

Pinellas County

315 Court Street
Clearwater, Florida 33756



Minutes - Final

Thursday, February 22, 2018

10:30 AM

County Commission Conference Room, 5th Floor

Board of County Commissioners - Work Session

Kenneth T. Welch, Chairman
Karen Williams Seel, Vice-Chairman
Dave Eggers
Pat Gerard
Charlie Justice
Janet C. Long
John Morrone

ROLL CALL - 11:35 A.M.

Members Present: Kenneth T. Welch, Chairman; Karen Williams Seel, Vice-Chairman; Dave Eggers; Pat Gerard; Charlie Justice; Janet C. Long; and John Morroni.

Others Present: Jewel White, County Attorney; Holly Schoenherr, Human Resources Director; and Lynn Abbott, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk.

1. County Administrator Search

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order and introduced Springsted Waters Senior Vice President Art Davis as the lead individual in the search for the new County Administrator; whereupon, at his request, those in attendance introduced themselves.

Mr. Davis provided background information regarding Springsted Waters and a brief employment history, noting that he was involved in the recruitment of Ms. Schoenherr. He discussed the duties of a recruiter and desired qualities for the position, relating that his goal is to identify competent candidates with the knowledge, traits, and skills that will best fit the organization; and that he is seeking the Board's input in the process.

In response to query by Chairman Welch, Mr. Davis referred to a memorandum titled *Recruitment of a County Administrator* and confirmed that a draft copy of the initial competency questions was given to the Board. He highlighted the importance of allowing adequate time to conduct the recruitment and for potential candidates to evaluate the position and opportunity, consider various priorities and circumstances in their lives, and comfortably participate in the interview process; whereupon, he referred to a draft document titled *Pinellas County, Florida, County Administrator Recruitment Timeline*, and recommended that the position advertisement be posted on April 16 and remain active for a minimum of 45 days.

Following discussion regarding Mr. Woodard's prospective leave date, the upcoming budget process, the amount of time the Administrator position will be double encumbered, contractual provisions, and the new hire's start date and duties, the members related their preference for a shorter advertising time frame; whereupon, Mr. Davis discussed the dangers of rushing the recruitment process and described a situation where a firm was pressured to rush the process, noting that a shorter turnaround time for responding to candidate questionnaires, conducting video interviews, and providing responses resulted in a lack of competent, qualified candidates.

Mr. Davis explained that, as a recruiter, his job is to market the organization, the position, and the community, and stressed the importance of carefully preparing the advertisement, candidate profile, and recruitment brochure. He related that while some local governments engage in civil discourse during meetings, others are plagued by disrespectful relationships between the members, management, and staff, noting that such issues can be a turnoff to

potential applicants. Commissioners Seel and Long indicated that the members are always respectful toward one another; that three of them have worked together for 18 years; and that an annual survey shows that there is a high level of citizen confidence and trust in County leadership; whereupon, Mr. Davis related that he will ensure that his marketing efforts include the message that Pinellas County is known for its good government and is a great opportunity, and discussion ensued.

Referring to a document titled *County Administrator Salary Survey, Comparable Florida Counties - Fiscal Year 2018*, Mr. Davis provided a compensation and population comparison of nearby counties and discussed recruitment strategies, relating that offering competitive wages is important to attracting highly skilled, qualified applicants; that recruiter flexibility during the negotiation process allows for compensation adjustments for highly competent candidates; that negotiations for internal and external candidates are different; that external candidates are in a position to negotiate their salary; and that hiring an internal candidate typically slows the natural progression of the salary schedule.

In response to query by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Davis opined that because the present County Administrator was hired as an internal candidate, it could have contributed to the current low salary range, and suggested that the Board consider an increase to its minimum and maximum pay range to become competitive; whereupon, he related that a county's population density and size, and job duties and responsibilities are contributing factors to the compensation schedule, and discussion ensued regarding deferred compensation, contract perks, previous County recruitments, and residency requirements and how those elements were applied during Mr. Woodard's hire.

Responding to query by Commissioner Eggers, Attorney White reported that even though the Pinellas County Charter has no restrictions with respect to the County Administrator being a county resident, she will provide further information regarding the matter at a future time; whereupon, Chairman Welch related that the members may want to discuss the issue of residency in relation to the hiring process, noting that a hard and fast rule may exclude good candidates.

Commissioner Justice related that the prospectus that was prepared internally for Mr. Woodard's hire contains information that would still be relevant, and in response to his query, Mr. Davis commented that he received a business environment summary three years ago during his involvement with Ms. Schoenherr's recruitment.

Following discussion regarding Mr. Woodard's tenure as an employee and as the County Administrator, Ms. Schoenherr related that there should be candidate profile material available from the last County Administrator recruitment; whereupon, Chairman Welch confirmed that staff is working to provide Mr. Davis the requested material listed on the second page of the memorandum, including information related to the budget, strategic planning documents, a government organizational chart, and general job descriptions. Mr. Davis invited the members to email him their ideas and thoughts about the profile development.

Profile Development

Mr. Davis indicated that he would like to begin discussing the profile to identify attributes, skills, characteristics, and abilities that the Board would like to see the candidates possess, and reviewed the six questions presented in the memorandum. Discussion ensued, and the members provided the following input:

1. Identify what you consider to be the highest priority issue(s) and projects that the new County Administrator will be responsible for during their first year of employment.
 - Implementation of the 2020 Penny for Pinellas
 - 2018 Homestead Referendum
 - Expiration of the Duke Energy power purchase agreement in 2024
 - Regional transit, transportation, and water issues
 - Managing regional and local partnerships
 - Assessment and implementation of affordable housing options
 - Maintaining a balanced budget
 - Pursuing future collaborative opportunities
 - Developing in-house administrative leadership teams

2. What experience, education, and specific areas of expertise will be important for a person to possess in order to be successful in this role?
 - Respect for the cultural history of the organization and sensitivity to its operations
 - Excellent communication and listening skills
 - Understanding Pinellas County's governance model and the respective roles of the County Commission and the County Administrator
 - Ability to work with 24 municipal partners and Special Districts
 - Tourism and economic development experience
 - Knowledge of accounting, budget processes, and public policy
 - Management experience and understanding of financial operations of similar complexity
 - Willing to embrace technology

3. Describe the personal attributes, approach to management, and communication style that you believe would best fit the organization. Is there an expectation that this person will be involved with the community and, if so, to what extent?
 - Articulation of Pinellas County's vision and implementation of the Board of County Commissioners' strategic plan
 - Cultivation and maintenance of mutual trust with individual Commissioners and staff
 - Establishment of boundaries while maintaining accessibility
 - Ability to facilitate communication
 - Utilizes humor in an appropriate manner; conducts work with humility

- Visionary qualities
 - Maintaining involvement with community connections
 - Mindful of potential ethical conflicts
4. What operations, programs, projects, or processes would you like to see implemented or changed by the new County Administrator, if any?
- Focused dedication to unincorporated communities, including economic development, law enforcement, and community planning
 - Accurately assess and identify issues with management processes
 - Development and maintenance of good working relationships with the Appointing Authorities
 - Supportive of workforce and business/supplier diversity
5. Please provide any additional information that would be helpful to give us a better understanding of the likely expectations for the new County Administrator.
- Responsive to Commissioners
 - Outstanding interpersonal skills
 - Knowledge of local governmental issues
 - Exceptional leadership competencies
 - Exhibits a high level of integrity
 - Problem solver
6. What community stakeholders should be invited to assist in development of the candidate profile?
- The Board will reach out to the key players later in the process.

During the presentation and in response to queries by the members, Mr. Davis explained the brochure editing and approval process, noting that he will consolidate the Board's input into a text-only draft to be submitted through Ms. Schoenherr to Chairman Welch for Board presentation and review for inaccuracies, improvements, and/or deletions. He related that once the corrections are incorporated, a final-proof brochure, complete with graphics, pictures, and logos, would be submitted through Ms. Schoenherr to Chairman Welch for Board review; and that once the Board approves the changes, the brochure would be finalized, posted, and distributed, and discussion ensued regarding the scheduling process and member availability, vision for the strategic plan, concerns regarding the current management style, and inviting Appointing Authority input.

Salary and Compensation

In response to queries by Chairman Welch, Mr. Davis discussed options for the Board to consider in relation to the subject of compensation, noting that the members can talk

formally or informally as a group and present their recommendation, or he can discuss the matter with the Chairman and then develop salary verbiage for Board review, and Ms. Schoenherr related that the current E-1 pay grade pay range assigned to the County Administrator position reflects a minimum of \$165,547, a mid-point of \$211,952, and a maximum of \$258,357, and discussion ensued regarding recent pay grade and compensation reviews, whether the range includes a cost of living increase, and salary comparisons of the current County Administrator and staff.

In response to queries by Chairman Welch, Mr. Davis described factors that influence salary negotiations, such as consideration of the candidate's current earnings, job position and responsibilities, relocation value, and components of the compensation package, noting that the offer of a more attractive salary range encourages more qualified candidates to apply.

Following discussion regarding what benefit components and figures constitute a competitive salary range, whether to offer a base salary, compensation offered by Florida counties of comparable size and population density based on the salary survey, the benefit of no state income tax, and deferred and total compensation, the members agreed to tentatively amend the salary range to extend from \$212,000 to 275,000.

Mr. Davis related that deferred compensation is commonly included as a benefit today; that he will ask his company's compensation experts to scan for salaries offered in counties of comparable size and population density throughout the southeastern region of the country; and that he will determine a working range for total compensation, noting that a candidate's level of experience and state of residence are variables; and that there are other parts of the country that are more expensive to live in than Florida.

In response to queries by the members, Mr. Davis provided an overview of the next steps in the process, relating that the Board can direct interested applicants to him via email; that the public records rule regarding verbal and written correspondence is in effect; and that the draft brochure will be completed by April 5 or earlier.

ADJOURNMENT - 1:28 P.M.