

A workshop meeting of the City Commission was held on June 28, 2013 in the lunchroom at the Municipal Administration Building for the purpose of conducting phone interviews with city manager candidates Dennis Kelly and Elizabeth Ann Toney-Deal. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Eugene Fultz at approximately 5:30 p.m.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Mike Carter

STAFF PRESENT: Human Resource Director Sandra Davis; Interim City Manager Dorothy Ecklund; Deputy City Clerk Jacquie Hawkins

[CANDIDATE: DENNIS KELLY]

Mr. Dennis Kelly had called before the meeting and withdrew his name from the list.

PRE-MEETING

The commissioners started the following discussions.

1. How the commissioners should rate those on the short list to come up with their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices. Suggestions as follows:
 - Someone that will be good in all aspects of city government.
 - strong leadership
 - Someone who can reason and discuss difficult topics
 - Results oriented
2. What to keep in mind during in-person interviews.
 - To keep the questions general
 - Try to pick up during the conversation what is important to them.
 - Let the candidate do most of the talking.
 - Start with standard questions and make the additional questions short.
 - Ask for examples from their past employment.
 - Use open ended questions so they can't just give a yes, no answer. If they do, ask them Why.
3. How many in-person interviews they should consider. They decided to interview three and if one drops out before the interview they will meet again to pick another.
4. Whether extra points should be given to candidates based in Florida. There was no consensus.

[CANDIDATE: ELIZABETH ANN TONEY-DEAL; 6:02 p.m.]

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

- Hit the ground running
- Set up workshops to determine the short and long term goals
- Address the budget
- Meet with staff to analyze current operations and develop a staff driven plan to capitalize on that information
- Find ways to generate more revenue for the city through grants, purchasing procedures and annexations
- Formalize a strong, positive, successful working relation with the EDC

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

- That all five commissioners will be pleased with her administrative direction
- Create a vision for long and short term goals
- Streamline operations
- Have a successful relationship with the EDC
- Plans for new infrastructure to allow for new businesses and the expansion of old businesses
- Accomplish the short term goals
- Organize and conduct the Lake Wales Citizen's Academy for civic and business leaders and form partnerships
- Work on the next budget with the intention of lowering the millage rate.

Question #2: Describe your management style and give specific examples.

- Council Management form of government to carry out commission policies
- Loyalty to the mayor and commissioners
- Expects staff to:
 - Share her passion for the community
 - Carry out the policies of the city commission
 - To 'think outside the box' and instead of asking "why," asking "why not."
- Thorough and thoughtful: Well thought out decisions in the best interest of the city
- Analytical: will give the commission a complete analogy of issues along with options and recommendations
- Recruiting management and mid-level management
- Detailed oriented, yet seeing the big picture
- Engagement with the community by participating in community events

Added Questions:

Commissioner Wojcik asked how she would deal with an employee not living up to her or the commissioners' expectations.

- She starts out giving department heads a clean slate because she doesn't have a professional knowledge of them
- She analyzes staff so each has an opportunity to show that they are committed to the goals selected by the commission
- If she finds someone who does not meet those goals she will first see if another staff member can accomplish it better
- She is not tolerant of people who do not want to do their jobs.
- Once an employee sees that they can't do what is required they quickly decide to seek employment somewhere else.
- If it becomes an issue she will address that sooner than later.

Commissioner Wojcik asked her how long that process normally takes.

Ms. Toney-Deal responded that it depends on how long it takes before she realizes that person is not on board but whenever it surfaces she will address it. She said she has no intention of 'cleaning house' but she said she couldn't promise them that she won't make organizational changes within the first year.

Mayor Fultz asked for the process she would use before relieving that person of their job.

- She starts out on day one giving the employees the benefit of the doubt.
- Work one-on-one with employees to make sure they know her expectations and usually they know if they can meet those expectations and if not they will expect to be released from duty
- Give the employee one opportunity to address the deficiencies
- If that expectation isn't met they will already know the outcome.
- She gave an example of the city manager from Miami Beach telling her she needed to fire two employees where she was deputy city manager. She didn't fire them and those

two department heads under her direction ended up being two of her favorite employees in the city.

- She also said she hoped the city commission would support her in organizational changes

Commissioner Lutton asked her how she does the care and feeding of the city commissioners.

- She cultivates relationships: It is important that the city manager has a close, comfortable relationship with all elected officials.
- She keeps the city commission informed about everything so they are not put in the position of being embarrassed, and so they know ahead of time of any problems that might arise.
- She keeps the city commission in the forefront so they are being seen.
- She gives them the credit but she takes the blame.
- She has an open door policy

Commissioner Wojcik asked if Ms. Toney-Deal would be able to stand up to a commissioner that was dominating her time.

She said she would have no problem with that. If it was a big picture item she would feel uncomfortable proceeding with direction from just one commissioner. She would want to get feedback from the other commissioners by setting up a workshop. She tries to make each commissioner happy but they all have to collectively be on board.

Commissioner Thornhill asked if she had a dictator style, micromanager or 'hands off' style unless there was an issue.

- Ms. Toney-Deal said she has been accused of being a micromanager but she has a hands-off policy for the everyday operations, though she may be more detailed on certain selected projects. She gave an example of the Haines City Selected Area Plan in which she handled the details for the project for several departments.
- She wants employees to not be afraid of trying new things but they need to do what they say they will do. If they make a mistake, that's okay but they shouldn't make the same mistake twice. Employees are held accountable so she expects them to do their jobs because if she has to do it...she doesn't need them.
- Employees need to work as a team. She gives the directions but they make the decisions and then take ownership of them.

Question #3: What are your strengths?

- She's a turn-key manager and can hit the ground running
- Experience and expertise in local government, infrastructure, master planning, and construction
- Her knowledge of the area and her network of contacts not only on the local level but state level
- Strong work ethic
- Excellent public speaking
- Has been a proven leader for 19 years
- Proven stability and results
- Her humor

Question #4: What are your weaknesses?

She said her weakness is not recognizing that others may not share her enthusiasm and letting that bother her. She now tries to get staff to buy-in on the onset to a new project. She is continuing to work on that problem.

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

Ms. Toney-Deal said she has loved Lake Wales for a long time because it has the total and complete package of what is needed for economic development as follows:

- Location: the crossroad of US 27 and SR 60, and proximity to Bok Tower
- Quality of life
 - Culture: the Art Center and historic museum
 - It's recreation:
 - Educational opportunities: Charter schools, Polk State College, Warner and Webber Universities that provide an educational workforce

Added Question:

Commissioner Wojcik asked her to define what it means for a city to be business friendly.

Ms. Toney-Deal said it would be a city that:

- Expands new businesses and supports existing ones.
- Has an EDC and Chamber for businesses to share ideas, develop partnerships and supports each other
- Considers change as a positive
- Helps instead of a hinders
- Is patient and friendly with businesses
- Becomes their best friend and an advocate
- Walks them through things like the permitting process
- Puts in infrastructure that draws new businesses and encourages expansion of existing ones

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

- A limited tax base: it needs to be diversified
- The Greater Lake Wales Area enjoys amenities provided by city taxes but does not contribute their fair share of the cost for those programs.

Question # 7: Other.

Commissioner Thornhill asked for an explanation of what caused her to lose her job.

Ms. Toney-Deal explained that she had been working there for twenty years. The newly elected commission didn't believe she was the best fit for the job so she resigned before she could be terminated.

Commissioner Wojcik explained that she would be required to move to Lake Wales and asked if that would be a problem.

Ms. Toney-Deal said she was not opposed to living in Lake Wales but explained that she had purchased a new home and she was hoping she could negotiate the terms so she wouldn't have to move immediately.

Commissioner Lutton asked what she thought her strongest technical skill was.

Ms. Toney-Deal said her legal understanding of labor laws, utility laws and utility systems

Ms. Toney-Deal was asked if she had any questions.

Ms. Toney-Deal asked each commissioner to tell her one trait they would like to see in a city manager. Their response was as follows:

- Mayor Fultz: Result oriented
- Commissioner Lutton: A generalist with ability over an entire spectrum
- Commissioner Thornhill: A leader
- Commissioner Wojcik: An effective manager

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

Ms. Toney-Deal was agreeable with the salary range.

The Next Step

A short list will be decided on after the interviews on Friday. Face-to-face interviews will start the week of July 8th.

The workshop meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Mayor Eugene Fultz

ATTEST:



City Clerk Clara VanBlargen