

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor England
Vice Mayor Kostka
Commissioner George
Commissioner Samora
Commissioner Rumrell

FROM: Max Royle, City Manager 

DATE: December 4, 2019

SUBJECT: Succession Planning for City Manager: Consideration of Proposals

INTRODUCTION

Some of you during your discussion with the City Manager about his performance evaluation spoke of the need for succession planning. In response, we suggest you consider adopting policies that will address the following three possibilities.

1. When the City Manager is temporarily unable to perform his duties because of a brief period of illness or an accident and an Interim Manager is needed to fill in until the regular Manager is able to return to work.
2. When the Manager is unable to work because of a major illness, stroke or accident, or his unexpected death and an Interim Manager is needed to fill the position while the Commission conducts a search for a permanent Manager.
3. When the Manager announces that he will leave for a position in another city or intends to retire at the end of a specific period of months or a year, giving you ample time to conduct a search for a permanent Manager.

Possibilities 1 and 2 above are related because they concern the appointment of an Interim Manager for a limited time. They differ in that for #1, the expectation is that the regular Manager will return to work, while for #2 the need will be for the City to have an Interim Manager while you conduct a search for a permanent replacement.

INTERIM MANAGER

The only time the current City Manager was away for a brief time was in mid-May 2014, when he missed eight workdays for an operation and recuperation period. Because his recuperation took place in the City and the operation and recuperation did not diminish the Manager's cognitive abilities in any way, he was able to sign checks, meet with department heads, make decisions and keep up-to-date on what was happening. He did not miss a Commission meeting, nor was he unable to prepare the agenda for the June meeting. For that situation, there was no need for an Interim Manager.

We suggest the guiding rule for when an Interim Manager is needed be this: If the regular Manager for whatever reason is not able to prepare agenda topics, attend a Commission meeting to represent the non-law enforcement side of the City government, and receive directives from the Commission, the

department head whom the Manager has designated as an Interim Manager attends that meeting and directs the non-law enforcement side of the City's government for either the limited time the Manager is away, or for a longer period if he's no longer able to carry out the position's responsibilities because of serious illness, accident or death.

The question then follows: Who is to be the designated Interim Manager?

The last paragraph of Section 1-8 of the City Charter states:

"Acting City Manager. By letter filed with the city clerk, the city manager shall designate a city officer or employee to exercise the powers and perform the duties of city manager during the manager's temporary absence or disability; the city commission may revoke such designation at any time and appoint another qualified person to serve until the city manager returns."

In accordance with the above paragraph, we suggest the following:

- The current City Manager designates one of the department heads to be the Interim Manager for those times when he is unable to attend a Commission meeting, or should he become incapacitated because of illness, accident, or death.
- The Commission approves that designation.
- After each election when there is a change to the City Commission, the new Commission reviews the Manager's designation that the previous Commission approved and either doesn't change that approval or asks the City Manager to designate someone else to be the Interim Manager for times when the regular Manager is temporarily or permanently absent.
- If the department head designated as the Interim Manager leaves City employment, the Manager would designate another department head for the Interim position.

The above process puts in place the designation of an Interim or Acting City Manager before the regular City Manager is unable, whether short- or long-term, to carry out his responsibilities. If and when that occurs, the designated department head automatically assumes the Manager's position temporarily or for the longer time that the Commission will need to conduct its search for a permanent Manager.

REPLACEMENT OF PERMANENT MANAGER

We suggest that in 2020 you approve a process for finding a City Manager should the need arise. That process requires that you first decide the answers to several questions, such as:

- What qualifications does the Commission want the Manager to have? For example, type and level of an academic degree, such as a Master of Arts or Science degree in public or business administration? How many years of experience as a Manager or an Assistant Manager, and in what size city? Should candidates have Florida coastal city experience, and so on.
- Should the search for the new Manager be nation-wide or confined just to Florida or to the southeast United States?

- Does the Commission want to engage an executive search firm to prepare the notice that the City is looking for a Manager, screen the applicants, and recommend however many candidates the Commission decides it wants to interview?
- Or does the Commission want to have the advertising of the position and screening done by City staff with the staff deciding the candidates for the Commission to interview?
- Or does the Commission want to appoint a committee of residents to screen the applicants and recommend the top 3 or 5 to interview, as was done in 2003 when the Police Chief's position became vacant?
- Or does the Commission want to be its own screening committee and decide the top 3 or 5 applicants to interview?

If you decided that the City's best option is to use a search firm, as was done when the City was looking for a new Police Chief in 2012, City staff will first have to prepare the specifications for a Request for Proposals, which will be reviewed and approved by you, so that the RFP will be in ready if and when it is needed.

Please note that the cost of a search firm can be between \$15,000 and \$25,000. As of 2019, there are 18 firms that provide their services in Florida and nationwide.

Once you have decided the answers to the above questions and any others each of you may have, they can be adopted by resolution and then reviewed each time the Commission changes membership, which we've suggested also be done for the designation of the Interim City Manager. This step will insure that the Commission has in place each year an agreed-upon process for both possibilities: when you need an Interim Manager and when you need to do a search for a City Manager.

ACTION REQUESTED

It is that you discuss and make decisions concerning the two processes outlined above. The City staff will then prepare policies for you to review at your February 3rd meeting.