



City of Lake Helen

Volusia County, Florida

MAYOR

Buddy Snowden

COMMISSIONERS

Ann Robbins

Vernon Burton

Rick Basso

Tura Schnebly

Special Meeting Lake Helen City Commission

November 17, 2014

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Buddy Snowden called to order the November 17, 2014 Special Meeting of the Lake Helen City Commission at 1:09 PM

Present:

Mayor Buddy Snowden	Vice Mayor Ann Robbins	Commissioner Vernon Burton
Commissioner Tura Schnebly	City Clerk Becky Witte	City Attorney Jennifer Nix
Interim City Administrator Jason Yarborough		

Not Present: Commissioner Rick Basso

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Buddy Snowden

Mayor Buddy Snowden noted the absences of Commissioner Rick Basso.

CEREMONIAL MATTERS: LEGISLATIVE PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by **Mayor Buddy Snowden**.

BUSINESS OF THE COMMISSION:

ITEM 1: DELETIONS OR MODIFICATIONS TO AGENDA: None

ITEM 2: PUBLIC FORUM: None

ITEM 3: PESENTATION:

Dick Kelton presented the selection of ten applicants for the position of City Administrator. He discussed the Florida recruitment process. He recommended narrowing the list to three to no more than five. He noted that selection of the City Administrator may be the most important decision a City Commission may make. He also discussed the technological opportunities available to interviewing those out of state candidates.

Mayor Buddy Snowden as well as the **Commissioners** and **Vice Mayor** thanked Mr. Kelton for his assistance and the value his experience brings to the City of Lake Helen.

ITEM 4: COMMISSION CONSDIERATION:

Consideration of Statements of Qualifications for the position of City Attorney

Mayor Buddy Snowden asked that each Zone Commissioner ask one question.



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ITEM 4a: Vose Law Firm LLP

Becky Vose, the Vose Law Firm, presented her background to the Commission.

Wade Vose, the Vose Law Firm, discussed his experience and their firm's philosophy as a City Attorney. He discussed the firm's philosophy of being creative and proactive. He discussed the weekly staff meetings that occur in their office.

Vice Mayor Ann Robbins asked about the billing for the City of Deltona.

Becky Vose answered that the firm is on a \$30,000 per month retainer.

Vice Mayor Ann Robbins asked about potential conflicts.

Becky Vose said she discussed this issue with the City of Deltona prior to submitting their proposal and does not foresee any issue.

Commissioner Vernon Burton discussed how he rated the Vose Law firm highest. He asked about billing schedules.

Wade Vose discussed the retainer option of \$4,000 per month or to utilize an hourly rate option of \$150. He noted that this is able to change, for example start with an hourly rate and change to a retainer option.

Commissioner Vernon Burton thanked Mr. Vose for his attendance at the recent Commission meetings.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly asked about the retainer option and a potential conflict issue with the City of Deltona or service issues.

Becky Vose answered that they feel there is no potential conflict with acting as legal counsel for both.

Mayor Buddy Snowden discussed the small town atmosphere of Lake Helen and the Commissions concern with their firms representing the neighboring City of Deltona.

Becky Vose said she does not foresee any future conflicts with the City of Deltona.

Vice Mayor Ann Robbins asked about the retainer option.

Becky Vose discussed the benefits of the retainer option and **Wade Vose** elaborated on the transfer process and the benefit of the retainer.

Commissioner Vernon Burton noted the update of the Comprehensive Plan update and litigation.

Wade Vose note that would be no problem.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly asked who would attend the meetings and asked if time spent would be noted on the bill.

Wade Vose said he would attend the majority of the meetings and that he can include that information on the bills.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly asked about litigation and a monitoring situation.

Wade Vose said he would be available for monitoring if covered by insurance.



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Mayor Buddy Snowden noted Wade Vose's attendance at previous City Commission Meetings.

Vice Mayor Ann Robbins asked about negotiating a lesser retainer and noted that our budget is very tight.

Commissioner Vernon Burton discussed the review of the City Attorney applicants and that the City Attorney should be keeping us out of litigation.

Becky Vose said that should be the goal of a good City Attorney.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly noted that she has reviewed the proposals. She asked about the billing for the litigation with the City of Deltona.

Commissioner Vernon Burton said he appreciates the flat fee option.

Mayor Buddy Snowden thanked them for attending the meeting.

ITEM 4b: Bell & Roper P.A.

Sherry Hopkins introduced herself and Cindy Townsend. She discussed the firm and mentioned that Mike Roper and Mike Bowling will be available to assist as well.

Vice Mayor Ann Robbins said she had no questions but noted the \$10,000 option was unlimited.

Commissioner Vernon Burton asked about the Comprehensive Plan update and asked their experience.

Sherry Hopkins said she had read the recent report from UCF and noted her experience with Comprehensive Plans.

Commissioner Vernon Burton asked her experience with smaller cities.

Sherry Hopkins answered that she did not have any direct experience.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly asked if they have reviewed the history of the meeting minutes and agendas.

Sherry Hopkins replied no and explained why.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly asked about fee option two and if they felt 30 hours a week would be enough.

Sherry Hopkins said it will be adaptable to resources and needs.

Mayor Buddy Snowden asked if they had reviewed the Charter and Ms. Hopkins answered no. He asked who would represent the City and Ms. Hopkins answered that she would be representing the City.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly asked about being counsel for the City of Ponce Inlet.

Cindy Townsend said it was for litigation issues.



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Commissioner Tura Schnebly also asked about the possible for conflict within the litigation aspects. **Ms. Hopkins** answered that she does not foresee any potential conflicts and that the firm would not accept any case that may conflict.

Mayor Buddy Snowden asked about growth and small town feel. **Ms. Hopkins** discussed her history with Kissimmee and Osceola County.

Mayor Buddy Snowden thanked Ms. Hopkins and Ms. Townsend.

Commissioner Vernon Burton noted the absence of Commissioner Rick Basso and that it will be discussed in a future meeting.

ITEM 4c: Scott E. Simpson P.A.

Scott Simpson introduced himself and his experience. He discussed the other attorneys that he works with as well as his work ethic.

Vice Mayor Ann Robbins noted the positive references she received.

Commissioner Vernon Burton discussed the review process and asked the number of members of his firm and those who would represent the City.

Mr. Simpson said he would be the representative for the City but there are six attorneys and nine staff in the group. He explained his experience with larger firms and using outside counsel.

Commissioner Vernon Burton asked about the Comprehensive Plan update.

Mr. Simpson described the importance of the Comprehensive Plan update and that it is more of a planning function than a legal aspect.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly disclosed that she has known Mr. Simpson since the day he was born (just about) and that she knows all members of the law firm. She questioned the fee schedule and the \$300 meeting fee as well as the items included.

Mr. Simpson said that he would be able to review the agenda but more extensive items such as an Ordinance would require more time.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly and Mr. Simpson discussed billing with the City of Oak Hill and the history with them.

Mayor Buddy Snowden noted favorable reviews he received about Mr. Simpson. He asked about the fire tax issue the City of Lake Helen shares with Oak Hill and Pierson and his approach to the process.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly elaborated upon the fire district issue.

Mr. Simpson discussed the options regarding fire services and the fire district.



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Vice Mayor Ann Robbins discussed the billing and his billing practices.

Commissioner Vernon Burton and **Commissioner Tura Schnebly** thanked Mr. Simpson.

Mayor Buddy Snowden said that the City of Lake Helen differs in respect to development than other communities and questioned his relations with the development community.

Mr. Simpson said he does not have any relations with developers and typically does not get involved in development until the end of the process. He cautioned the Commission to pay attention to the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Tura Schnebly noted that she had not discussed the RFP or the response with Mr. Simpson.

Mayor Buddy Snowden discussed the Special Meeting on December 1, 2014 and requested the meeting be held at 2:30pm instead of 10:30am.

The Commission agreed upon the change of time as well as the discussion items for the City Administrator and City Attorney be discussed at the regular meeting on December 11, 2014.

MOTION by **Commissioner Tura Schenbly** to request the current city attorney draft a contract for the incoming city attorney for the next regular Commission meeting. **SECOND** by **Vice Mayor Ann Robbins**.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioner Vernon Burton asked about a notice of pending lawsuit, settlement offer and information regarding Ms. Wilson.

City Attorney Jennifer Nix recommended this be added to the next City Commission Meeting and an attorney from the representing firm may be able to attend. She asked that the Commission not discuss this but to add this to an agenda.

ITEM 5: ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Buddy Snowden adjourned of the November 17, 2014 Special Meeting of the Lake Helen City Commission at 3:53 PM

The end.