MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING

TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

January 20, 2021

The special meeting of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida with Mayor Kussard presiding. The meeting convened at 10 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kussard

ROLL CALL

| Commissioner (Ward) | Present |
| --- | --- |
| Kussard (One) | YES |
| Holden (Two) | YES |
| Vincent (Three) | YES |
| Hannan (Four) | YES |
| Rietz (Five) | YES |

STAFF PRESENT

Thad Carroll, Interim Town Manager and Nancy Slaton, Interim Town Clerk

Others present: Colin Baenziger of Colin Baenziger & Associates (via Teams)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and Review of the Candidate Finalists Selected by Colin Baenziger & Associates, Executive Search Firm for the Town Manager Position

Mayor Kussard opened the meeting by asking the Commissioners to name their top four or five candidates to be interviewed for the Town Manager position.

Commissioner Hannan stated his choices as Stacy Tebo, Leonard Sossamon, George Korthauer and Matt Campbell, with Scott McClure as alternate.

Commissioner Holden stated his choices as Matt Campbell, William Lawrence and Thomas Thomas.

Commissioner Vincent stated his choices as George Korthauer, William Lawrence, Benjamin Marchant and Scott McClure

Commissioner Rietz stated his choices as Matt Campbell, William Lawrence and Leonard Sossamon.

Mayor Kussard stated her choices as Matt Campbell, George Korthauer, Benjamin Marchant, Leonard Sossamon and Thad Carroll.

Mayor Kussard asked if the Commissioners had any other names they wanted to add. There were no additions.

The Interim Town Clerk tallied the votes on the spreadsheet provided by Mr. Baenziger and announced that it showed the top four candidates as Matt Campbell, George Korthauer, William Lawrence and Leonard Sossamon.

The Commissioners were in agreement on the top four candidates.

Colin Baenziger suggested that the Commission choose another candidate as an alternate in case someone were to withdraw.

Commissioner Hannan suggested Scott McClure, and Commissioner Rietz suggested Benjamin Marchant.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to select Benjamin Marchant as the fifth candidate/alternate.

1. Selection of Candidates to be Interviewed by the Town Commission

Mayor Kussard asked if a motion should be made for the selection of candidates and it was decided it would be a good idea to do so.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Holden and a second by Commissioner Rietz, the Commission agreed to conduct interviews with the following applicants for the Town Manager position: Matt Campbell, George Korthauer, William Lawrence, Leonard Sossamon and Benjamin Marchant, by a vote of 5 to 0.

Mayor Kussard announced that the majority vote by the Commission was that panel interviews be conducted so that each candidate would be asked the same questions.

Commissioner Vincent noted that he would have preferred to have one-on-one interviews with each candidate as well as the panel interview.

Mayor Kussard reiterated that the majority voted for panel interviews and there would be no one-on-one interviews. She requested that the Commissioners select 20 or 30 questions from the list provided by Mr. Baenziger or submit questions they would like to ask, and then staff would compile them so that each Commissioner asks each candidate the same questions; duplicates would be deleted.

Commissioner Rietz asked if the interviews would be in person. He also asked what would happen if a question was specific to one candidate.

Interim Town Manager Thad Carroll replied that each candidate would be scheduled for an approximate 45-minute interview session before the Commission as a panel in a public meeting in the Commission Chambers, without the other candidates present. Each Commissioner would have a turn to ask questions until all the questions were asked or time ran out for that session.

Mayor Kussard responded that the questions to the candidates would have to be the same to be fair.

Commissioner Holden reiterated that specific questions for one candidate could be included, but they would have to ask each candidate that same question. He stated he has a list of 15 questions for the candidates.

Mayor Kussard stated she compiled a list of 30 questions; some from the list used years back by the Range Riders during the last Town Manager search, and some similar to those suggested by Mr. Baenziger, although some pertain more to the Town. She stated she would be happy to share them.

After further discussion regarding the selection of questions, the Commissioners agreed that they would each submit a list of questions to Mr. Carroll so that they could be compiled and make sure there is no duplication.

It was the consensus of the Commissioners to interview each candidate for 45 minutes the morning of February 4th, then break for lunch and resume the meeting in the afternoon to discuss the interviews and select a candidate for the Town Manager position.

Mr. Baenziger suggested that the four top candidates, as well as the alternate, be invited for interviews in case someone withdraws at the last minute.

Commissioner Hannan asked if the candidates will be timed per answer.

Mr. Carroll suggested that the candidates be informed at the beginning of the session that the Commission has a list of 20 to 30 questions to ask in a 45-minute time period. He stated the candidate should infer that they need to keep their answers to a minimum to stay within that timeframe.

Commissioner Vincent asked if they could add questions that they had not thought of beforehand if an answer to one question triggers another. He stated if all the questions were to be the same, the candidates could just send in the answers without being interviewed.

Mr. Carroll replied that the reason for in-person interviews is to find out how someone handles themselves in front of the Commission and to get an idea of their personality.

Commissioner Holden asked if the Clerk’s Office could transcribe the answers of the questions asked of each candidate, and have that document handed out for the Commissioners’ review before they make a selection.

The Interim Town Clerk noted that it could take several days to transcribe verbatim answers to the questions asked of each candidate.

Mayor Kussard replied that the Commission is scheduled to meet that same afternoon after the interviews are completed to discuss the interviews and make a selection of a candidate to fill the Town Manager position.

Mr. Carroll noted that the Commission could always put the decision off if they felt rushed and schedule another special meeting. He stated that an audio recording of the interviews could be made available for review.

Commissioner Hannan noted that the Commissioners could each be given a flash drive with the recording on it.

Commissioner Vincent stated he would like to have the recording to review the answers to the questions and have it available for any of his constituents that may be interested, then make the decision a few days later.

The Interim Town Clerk noted that the schedule for that day is to have interviews in the morning, break for lunch, and thenmeet in the afternoon to make a selection.

Commissioner Vincent stated he would like more time to mull it over.

Mr. Carroll reiterated that the agenda for that day is currently written that the decision is to be made the same day of the interviews, although if at that meeting the Commissioners decide that they need more time, they can then reconvene on another day.

Commissioner Rietz and Mayor Kussard asked if the interviews were to be open to the public.

Mr. Carroll replied that the interviews and the meetings to discuss and select the candidate will all be public meetings as the Commissioners are all together.

Commissioner Rietz stated that perhaps Commissioner Vincent could share his materials regarding the candidates with any of his interested constituents prior to the interviews.

Mayor Kussard suggested that any of Commissioner Vincent’s constituents that were interested could attend the public meetings; the interviews in the morning and the selection meeting in the afternoon. She stated that if anyone in the audience has questions of their Commissioners, they could ask those questions of their Commissioner during the break.

Commissioner Rietz asked if the public will be allowed to ask questions during the meeting.

Mayor Kussard replied that it would not be allowed at these meetings.

Mr. Carroll stated that the Commissioner’s constituents could provide questions in advance so that the Commissioners could ask them at the meeting since there is no public comment on the agenda for these meetings.

Mayor Kussard asked if there was anything else that needed to be addressed at this time.

Commissioner Rietz noted that a mid-morning break should be included in the schedule.

Mr. Carroll asked the Commissioners to send their list of questions to himself or the Clerk. He asked that they be sure not to copy any email to their fellow Commissioners, and that they should not be in contact with any of the candidates in advance.

Mayor Kussard thanked Mr. Baenziger for all the hard work he and his firm put into this search. She stated they provided a lot of information and it has been very helpful.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

s/Nancy Slaton, Interim Town Clerk

s/Ruth Kussard, Mayor

Minutes transcribed by Nancy Slaton, Interim Town Clerk