

January 18, 2019

TO: MAYOR CHRIS VINCENT
VICE MAYOR ELLIOT SOKOLOW
COMMISSIONER BUZ OLDAKER
COMMISSIONER EDMUND MALKOON
COMMISSIONER RANDY STRAUSS

FROM: CONNIE HOFFMANN

RE: TOWN MANAGER SELECTION UPDATE AND SUGGESTED FINALISTS

As I advised the Commission earlier this week, Andy Berns, currently Town Administrator of Southwest Ranches, withdrew his candidacy for the Town Manager position here in LBTS for personal reasons.

In the past week, I have personally met with the remaining five candidates and administered two role-playing exercises to all of them to give us a better idea of how they actually manage people and problems. All candidates commented on how realistic the exercises were and were very interested in the process. Linda Connors, Capt. Tom Palmer and Steve D'Olivera served as our role players and got a first-hand sense of each candidate's managerial style. (Linda actually was out of Town and did not get to meet Bill Vance. Lisa Slagle filled in for her that day.) I thank all the role players for the excellent job they did in making the exercises as lifelike as possible. Linda and Steve also spent more time with some of the candidates, as they gave them a tour of Town.

Town Manager Bud Bentley also met with the four outside candidates. I hope the Commission will feel free to contact any of these staff members to get their feedback on the candidates.

We did finish the background checks into all the remaining candidates and those reports are being provided to you. There was nothing of concern in the background reports. They did confirm the information Bill Vance had provided to me in his interview that he had a DUI while in college, but not traffic infractions in the intervening years. The report did indicate that Mr. Vance attended college for four years but could not confirm his degree. I contacted Mr. Vance who advised that he had recently learned that the degree had not been conferred and he had been in touch with the University to resolve this matter. Once he paid them a fee, they advised they would process his degree in the graduation ceremony in December of 2018, so the official records now show his degree was conferred in 2018.

I also completed the interview with in-house candidate Tony Bryan and reported that to you earlier.

It has been very time-consuming getting the candidates here and through the assessment exercises and evaluating their performance on those exercises, as a result, I have not completed my reference check interviews on the candidates. I hope to do that before Tuesday night and will

report that information to you, and advise if there is anything concerning in those reference checks.

It would have been preferable to wait until the reference checks were completed before sending you this report, but I am concerned that both Mr. Strahl and Mr. Irby may be offered other jobs soon and did not want to delay our process by several weeks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is my recommendation that two candidates – Glenn Irby, and David Strahl,– move into the finals and be invited to come back to LBTS on January 30 to interview individually with the Mayor and Town Commissioners and to make a 15-minute presentation at a public Commission meeting on Thursday, January 31. Ideally, you would make your decision on your number one and two candidates at the January 31st meeting, or at a special meeting to be held shortly thereafter.

My recommendation is based on a combination of many factors: my review of their resumes, the answers they provided in their lengthy interviews with me, their performance on the three managerial skill assessment exercises they each went through, my casual discussions with them, input from the role players, what I have gleaned about them from reviewing newspaper articles, the reference interviews I have completed and those I have read from other sources.

One candidate – William Vance – is promising but I need to complete reference checks on him before recommending him and for the reasons further explained below.

The other two shortlisted candidates – Tony Bryan and Alan Rosen – both have appealing characteristics and strengths. They simply do not have the deep experience in managing a municipality that the other three men do. Neither of them has had to make the tough decisions that a Town Manager has to make, nor do they have the experience in supervising senior management personnel that Irby, Strahl and Vance do.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE RECOMMENDED FINALISTS

GLENN IRBY

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration from the University of Central Florida and a Master of Public Administration degree from Troy State University.

Mr. Irby's municipal experience is as follows:

City Administrator, Apopka, FL. 2015-2018 pop. 51,000. \$124 million budget

City Manager, Umatilla, FL. 2006-2015 pop. 3,600 \$11 million budget

City Manager, Mascotte, FL 2005-2006

Asst. City Manager, Finance Director, Accountant Tavares FL. 1993-2004, pop. 7,000

Strong Mayor, Mineola, FL 1999-2000

Police Officer, Eustis, FL 1976-1985

He is currently unemployed. He left Apopka after a new Mayor was hired and brought in his own choice as Town Administrator. He did ask Mr. Irby to stay for a 90-day transition period.

His most recent experience was in Apopka, a rapidly growing city west of Orlando. He was the City Administrator, working under a strong Mayor. The Mayor was the Chief Executive Officer of the City and had sole authority to hire and fire the Town Administrator. Department Heads were appointed by the Mayor, but their appointment required the approval of the Town Council. The Mayor Mr. Irby served under did not have managerial or business experience and delegated much of his managerial authority and all administrative authority to Mr. Irby.

Mr. Irby handled a number of complex and controversial issues while in Apopka, including an industrial user overloading the city's wastewater plant with more industrial pollutants than the plant was designed to handle and the negotiation of a complex financial arrangement with a developer for construction of an access ramp to a major highway that ran through the city in order to facilitate a large, mixed-use development. Mr. Irby proposed, and the developer ultimately agreed, that the developer pay the entire cost of the access ramp and the City would reimburse him from additional tax collections that resulted from the development. Wisely, Mr. Irby limited the period of time where that reimbursement would occur to four years. So, if the incremental increase in tax revenues for that defined area would only pay for 50% of the ramp's construction cost, the developer would have to absorb the remaining 50% of the costs.

While neither of these examples relate directly to challenges in LBTS, they do illustrate his ability to work through very complex issues and negotiations. And they show economic development skill.

He also oversaw the construction of a new Fire station in Apopka, experience that could come into play in LBTS.

In Umatilla, a town smaller than LBTS, he also demonstrated his economic development skills under very difficult circumstances, and his ability to deal with performance problems in his executive ranks.

In his work in Tavares, he started as an accountant and worked his way up to Finance Director and Assistant City Manager. So, he clearly understands the financial aspects of municipal government.

He has had exposure to all the functions of local government and, as a Police Officer for ten years, has a unique understanding of law enforcement challenges.

Mr. Irby expresses a desire to get back to a smaller town, like LBTS, as he likes being out in the community and among his staff, something that is difficult to do when managing a larger city.

DAVID (DAVE) STAHL

He holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from North Illinois University and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Manchester College.

Mr. Stahl's municipal experience is as follows:

City Administrator, O'Fallon, MO 2017-2018 pop. 87,250 \$121 million budget

Acting Village Manager, Mount Prospect, IL 2014- 2015

Asst. Village Manager, Mount Prospect, IL. 1993-2016. pop. 56,500. \$115 million budget

Administrative Coordinator, St. Charles, IL pop. 33,000. \$70 million budget

He is currently unemployed. He left the City Manager position in O'Fallon by mutual consent after only a year there. He made the decision to part ways due to concerns about the Commission meeting each other to discuss issues out of the public eye. (The newspaper accounts are mum on the reasons for his departure and I have not yet had success in reaching any of the elected officials there for their explanation. I will continue to make attempts to do so before your meeting on Tuesday night.)

While in Mount Prospect, Mr. Stahl was responsible for several high-cost and complex projects:

- the \$17 million Village Hall construction project, a project that he brought in on time and on budget.
- The acquisition and implementation of an ERP, which is a complex software system that unifies in a single source the data and multiple functions of accounting, finance, human resources.

As Assistant Village Manager there he supervised HR, IT, the PIO, was the Village's Chief negotiator with four labor unions, was the Village's staff liaison with the Village Attorney, and the staff liaison to state agencies and officials, the county and other municipalities. He was the Village's Operations Commander for emergencies. He also was the point person in management for process improvement of Village functions and in monitoring implementation of the Village's Strategic Plan and setting performance measures for the Village's departments.

Mr. Strahl served as Acting Village Manager for approximately one year during the Village Manager's extended leave due to illness, so he had full responsibility for all aspects of city management during that period. He reports that the Manager was often absent in prior to that time and that he regularly absorbed the Manager's responsibilities in those instances, too.

INFORMATION ABOUT WILLIAM (BILL) VANCE

He holds a Bachelor degree in Political Science/Public Administration from Appalachian State University.

He is a credentialed municipal manager by the International City County Managers' Association.

Mr. Vance's municipal experience is as follows:

City Manager, Pickerington, OH. 2010-20018. Pop. 18,500

Town Manager, Lady Lake, FL 2004-2009 Pop. 14,000 \$20 million budget.

Town Manager, Luray, VA 2000-2003 Pop. 4,800 \$6 million budget

Town Administrator, Franklinton, NC. Pop. 2,200

Mr. Vance has had a wide variety of municipal management experiences. He left his last position as City Manager in Pickerington, Ohio, a city near Columbus, Ohio after eight years there in order to attend to personal issues, including a daughter's illness and a divorce.

In Pickerington, he championed several economic development efforts, including city grants to business on their historic main street to revitalize the exteriors of commercial properties.

The City did a comprehensive revamp of its land use and development regulations while he was there. They also restructured development fees so that the City could supplement their limited staff for engineering and building plans review and inspections with contracted staff support. The fees allowed the City offer a higher level of service without spending taxpayer dollars to do so.

He modified the approach to code enforcement, calling on staff to take a more cooperative approach with property owners over violations, resorting to notices of violations and fines only after approaching the property owner in a friendly manner and giving them reasonable time to correct the violations.

The City did not raise property or income taxes during his tenure there, yet increased reserves. The Mayor there told me that Mr. Vance ran a lean operation very effectively.

He managed multiple large construction projects in Pickerington, including a large and complex street project.

He had a five-year tenure in Lady Lake as Town Manager, but left there amid considerable controversy. A Police Lieutenant, who was out on disability, committed suicide and criticized Mr. Vance in his suicide letter. And his HR Director unwittingly sent a document out in response to a public records request that contained the personal information of employees. That information should have been redacted.

Mr. Vance indicated to me that his departure was not forced and the City Attorney confirmed that in a telephone conversation with me. He indicated Mr. Vance had the support of four of five Commission members at the time of his departure.

The minutes of the meetings where his severance agreement was approved had very vocal criticism of him from one particular Commission member and members of the audience.

I have completed two reference interviews regarding him, one with the Mayor of Pickerington and one with the City Attorney of Lady Lake. Both of them emphasized that Mr. Vance is

someone who is very effective at carrying out the wishes of his City Council and that he gets things done. Both praised his interpersonal skills.

Mr. Vance stresses his pride in creating a team atmosphere in the cities he has run, stating he is not a micromanager but likes to stay informed of progress on assignments. Based on the comments at the Lady Lake Commission meeting, I feel I need to complete reference checks on him before suggesting he be a finalist.

COMPARISONS OF FINALISTS (INCLUDING POSSIBLE FINALIST VANCE)

Mr. Irby and Mr. Vance have experience in small towns, Mr. Stahl does not.

Mr. Irby and Mr. Vance have Florida experience, Mr. Stahl does not.

All three men have experience in command operations during physical disasters (hurricanes, floods, tornadoes).

Mr. Irby and Mr. Vance have been in the top management positions in multiple cities. Mr. Strahl was City Manager in O'Fallon for only a year. However, due to an illness of the Village Manager in Mount Prospect, he was Acting Village Manager for a year there.

Mr. Irby and Mr. Stahl excelled on the in-basket exams, with very high scores, some of the highest I've ever seen. That is reflective of good time management, planning and organizing skills, judgement, analysis and follow-up skills. Mr. Vance did not do so well on this test, indicating he had some problems with the technology of the exam (it was taken s on-line) and indicating that computers are not his forte.

All three men performed acceptably on the other two skill assessment exercises. The first involved a group-problem solving situation, and the second was a one-on-one coaching/counseling of a subordinate employee. All three performed better on the group problem solving exercise than on the employee coaching/counseling. None of them excelled on the employee coaching/counseling exercise. (Neither did the two candidates I am not recommending move forward to the finals.)

PLAN FOR CANDIDATE VISITS

All three men have already visited LBTS for their assessment exercises and had a tour of Town, so the focus in their next visit should be interaction with the Mayor and Commission. It is normal for Commissioners to meet with candidates individually in private, so you can have candid conversations with them and get a feel for how they communicate with you one-on one. I recommend setting aside a minimum of one hour for each of your interviews. If you feel you need additional time, we can schedule that. I also recommend that one member of the Commission take each candidate (and his spouse if they come with them) out to dinner to get a feel for them in a social setting.

I also recommend that we ask each candidate to prepare a 15-20-minute presentation that they will make at the public Commission meeting to introduce themselves to the public, talk about their management style, tell us about the two or three things in their career they are most proud of, and give us their impression of the Town and what they can bring to it.

Whether you hold a reception for the candidates on the evening of the 30th, or wait and hold a reception for the selected candidate once they report to work is a decision on which the Commission should provide direction.

The problem with the reception with the candidates is that residents and members of the business community form an impression of the candidates on the basis of very superficial discussions, while you have a wealth of information about the candidates both in written form, from private and public discussions with me, from your individual interviews with the candidates, and from feedback from the staff who interacted with them in exercises on which to base your assessment. However, the reception does give you the opportunity to observe how comfortable they are mingling and talking with the public.