



M Town of Melbourne Beach

**TOWN COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017
immediately following the regular meeting
MASNY ROOM – 507 OCEAN AVENUE**

MINUTES

Mayor Jim Simmons
Vice Mayor Tom Davis
Commissioner Steve Walters
Commissioner Wyatt Hoover
Commissioner Sherri Quarrie

Interim Town Manager Mascaro
Town Clerk Nancy Wilson
Town Attorney Clifford Repperger

PUBLIC NOTICE

**The Town Commission conducted a Town Commission Special Meeting
immediately following the Regular Meeting
on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 to address the item below.**

I. Call to Order – Led by Mayor Simmons

Mayor Simmons called the meeting to order at 11:10 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Town Clerk Wilson led the roll call.

Commissioners Present:

Mayor Jim Simmons
Vice Mayor Tom Davis
Commissioner Steve Walters
Commissioner Wyatt Hoover
Commissioner Sherri Quarrie

Staff Present:

Interim Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Clerk Nancy Wilson
Town Attorney Cliff Repperger

III. Public Comment

There were no comments from the audience

IV. Old Business

Discussion and possible action regarding Town Manager position.

Commissioner Walters said that the last Town Manager candidate who was interviewed was shown in a You Tube video having a confrontation with a Commission member so he wouldn't be comfortable with that applicant. He is concerned about temperament and wasn't in favor of that particular candidate especially since he avoided answering certain questions. Vice Mayor Davis also mentioned the candidate's DUI conviction. Mayor Simmons was not in favor of that candidate and neither the Mayor nor Commissioner Walters were in favor of the candidate who talked almost exclusively about a job he had in Kentucky even though he had been a manager in Florida. Commissioner Quarrie said that she had to miss the interview with Mr. Akhimie. Commissioner Walters said he had never been a manager and that his experience was limited to utilities work in larger cities. Commissioner Hoover, on the other hand, was impressed with Mr. Akhimie's experience in coastal communities and that he has dealt with the same issues facing Melbourne Beach; he was also impressed by his demeanor. Mayor Simmons thought, at first, that he wasn't going to be a strong leader but he changed his mind as the interview went on. The Mayor did not feel as strongly as others that the Town has to hire someone with Town Manager experience. We have a strong staff and because of that, someone without that experience could come up to speed quickly.

Discussion ensued regarding the Town's inability to keep a Town Manager long term. Mayor Simmons said he felt that the hires in the past have fully intended to move to Melbourne Beach but then, when everything isn't happening as they would like, both professionally and personally, it's easy for them to leave. The Mayor said he would like somebody for whom it is harder to leave here than it is

to stay. Commissioner Walters said that for many of the Town Managers the Town has employed, they've used us as a stopover. Mayor Simmons responded that the Commission keeps doing the same thing and getting the same results and that he therefore believes we should revise our criteria and widen our search. He's hoping there is somebody who is ready to make a commitment to the community.

Vice Mayor Davis agreed with the Mayor and said he has asked himself if maybe we've been looking for something we don't need; we are always looking for the wrong fit. Commissioner Walters added that the Town does need somebody with Town Manager experience in Florida.

The Commission then discussed past managers and what types of experience the Town needs and wants. Commissioner Quarrie asked Commissioner Walters if Interim Town Manager experience qualifies as experience. Commissioner Walters responded that we need somebody who has experience managing a municipality and people for an extended period of time. Commissioner Hoover added that it is important to hire someone with experience managing people and teams of people.

Mayor Simmons said that one of the candidates, Mr. Daniels, is in the audience and we've had our discussion. The question is, do we want to continue the process, do we want to continue the process keeping Mr. Daniels in the pool, do we want to make him a finalist or do we want to make him an offer.

Vice Mayor Davis said he wasn't in favor of Mr. Akhimie and is looking very hard at Mr. Daniels and would like to keep him in the running. Commissioner Walters said he thought Mr. Daniels gave a better interview than Mr. Akhimie. There was Commission consensus to keep Mr. Daniels in the running. The Mayor then asked if Mr. Daniels is a finalist, do we want to open this back up to potentially find more candidates, using different criteria, and add him to that pool.

Commissioner Quarrie said that from the list of applicants, nobody gave her a good feeling except Mr. Daniels. She suggested that they could all cast their own nets and establish a deadline for any potential candidates to make formal application. Mayor Simmons said he doesn't mind re-advertising and said to Mr. Daniels that he's a finalist.

Commissioner Hoover said he likes Mr. Akhimie and Vice Mayor Davis said second interviews would yield nothing for him. Commissioner Walters said he felt Mr. Daniels had all the right answers and he didn't feel that way about Mr. Akhimie. Mayor Simmons said he was torn between Mr. Akhimie and Mr. Daniels and liked aspects of both of them.

Mayor Simmons asked again how the Commission would like to proceed.

Commissioner Walters said if we re-advertise we can keep Mr. Daniels in the pool but we risk losing him and we'll be pushing this out another month or two.

Vice Mayor Davis made a motion to negotiate a preliminary offer with Mr. Daniels; Commissioner Walters seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Vice Mayor Davis said Mr. Daniels had management experience but we based the previously paid \$93,000 salary on a more restrictive pool. Commissioner Walters said the \$93,000 figure was paid after 6 months of employment. Mayor Simmons suggested taking the previous contract and putting a new dollar figure in it and leave everything else the same.

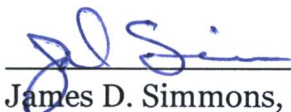
Commissioner Walters made a motion to negotiate a contract with Robert Daniels with a starting salary of \$86,000 with standard benefits as previously agreed to by the Town Commission; Commissioner Quarrie seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

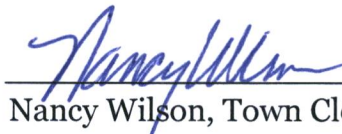
V. Adjournment

Commissioner Quarrie made a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Walters seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

ATTEST:


James D. Simmons, Mayor


Nancy Wilson, Town Clerk