

A workshop meeting of the City Commission was held on June 26, 2013 in the lunchroom at the Municipal Administration Building for the purpose of conducting phone interviews with city manager candidates John Schneiger and Michael Stampfler. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Eugene Fultz at 5:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Betty Wojcik; Jonathan Thornhill; Christopher Lutton; Mike Carter; Eugene Fultz, Mayor

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Human Resource Director Sandra Davis; Jacquie Hawkins, Deputy City Clerk

[CANDIDATE: JOHN SNEIGER]

Question #1, Part A: What will your first steps be upon assuming responsibility for this position?

Mr. Schneiger said his first step would be to put together a communications plan.

- Meet with:
 - Commissioners: so he can learn their preferences, values, priorities and expectations and to develop goals for the first year along with benchmarks.
 - Organizations: such as The Chamber of Commerce, the County and Main Street, schools and Legion organizations
 - Employees: formally and informally including in the field, they can know him and vice versa so they can build a team
 - Business owners: to get an understanding of what the city is and who the players are.
 - Community leaders: He will get five names from each Commissioner of knowledgeable individuals in the community that he can meet to learn about the community and help him with a seamless transition.
- Monthly Coffee with City manager: Two hour timeframe open to the community for them to express their issues, resolve their concerns and for them to receive information
- Interim City Manager: Work closely with her.
- Develop a plan for future success:

Question #1, Part B: What do you hope to accomplish in the first year?

- Connect with People:
- Set Goals for the Future:
- Start accomplishing those goals:

Question #2: Describe your management style:

- Team Orientation
- Internal and external Communication
- Transparency
- Positive Attitude
- Goal and Result Oriented
- Principle Centered
- Customer Focused
- Businesslike Approach to what he does

Question #3: What are your strengths?

- A Successful Planner
- A Seasoned Manager: With a broad range of skills in finance, planning, economic and community development, and communication but continually growing and learning as an individual
- Strong Leadership: with a focus on honesty and integrity
- Committed: Mr. Schneiger said he is deeply committed to honesty and integrity

- Problem Solver: creative in finding solutions
- Competent: He gets results
- Positive Attitude
- Persistence: that leads to creative and innovative solutions to problems

Additional Question:

Commissioner Wojcik asked if a department head is not performing at the level he thought needed for him to rely on them.

- Coaching: Mr. Schneider said he would first try and coach the employee to try to turn him or her around.
- Performance Plan: He would devise a plan for steps to progress, meet at intervals to check on that progress, and document in the employees personnel file.
- Terminate: The employee will be told that will have two chances, no more, before his job is in jeopardy and action is taken. He said a department head that is not performing or does not achieve not only affects that department but others as well.

Question #4: What are your weaknesses?

- Employee Expectations: Mr. Schneider said that at times he realizes his expectation of staff is too high and he is too tough on them.
- Self Expectations: He said he is always hardest on himself because he wants to be a positive role model and he wants to accomplish the goals and he takes pride in a job well done. He takes his job seriously because he wants to do positive things in the community.

Question #5: Give us a positive statement about Lake Wales.

Mr. Schneider said that though he has not been to Lake Wales he has discovered many good things about our community:

- It's a Desirable Community:
 - It has a high quality of life.
 - A lot of leisure activities
 - It's a family community
- It has Great Assets:
 - It's historic downtown
 - It's business park and business development
 - It's natural assets
 - It's a great location regarding transportation:
- It's Slogan: Progressive Vision, Vintage Charm

Additional Question:

Commissioner Wojcik asked Mr. McClain to define being "Business Friendly."

Mr. Schneider defined as a city doing what it can to facilitate the retention, improvement and expansion of business:

- Through the use of incentives, grants and partnerships
- If zoning is a problem change the zoning
- Put most desirable incoming businesses, if is something good for the community, on a fast track to expedite the process
- Have a positive attitude toward businesses
- Be a problem solver instead of an obstacle.

Question # 6: Give us a negative statement about Lake Wales.

Mr. Schneider said it was hard to come up with a negative. Mr. Schneider said he had a time coming up with any because the negatives are the same all cities seem to be facing.

- Financial: Lake Wales faces financial challenges with a \$400,000 gap in the budget
- Economic: Lake Wales has economic development challenges that he said he can turn to an asset.

- Assessed Value: The assessed value that has dropped.
- Difficulty in staffing
- Lake Wales has a lot of assets but needs someone to look for opportunities

Question # 7: Other

Added Question:

Commissioner Carter explained that the city now has an Economic Development Council in the Chamber of Commerce and so the city no longer takes the lead in bringing in business. He asked what role the city should now play.

- City Manager: Mr. Schneiger said the city manager needs to be involved and maintain a good relationship with them so they never forget it is about Lake Wales. It is important for the city to build a relationship with them.
- Pros and Con: There are pros and cons to having Economic Development in-house.

Commissioner Lutton asked Mr. Schneiger to fill in the gaps on his resume from 1885 – 1990 and current missing employment.

Mr. Schneiger filled them in as follows:

- 1885 – 1988 he was in graduate school
- 1988 – 1990 he worked for an engineering management consultant firm in Denver, Colorado.
- He left the City of Eustis to become a City Manager again.
- New Port Richey was not a good fit. He uncovered some serious financial issues because of substantial debt. It was difficult trying to save the city from bankruptcy and he didn't make friends in the process. Since he left they still haven't hired a new city manager.

Mayor Fultz asked Mr. Schneiger if he had any questions.

He asked if there were any major challenges he was not informed of. He was told no. Mr. Schneiger asked for the next step in the process.

Next Step.

Mayor Fultz explained that they will be making a short list on Friday and starting July 8th the second round will take place, this time in-person interviews.

Salary Range: Between \$90,000 and \$153,000.

Mr. Schneiger was agreeable to the salary range.

The phone interview with John Schneiger ended at 6:07 p.m.

[CANDIDATE: MICHAEL STAMPFIER; 6:15 p.m.]

Question #1, Part 1: What will your first steps be upon assuming responsibility for this position?

Survey/Discussion: Mr. Stampfier said he would like to meet with the community leaders, business people, neighborhoods, non-profit organizations, commissioners, residents, department heads, and employees to:

- Get his bearings.
- Find out the public's perceptions of the city and where it should be going.
- Get a feel for what employees think the status of the community is and where it should be going.

Question #1, Part 2: What do you hope to accomplish in the first year?

- Evidence to the public how the city conducts its business and evaluate progress
- Look at goals and objectives and decide where we want to go over the coming year
- Be able to describe what progress we made
- Move the City forward.

Question #2: Describe your management style.

- Open Door Policy: Be available, approachable, and acceptable to employees, the city commission, and citizens to demonstrate that someone is listening to them
- Management by Objectives: Decide together the goals and objectives so everyone knows what we are trying to do, then together coming up with a timetable to get them done

Additional Question:

Commissioner Wojcik asked how he would deal with a department head that was not living up to his expectations after being here a while and observing how he operates.

Mr. Stampfier said it is important to make sure the employee knows what is expected, the goals and objectives.

- Meet monthly or at a minimum quarterly to review the goals and the progress made.
- Take into account extenuating circumstances, but make sure there are not too many excuses for not achieving
- If necessary, take action

Question #3: What are your strengths?

- Communicator: in both written and speaking
- Thorough Work:
- A Visionary: when finding paths for goals

Additional Questions:

Commissioner Wojcik asked Mr. Stampfier to discuss his consultant work.

Mr. Stampfier said he worked with communities that had financial problems but on occasion helped with things like rate or utilities studies for economic developers or corporations. The goal was always to encourage civic quests to further civic goals and make democracy work as best as possible.

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Commissioner Lutton said there were several times he worked only for a year or so and asked if he was contracting with cities:

Mr. Stampfier said:

- Casselberry Manager: He had a difference of opinion with the mayor and council and he resigned after six months.
- Calladega Manager: He worked as a manager for two years and left because he was appointed by the Governor of Michigan to serve as Emergency Manager.
- Emergency Manager: He worked there 14 or 15 months but after an election where the Republican Party won he was replaced as he was a Democrat.

Question #4: What are your weaknesses?

- Over engaging
- Being overly dedicated to the job
- Taking things to heart if things aren't moving fast enough

Question #5: Give us a positive statement about Lake Wales.

- The location
- The environment
- Historic Preservation and promotion of the arts and recreation

Additional Question:

Commissioner Carter asked what he thought the role of recreation played in a community.

Mr. Stampfier said he thought it was the most important marketing tool a community can have and it resonates with almost everyone. The trick is making sure it is not a total drain on the budget by

finding a way to make it self-sustaining and the best economic value for the dollar. He said that is where his heart lies.

Commissioner Wojcik asked Mr. McClain to define being “Business Friendly.”

He said the following draws businesses to a community and points to a business friendly atmosphere:

- Low tax rates
- Excellent services
- Good infrastructure
- Recreation

Question # 6: Give us a negative statement about Lake Wales.

- The unemployment rate is a little high
- The pension issue, though he said that may already be resolved
- Being about forty miles from a large metropolitan area

Added Question:

Commissioner Thornhill asked Mr. Stampfier what his commitment level was because he had several short time terms. He asked if it would be 2 years or ten.

Mr. Stampfier said that would depend on how fast the city got tired of him but he would opt for the ten years. He said he is looking for the right place and the right environment, which he thought was Lake Wales.

Question # 7: Other

Salary Range: Between \$90,000 and \$153,000.

Mr. Stampfier was agreeable to the salary range.

Next Step

Mayor Fultz explained that they will be narrowing down the candidates to two or three and start the in-person interviews the week of July 8th. They hope to make a decision by the end of that week.

The phone interview was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

The Commission discussed the candidates until 6:55 p.m.

Commissioner Lutton said he was glad they were talking to ten candidates because, though there were many similarities, there were many differences.

Human Resource Director Sandra Davis said they would hold a Special Meeting on Friday after the interviews for discussion and consensus for the following:

1. **Short List:**

- The number of candidates to be interviewed:
- How they will determine who gets on the short list:
- If they want an alternate put on the list

2. **The Agenda:**

- A Tour of the City: They need to make sure one candidate does not have more time than another and that they each one gets to experience the same things. They also need to decide which Commissioner can attend the tour on which day.
- An Hour Meeting with the Chamber of Commerce Board: Whether it should be a breakfast or at a different time of day; whether a small group or large.
- Lunch: At a restaurant downtown, a different one each day with one of the

commissioners. They will have to decide which Commissioner can attend the luncheon on which day.

- A Panel Discussion:

3. City Covered Expense:

Ms. Davis said they will have an opportunity to discuss if candidate fees for lodging and travel will be covered by the City. She explained that it hasn't been covered in the past but they can discuss that on Friday.

The Commissioners discussed car allowances, whether or not the city manager would need one now that the Mayor has taken on a lot of the travel. It was determined that the candidate would decide if he or she wants a car allowance, which would be part of the package deal and would come from the salary, and if not, the salary would be higher.

The workshop meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.



Mayor Eugene Fultz

ATTEST:



City Clerk Clara VanBlargan