to demonstrate what she can do.

Commissioner Thornhill made the following comments:

- Commissioner Thornhill said he was disappointed that Dale Brown pulled out from consideration and he didn't think the candidate got a fair shake.

- Commissioner Thornhill said he thought future candidate searches should not be stretched over such an extended period of time because the top choices got hired while they had prolonged making the choice. Ms. Delmar said a month to six weeks had been added to the process by having the Commission review all 40 candidate resumes, which would not have been necessary if they had accepted the recommendation of the Selection Committee.
- Commissioner Thornhill said he agreed with the hiring of Ms. Leary and gave the following reasons:
  - Her passion
  - Her energy
  - Her friendliness
  - He believed she will work with what we have, not try to clean house, but make improvements if needed.
  - Her knowledge
- Commissioner Thornhill said he understood how politics work and that Ms. Leary gave an explanation as to why she left the last position after only two years.
- Commissioner Thornhill said they need to make sure she doesn't only focus on the downtown area but has a broad focus.

Commissioner Rogers made the following comments:

- Commissioner Rogers gave the following reasons for thinking Ms. Leary would make a good city manager for Lake Wales:
  - She was well spoken
  - She was well dressed
  - She gets along with everyone
  - She communicated well
- Commissioner Rogers would have liked to see a more rounded candidate with knowledge in things like utilities, fire and police and things of that nature.
- Commissioner Rogers said if the consensus was to hire Ms. Leary he would cooperate and work with her 100% in the best interest of the city.
- He did not think Mr. Brown got a fare shake.

Mayor Carter made the following comments:

Mayor Carter gave the following reasons for thinking Ms. Leary is the right person for Lake Wales:

- A wealth of experience
- The right background and education
- Years of experience in all levels of city and county government
- The passion she brings to the job.
- Her demonstrated interest in Lake Wales that he thought was impressive.
- Her willingness, ability and readiness to give to the community
- She was as personable in person as she was on the phone.

After much discussion, the consensus of the Commission was to:

- Evaluate Ms. Leary's performance annually on each anniversary date with a reasonable time given to correct deficiencies, followed by a re-evaluation
- Offer her an open contract with no set minimum
- Have staff negotiate a salary not to exceed the budgeted \$112,000
- Have staff immediately notify the Commission if negotiations fail, so they can meet to decide in what manner they wish to continue the search

Commissioner Wojcik made a motion to offer Ms. Leary the position and to direct staff to negotiate. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Howell.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Wojcik                      YES

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Commissioner Howell	YES
Commissioner Thornhill	YES
Commissioner Rogers	YES
Mayor Carter	YES

The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Howell made a motion for staff to negotiate within the framework of the budget and bring a contract back to the City Commission at the first City Commission meeting in September. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thornhill.

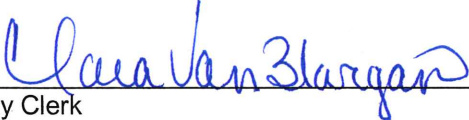
Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Howell	YES
Commissioner Thornhill	YES
Commissioner Rogers	YES
Commissioner Wojcik	YES
Mayor Carter	YES

The motion carried 5-0.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

  
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Mayor/Commissioner

  
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City Clerk