COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

Entered into the Public Record during the City of Coral Gables Commission meeting of 2/10/09, in connection with Agenda Item F-4.

WALTER J. FOEMAN
City Clerk

City of Coral Gables, FL

CITY MANAGER INTERVIEW NOTEBOOK

Colin Baenziger & Associates

Contact Person: **Colin Baenziger**
Colin Baenziger & Associates
12970 Dartford Trail – Suite 8
Wellington, FL 33414
(561) 793-2624
(561) 792-2137 Facsimile
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CORAL GABLES CITY MANAGER CANDIDATE LIST

December 22, 2008

	NAME	*ADDRESS*	*CURRENT/MOST RECENT POSITION*
1	Afoun, John	6 Bloomingdale Dr., Scarsdale, NY 10583. afoun@hotmail.com	President/ CEO, Greenburgh Housing Authority, 2000 -2008.
2	Akselrod, Ben	2308 E. 21st St., Brooklyn, NY 11229. abenl@aol.com	Executive Director, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst Kehillah, Inc., Jackson Heights, NY - 2007 - 2008.
3	Angus, Linda	4415 Monserrate St., Coral Gables, FL 33601. lggangus@gmail.com	Managing Director, Daylight Forensic Advisory, Miami, FL 2007 - Present.
4	Antonen, James W.	5606 Tufts St., Davis, CA 95616. jamesantonen@comcast.net	Senior Manager, Bob Murray & associates, 2006 - 03/2008.
5	Avael, Julio	1720 Johnson St., Key West FL., 33040.	Avael & associates Consulting Firm, 2008 - Present City Manager, Key West, FL 1996 - 2007, (retired).
6	Barlow, III., William P.	33 Hilltop Dr. Schaumburg, Il 50193. WBarlow561@aol.com,	Village Manager, Village of Winflield,IL City Manager, Xenia, OH . RESUME IN SUMMARY NO DATES GIVEN .
7	Barrett, Anthony W.	4204 Amelia Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22408. abarrett2009@aol.com	Commercial Sales and Leasing Agent-Project Manager Sliver Development Companies Present
8	Barton, Kathleen C.	63 Blue Ridge Rd., Penfield, NY 14526. Kciulla@frontiernet.net	Turnaround Consultant/Owner, About Face, Penfield, NY - 2007 - Current.
9	Beimer, Michael R.	303 Turtle Dove Lane, Mount Vernon, IW 52314. mbeimer@cityofmtvernon-ia.gov	City Administrator, City of Mount Vernon, IW, 01/1988 - Present.
10	Benford, Russell	4944 Windward Way, Dania Beach, FL 33312. Russell_benford@hotmail.com	City Administrator, City of West Park, West Park, FL, 07/2005 - Present.
11	Bocanegra, Frank C.	908 Granada Blvd., Coral Gables, FL 33134.	Police Mayor, Police Dept., Coral Gables, FL , Promoted - 11/2007.

12	Bowman, Daren Lyle	517 Crescent Lane, Norwalk, IA 50211. bowmandaren@yahoo.com	Executive Officer, United States Marine Corps, Recruiting Station Des Moines, Iowa - 08/ 2008.
13	Brewer, Herman	5533 S. Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, IL 60637. hermanbrewer@yahoo.com	Director, The John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation,05/03- Present. Chief Operating Officer, Centers for New Horizons, 04/ 2002 - 05 / 2003.
14	Brown, Jr., Howard W.	509 N. Westover Blvd., Apt 724, Albany, GA 31707. howardwbrownjr@gmail.com	Director, Planning and Development Services Dept., City of Albany, Albany, GA 2007 - Present.
15	Buttacavoli, Mayra Diaz	5451 Alton Rd., Miami Beach, FL 33140. FMB1208@aol.com	Director of Human Resources & Risk Management, City of Miami Beach, FL 01/2004 - 01/ 2008.
16	Carey, Gary L.	4040 Singal Dr. SW., Grandville, MI 49418 garycarey@msn.com	City Administrator, Community Development Director, City of Rockwood, MI - 2004- 2007.
17	Carey, Shaun	1685 Sabatino Dr., Sparks, NV 89434. careysd@sbcglobal.net	City Manager, City of Sparks, NV 10/ 1999 - Present.
18	Carlucci, Ernest J.	10 Sorrell Rd., North Provide, RI, 02904. ejc10@msn.com	Director of Administration, City of Cranston, Cranston, RI , 2007 - Present.
19	Carr, Fredrick C.	8 Reid Way, Freehold, NJ 07728. PHREDINCRANBURY@aol.com	Borough Administrator, Matawan Borough, NJ, 2006 - 2008.
20	Chapman, II., Steven G.	3031 NE 51st., #201 W., Fort Lauderdale FL 33308. stevenchapman64@yahoo.com	Director of Financial Services, City of Tamarac , 02/05 - Present.
21	Crawford, Donald D.	912 Park Lane, Gross Pointe Park, MI 48230 dcrawford@cmpassociates.com	City Manager, Hamtramck, .MI, 2005 -2008
22	Crowell, Jr.,Steven Stewart	2032 Silver Palm Rd., North Port, FL 34288. unrivaled@verizon.net	City Manager, City of North Port, FL, 07/2005 - Present.
23	Culbreth, John H.	170 Buckhorn Trail, Fairburn, (Fayette County), GA 30213. jhculbreth@comcast.net	Director, Dept., of Parks, Recreation, Entertainment, Conservation, City of Jacksonville, FL 01/2006 - 05 / 2007.

24	Cummings, William F.	588 Vanburenville Rd., Middletown, NY 10940. bill4401@hotmail.com	Administrator, High Point Community, Montague, NJ 2007 - Present.
25	D'Agostino, John O.	175 Balcom St., Mansfield, MA 020481.` Johnnydog92257@comcast.net	Town Manager, Town of Mansfield, MA 12/ 1997 - Current.
26	Daly, III., John H.	391 Riverwoods Dr., Flushing MI 48433. JohnHDalyIII@aol.com	Manager Director, Genesee County Road Commission, Flint, MI 12 / 99 - Present.
27	Daughtrey, Newall J.	P.O.Box 470307, Miami, FL 33247. njdaughtrey@yahoo.com	Chairman, Newall J. Daughtrey & Assoc. 01/1992 - Present. City Manager, City of Belle Glade, FL 08/2006 - 02/2007
28	Diaz, Omar	6368 SW 31st St., Miami FL 33155. omarod@bellsouth.net	Estate Property Manager & Office Manager. NO DATES ON RESUME
29	Donmez, Erdal Withdrew	11311 NW 11th Court Coral Springs, FL 33071	Assistant City Manager, Coral Springs, FL 2000- Present
30	Ducas, George, J.	3300 University Park Lane, Irving, TX 75062. GJMD1@earthlink.net	Construction Management 2000 - 2008.
31	Foster, Dana William	630 Spenser, Brighton, MI 48116. brightoncitymgr@yahoo.com	City Manager, Brighton, MI 1991 - Present.
32	Frasher, David W.	1035 NW Cooke Ave., Grants Pass, OR 97526. dfrasher@grantspassoregon.gov	City Manager, City of Grants Pass, OR 2005 -Present.
33	Gallent, Chester E.	224 S. Trimble Rd., Mansfield, Ohio 44906. egallantis@yahoo.com	Substitute Teaching & Tutoring K -12, Mid - Ohio Educational service Center, 2007 - Present.
34	Glover, Patricia	1000 Stanhope Rd., Collierville, TN 38017. Budgetlady@aol.com	Manager of Budget & Internal Audit, Contract Bridge League, Memphis, TN, 06/2007 - Present.

35	Grever, Annika	3440 Percival Ave., Miami, Fl 33133. annikagrever@gmail.com	Policy & Pricing Analyst for Purchase of Service, Executive Office of Health & Human Services, MS , 01/2007 - 03/2008.
36	Grossman, Jeffrey A.	P.O. Box 501 Old Orchard Beach, ME 04064. jag4238@yahoo.com	Town Manager, Tax Collector, Treasurer, Road Commissioner, Town of South Berwick, Maine, 09/2004 - 03/ 2008.
37	Hanson, Kandis M.	2942 Oakland Lane, Mound, MN 55364.	City Manager, City of Mound, MN, 04/2000 - Present.
38	Hoover, Thomas R.	422 Edmund Ave., Royal Oak, MI 48073. hooverthomas@att.net	City Manager, Royal Oak, MI 2004 - Present.
39	Hurm, James C.	603 24 St. SW, Austin, MN 55912 jhurm@ci.austin.mn.us	City Administrator,Port Authority Director and Executive Director Housing & Redevelopment Authority, Cityof Austin, MN - 2003 - Present
40	Jackson, James A.	4250 Audubon, Detroit, MI 48224. jajack561@yahoo.com	Director, Department of Public Services, Wayne County, 05/ 2006 - Present.
41	Johnson, Eric	3116 SW Shrout Creek Dr., Blue Springs, MO 64015. ejohnson@bluespringsgov.com & Ejohnson6715@sbcglobal.net	City Administrator, City of Blue Springs, MO, 01/2006 - Present.
42	Kelley, Autie F.	5 Hilda Ave., Beaufort, SC 29907. kelley111_us@yahoo.com	Project Manger, Hartman Consulting & Design, Orlando, FL 2006 - Present.
43	Kutney, Mark A.	13627 Chatsworth Village Dr., Wellington FL, 33414 makutney_3254@mail.com	Acting City Manager of Belle Glade, FL 09/ 2008 - 11/ 2008. Deputy City Manager , Belle Glade, FL 2007 - 09/ 2008.
44	Lanning, Allan D.	27611 Winchester Trail, Steamboat Springs, CO 80487. lanning6@comcast.net	City Manager, City of Steamboat Springs, CO 08/2006- 08/2008.
45	Lewis, Gregory D.	99 Carolina Ave., Lockport, NY, 14094. lewis99@adelphia.net	Administrative Assistant, Niagara County NY, 1991 - Present.

46	Lochner, Christopher W.	4960 Gittings Drive, Gibsonia, PA 15044 clochner@connecttime.net	Municipal Town Manager, Township of Hampton, PA 1986 -Present.
47	Lonon, Craig	3102 Haine No.716, Harlington, TX 78550. clonon@sbcglobal.	City Manager, City of Harlington, TX, 03/2006 - Present.
48	Lowery, Jr., Robert G.	713 Cooper Way, O'Fallon, MS 63368. Loweryr@charter.net	City Administrator, City of O'Fallon, MS, 2005 - Present.
49	Malin, Craig Withdrew	3708 Esats 59tj Street Daveport, IA 52807 MalinCraig@aol.com	City Manager, Davenport, IA
50	McLemore, Ron	1620 Eagle Nest Circle, Winter Springs, FL, 32708.	City Manager, Winter Springs, FL 1996 - Present. Assistant County Administrator, Martin County, FL 1993 - 1996.
51	Middaugh, Robert C.	1000 Orange Isle, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33315. rcmj0629@bellsouth.net	Assistant City Manager, City of Miami Beach, FL, 2001 - Present.
52	Morrison, Robert L.	9138 E Rainsage St Tucson, AZ 85747 rmorrison22@cox.net	Deputy City Manager, City of Harrrisburg, PA - 1971 - 2003
53	Munroe, Keith G.	1009 Desert Jewel Court, Reno, NV, 89511. RenoMunros@hotmail.com	First Assistant(3/2008 - Present & Chief of Staff(01/2007 - 03/2008), Office of Nevada Attorney General, Catherine Cortez- Masto.
54	Nagy, Michael	1220 West Blvd., Marine City, MI, 48039. michaeljohnnagy@yahoo.com, michael.nagy1027@att.net	City Manager, City of Fort Morgan, CO 2007 -2008.
55	Newman, Graham M.	198 Valleyview Dr., Abingdon, VA 24210 gmn@abingdon.com	Town Manager, Town of Abingdon, VA, 02/1982 - 11/2006.
56	Nichols, James R.	3104 N 145th Ave., Goodyear, AZ 85395. JRN1966@cox.net	Deputy City Manager, City of Goodyear, AZ , 09/2005 - Present.

57	Olmedillo, Guillermo	1450 Madruga Ave., Suite 407, Coral Gables, FL 33416. guillermo@olmedillox5.com	Private Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Consultant, 01/2001 - Present.
58	Palesh, USAF. (Ret.) Lt. Col. Mark R.	161 S. Hoopes Ave., Auburn, NY 13021. Mpalesh@ci.auburn.ny.us	Managing Member / CEO, The Magellan Group, LLC, Salt Lake City Utah, 08/1995 - Present.
59	Parker, Joyce A.	P.O. Box 3086, Ann Arbor, MI 48103. joyce_parker@msn.com	City Manager, City of Inkster, MI, 09/2004-10/2008.
60	Patrick, James H.	15 Buffalo Stage, Kalispell, MT, 59901. japatrick@bresnan.net	City Manager, Kalispell, MT, 11/2004 - 10/2008.
61	Penn, Ph.D., George J.	drgpenn@aol.com	Vice President/Strategic Planner, PDA Consulting Group, Inc., Cerritos, CA NO DATES ON RESUME
62	Phillips, Michael B.	410 Curtis Rd., Greenville, SC 29611. MPhillips1044@aol.com	County Manager, Applying County, GA 2007 - 2008. City Administrator, City of Chester, SC 2004 - 2006.
63	Pingree, Benjamin	116 Strattonwood Pl., Crawfordville, FL 32327. benpingree@hotmail.com	County Administrator, Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners, FL 01/2007 - Present.
64	Pinon, Joseph	14723 SW 42 Terrace, Miami, FL 33185. joepinon@msn.com & joseph.pinon@iraq.centcom.mil	Senior City Manager Advisor, United States Dept., of State, Iraq, Assisted in 5 year plan.
65	Purrinos, Sergio	2232 SW 152 Place, Miami, FL 33185. spurrinos@yahoo.com	City Manager, City of Dorval, FL 09/2005 - Present.
66	Rasco, Joe	310 West Heather Drive Key Biscayne, FL 33149 jirjr@aol.com	Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Miami-Dade County, 2005 - Present
67	Rivera, Sr. , Hector A.	4510 SW Thistle Terrace, Palm City, FL 34990. hrivera2@bellsouth.net	Assistant City Manager/ Community Development Director, City of Cape Coral, FL., 04/2007 - 08/2008.

68	Rodgers, Spencer T.	P.O.Box 1743, Danville, KY 40423. strodgers@gmail.com	Information Technology Tech, City of Danville, KY 08/2008 - Present.
69	Ruano, Robert	1544 Murcia Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33134	Director, Grants and Sustainable Initiatives, City of Miami, 2003 - Present
70	Saddler, III, Charles Clark	1810 Sir Henry's Trail, Lakeland FL 33809 csaddler@tampabay.rr.com	Town Manager, Town of Dundee, FL 2006 - 2008.
71	Sadler, Ed	1207 Des Moines St., Webster City, IO 50595 Esadler@Webstercity.com	City Manager, City of Webster City, IO 06/ 2006 - Present.
72	Salerno, Patrick G.	NO ADDRESS ON RESUME PGSalerno@aol.com	City Manager, City of Sunrise, FL 1990 - 2008
73	Schempf, John B.	229 Butte Dr., Los Osos, CA 93402. jbschempf@charter.net	General Manager, Los Osos, CA, 10/2007 - Present
74	Schmittt, Joseph K.	7629 Mulberry Lane, Naples, FL 34114. joe.peggy@comcast.net	Administrator, Community Development & Environmental Services Division, Collier County, FL, 01/2002 - Present.
75	Schock, Christine D.	4840 Muirwoods Court, Blue Ash, OH 45242. cdschock@yahoo.com	Executive Director of Regional Planning Commission, Clinton County Regional Planning Commission, Wilmington, OH , 2007 - Present.
76	Scurr, Charles D. Withdrew	11035 Killian Park Rd., Miami, FL 33156. CDSMIA@aol.com	Adjunct Professor, Associate Vice President, Florida International University, 2007 - Current.
77	Segal - George, Marsha Withdrew	1838 Seneca Blvd., Winter Springs, FL 32708 marshaisg@bellsouth.net	City Manager, Orlando, FL , Present.

78	Siberio, CPA., Daniel	2000 S. Bayshore Dr., Villa 54, Coconut Grove, FL 33133. dsiberio@fairchildfs.com	Partner, Fairchild Financial Group, Coral Gables, FL , 2003 - Present.
79	Spring, Larry	1111Brickell Bay Drive, Apt. 702, Miami, FL 33131 LarryMSpring@aol.com	ACM/CFO, City of Miami
80	Stanton, Susan A.	5528 N. 10th St., Phoneix,AZ 85014. susanstanton58@yahoo.com	City Manager, Largo, FL 08/1990- 03/2007.
81	Starowicz, Edmund	8 Stuyvesnat Rd., Pitttsford, NY 14534. estarowi@rochester.rr.com	Deputy Commissioner of Public Works, Town of Pittsford, NY, 2003 - Present.
82	Steers, Christopher D.	16630 SW 234th St., Homestead, FL 33031. steers@bellsouth.net	President/CEO, Steers & Associates, Government & Corporate Consulting, 11/2008 - Present.
83	Turk, Brian	207 Ammon Ave., Elizabethtown, PA 17022. Brianturk77@comcast.net	Project Director/Consultant/ Business Developer, 2007 - Present.
84	Turner, Issac Duane	399 Windwood Pl., Ormond Beach, FL 32174. issacdturner@bellsouth.net	City Manager , City of Ormand Beach, 06/2001 - 08/2008.
85	Van Haute, Paul M.	275 Cottonwood Creek Circle, Canton, GA 30114. paulvanhaute@comcast.net	Assistant County Manager, Spalding County, GA 2006 - Present . Mayor, City of Holly Springs 1996 - 2004.
86	Vella, Fred	843 Becks Run Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15210. fjv2us@yahoo.com	J.C. Penney, OH, PA & FL , 2004 - Present.
87	Walker, Brenda	3460 Birdsall Ave, Oakland, CA 94619 brenda.walker@sbcglobal.net	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, San Francisco, CA 2005 - Present Interim Deputy Director, Transportation Development 06/2008 - 11/2008

88	White, John Wesley	4615 Oak Forest Dr., Sarasota, FL 34231. JWesWhite@msn.com	Owner/ Consultant, Strategic Management Resources 1997 - 2008.
89	Willi, Thomas	1023 Lagoon Dr., Summerland Key, FL 33042. thomas-willi@hotmail.com	Partner in starter regional firm, Development Consulting Firm, New Ventures Group, 01/2008 -Present.
90	Witt, Buford (Randy)	3648 Saint Gaudens Rd., Miami, FL 33133. brwitt@ifoneinc.com	Co-Founder/President, iFONE, Inc., Miami, FL 2003 - Present.
91	Zoukee, George M.	39 Bartlett Rd., P.O. Box 68, Newberry, NH 03255. NHGMZ@aol.com	Senior Vice President, NW Financial Group, Jersey City, NJ & Newberry, NH, 11/2006 - 11/2007.

Entered into the
Public Record during
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of 2/10/09,
in connection with
Agenda Item F-4,

WALTER J. FOEMAN
City Clerk

MEMO

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

WELLINGTON, FL

TO:	City Commission Members City of Coral Gables	**DATE:**	February 4, 2009
FROM:	Colin Baenziger	**PAGES:**	1 of 3
RE:	Suggested City Manager Semi-Finalists		

Background

Overall, 87 candidates applied to be the next City Manager of Coral Gables. Many were extremely well qualified – in fact, this field is the best we have had since we started recruiting eleven years ago.

Initially we selected seventeen apparently outstanding candidates to review further representing solid experience and diversity. Of the seventeen, three dropped out for personal reasons and one accepted another position and dropped out at the last minute. We eliminated four others based on our detailed reviews of their backgrounds. The reasons varied, but two, for examples, had sued prior employers after being terminated from their positions.

The remaining nine candidates have passed our background screening, comprise a diverse and impressive group, and each is outstanding in his own way. The results of our work are contained in the attached notebook. For each candidate, we have included: the candidate's resume, the results of our interview with the candidate, the results of our background checks (criminal, civil, credit, employment verification and so on), what references had to say about the candidate and what we found of importance on the Internet concerning the individual.

The Recommended Candidates

The nine candidates we are recommending for the Commission's review are listed below along with a few very brief highlights and/or comments regarding each. In reviewing these candidates materials, please remember that what you are reading is only paper. As such, it does not convey the essence of the candidate. That can only be accomplished by meeting the candidate in person.

Julio Avael:

- Over 15 years experience as a City and County Manager.
- Key West's longest serving manager, at least in recent memory.
- Served as County Manager for Clark County, one of the nation's most rapidly growing counties.

CB&A Note: We caution you when reading the material we compiled from searching the

Internet and newspaper archives. The newspapers in the Florida Keys can be almost partisan in nature. If they like you, the stories in them are reasonably accurate. If they do not, they will go after you with a vengeance.

Steven Crowell:

- Over 20 years experience as a City Manager in five cities in three states.
- North Port, where he is currently the City Manager, has a population of 54,000 and was one of Florida's fastest growing cities during the housing boom.
- Served as City Manager of Greenwood Village, CO, for 11 years. Greenwood Village is a mixed use community outside of Denver with a number of Fortune 500 headquarters. The median household income is over $115,000.

David Frasher:

- Over nine years experience as a City Manager in three cities in three states.
- Trained and practiced as an attorney and is a former police officer.
- In Grants Pass, OR, obtained the City's first AA bond rating saving $500,000 in debt issuance costs.

Ron McLemore:

- Approximately 19 years experience as a City Manager in four cities in three states.
- The face of Winter Springs changed significantly in the 12 years Mr. McLemore was the City Manager and has been acclaimed as one of the best cities in the nation to live by several sources, the most recent of which was by Money Magazine in 2007.

Robert Ruano:

- Coral Gables resident with 18 years experience in the public and private sector.
- Served three years as the Executive Director of Regis House.
- Currently the Director of Grants and Sustainable Initiatives with the City of Miami.

Patrick Salerno

- Over 20 years experience as a City and County Manager in two states.
- During his seventeen year tenure as Sunrise's City Manager, the community changed from largely residential to become one of Broward County's office and commercial hubs.
- Experienced in dealing with the development industry's heavy hitters such as Wayne Huizenga.

Larry Spring

- Over 14 years experience in the public and private sectors with a heavy concentration in banking and finance.
- Currently serves as the City of Miami's CFO and also served as its Chief of Strategic Planning, Budgeting and Performance.

John Wesley White

- Over 14 years as a County Manager in Florida (Sarasota County) and Maryland (Prince Georges County). Also served as Budget Director for the City of Miami and as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the State of Florida government
- Coral Gables native and graduated from Coral Gables High School.
- Led Prince Georges' County's successful effort to be recognized as an All American City
- Recognized as one of the icons in local government management.

Buford "Randy" Witt

- Retired Brigadier General, U.S. Army.
- Served as the Chief Information Officer for Miami-Dade County for four years.
- Successful business man.
- Change agent dedicated to public service.

Next Steps

I am available to discuss the candidates with the Commissioners individually in person or via telephone on either Friday, February 6th or Monday, February 9th. On Tuesday, February 10th, the Commission will select finalists to interview on February 21st.

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WALTER J. FOEMAN
City Clerk

		Commission					
		Slesnick	Kerdyk	Anderson	Cabrera	Withers	**Total**
Candidates	Julio Avael						**0**
	Steven Crowell	1	1		1		**3**
	David Frasher					1	**1**
	Ronald McLemore					1	**1**
	Robert Ruano	1					**1**
	Patrick Salerno	1	1		1	1	**4**
	Larry Spring	1	1	1	1	1	**5**
	John Wesley White						**0**
	Buford "Randy" Witt	1	1			1	**3**
	Total	**5**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**5**	

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WALTER J. FOEMAN
City Clerk

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Commission / Candidate	Slesnick	Kerdyk	Anderson	Cabrera	Withers	Total
Julio Avael						
Steven Crowell	✓	✓		✓		3
David Frasher					✓	1
Ronald McLemore					✓	1
Robert Ruano	✓					1
Patrick Salerno	✓	✓			✓	3
Larry Spring	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
John Wesley White						
Buford "Randy" Witt	✓	✓			✓	3
Total						

Compiled By: Colin

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Please put a check mark your top choices (preferably five or six) to invite to the City to interview for the City Manager position.

	Candidate	Select
1	**Julio Avael**	
2	**Steven Crowell**	
3	**David Frasher**	✓
4	**Ronald McLemore**	✓
5	**Robert Ruano**	
6	**Patrick Salerno**	✓
7	**Larry Spring**	✓
8	**John Wesley White**	
9	**Buford "Randy" Witt**	✓

Submitted by:

□ Slesnick □ Kerdyk □ Anderson □ Cabrera ☑ Withers

_____

Signature of Elected Official Submitting the Ballot

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Please put a check mark your top choices (preferably five or six) to invite to the City to interview for the City Manager position.

	Candidate	Select
1	**Julio Avael**	
2	**Steven Crowell**	✓
3	**David Frasher**	
4	**Ronald McLemore**	
5	**Robert Ruano**	✓
6	**Patrick Salerno**	✓
7	**Larry Spring**	✓
8	**John Wesley White**	
9	**Buford "Randy" Witt**	✓

Submitted by:

☒ Slesnick ☐ Kerdyk ☐ Anderson ☐ Cabrera ☐ Withers

Signature of Elected Official Submitting the Ballot

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Please put a check mark your top choices (preferably five or six) to invite to the City to interview for the City Manager position.

	Candidate	Select
1	**Julio Avael**	
2	**Steven Crowell**	✓
3	**David Frasher**	
4	**Ronald McLemore**	
5	**Robert Ruano**	
6	**Patrick Salerno**	
7	**Larry Spring**	✓
8	**John Wesley White**	
9	**Buford "Randy" Witt**	

Submitted by:

□ Slesnick □ Kerdyk □ Anderson ☑ Cabrera □ Withers

Signature of Elected Official Submitting the Ballot

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Please put a check mark your top choices (preferably five or six) to invite to the City to interview for the City Manager position.

	Candidate	Select
1	**Julio Avael**	
2	**Steven Crowell**	
3	**David Frasher**	
4	**Ronald McLemore**	
5	**Robert Ruano**	
6	**Patrick Salerno**	
7	**Larry Spring**	✓
8	**John Wesley White**	
9	**Buford "Randy" Witt**	

Submitted by:

□ Slesnick □ Kerdyk ☒ Anderson □ Cabrera □ Withers

Signature of Elected Official Submitting the Ballot

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Please put a check mark your top choices (preferably five or six) to invite to the City to interview for the City Manager position.

	Candidate	Select
1	**Julio Avael**	
2	**Steven Crowell**	✓
3	**David Frasher**	
4	**Ronald McLemore**	
5	**Robert Ruano**	
6	**Patrick Salerno**	✓
7	**Larry Spring**	✓
8	**John Wesley White**	
9	**Buford "Randy" Witt**	✓

Submitted by:

□ Slesnick ☑ Kerdyk □ Anderson □ Cabrera □ Withers

_____

Signature of Elected Official Submitting the Ballot

City of Coral Gables

Ballot to Select City Manager Finalists

February 10, 2009

Commission / Candidate	Slesnick	Kerdyk	Anderson	Cabrera	Withers	Total
Julio Avael						0
Steven Crowell	1	1		1		3
David Frasher					1	1
Ronald McLemore					1	1
Robert Ruano	1					1
Patrick Salerno	1	1			1	3
Larry Spring	1	1	1	1	1	5
John Wesley White						0
Buford "Randy" Witt	1	1			1	3
Total						

Compiled By: _____

1 Schedule

2 Interview Procedures and Questions

3 Julio Avael

4 Steven Crowell

5 David Frasher

6 Ronald McLemore

7 Robert Ruano

8 Patrick Salerno

9 Larry Spring

10 John Wesley White

11 Buford Randy Witt

12 Current Salaries

Internet and Media Research

The following material must be read and used carefully. You should also have an understanding of its limitations.

Our staff gathers information about candidates from the Internet and from newspaper archives. While we would like to think all published material is accurate, we know it is not. For example:

1) Some news sources have biases toward particular individuals, or their articles do not contain complete information.
2) Occasionally, governments purposely provide information to the media that is neither accurate nor the full story. This situation is particularly true when someone is leaving his/her employment.
3) Some elected officials occasionally make allegations about managers or staff members for political reasons, whether or not the allegations are based on fact. Moreover, some elected officials shoot from the hip without a complete understanding of the real issue or all the facts.
4) A manager may be blamed for issues and problems that come to the surface during his/her tenure, but which existed long before he/she took office. In fact, a manager occasionally uncovers a problem and deals with it. That action brings problems to light that can prompt a news story reflecting badly on the manager who is trying to fix a problem, rather than the manager who let it fester for years and did nothing.
5) Since managers are ultimately responsible, they typically receive more media coverage than assistants. With their lower profile, assistants simply tend to have less is written about them. Also, when an assistant makes a mistake, the manager often takes the blame.

You also need to be aware that the Internet and the media changes daily. What you see is a snapshot in time and what was available on the Internet the day we did the research. In fact, if you searched the Internet tomorrow for information about these candidates, you might find more or less information. Search engines take up to six weeks to "find" stories after they are posted on websites. On the other hand, a story appearing on a website yesterday may not be there tomorrow.

We should also add that we have not included everything we found. Many articles have little (if any) relevance to the candidate's qualifications, so they have often been excluded. We also do not include blogs. We consider them to one person's view point and often find them to be of questionable validity.

Where issues of concern were found, we attempted to research them to determine their true nature. If we found information we believed was serious and was precipitated by the candidate's actions, or that would cause the city/county or the candidate embarrassment, we dropped him/her from consideration. Thus, the candidate and his/her information would not be in this notebook.

Schedule

Interview Procedures & Questions

Interviewing Candidates

The interview is generally the final step in the selection process. At this point, the executive recruiter has screened the candidates and is satisfied that all finalists are capable of doing the job. Reference checks and more extensive background checks have been conducted, including discussions with individuals of our choosing and not on the candidate's list of references. Internet searches have been done, along with a review of newspaper archives. Credit history, educational verification, and criminal background checks have also been run so there should be no surprises once a candidate is selected.

The interview is an opportunity for both the elected officials and the candidate to learn about each other and to determine how well they will be able to work together. It is also an opportunity for the elected officials to evaluate the candidate's management abilities and to decide if he/she would be a good leader for the community. It is important for both the elected officials and the candidate to act professionally and in a manner that will impress the other party, all the while learning what they can about the other.

Since all the candidates are capable of performing the job, the focus of the interview should be on determining who fits best with the elected officials, the staff and the community. Some candidates will have more experience than others. Some have special areas of expertise that others do not. Some have better instincts, and some are simply more capable than others. While some may make more mistakes than others, they may also hit more home runs. The key is to determine which candidate will have the best chemistry with the elected officials, but also who can best lead the staff. No matter how technically sound a candidate may be, if he or she cannot build and maintain a strong working relationship with the elected officials and staff, he or she will not last long as the community's appointed leader. Of course, experience and expertise are critical and should not be overlooked.

The Internal Candidate (Does not apply)

If an internal candidate is among the finalists, elected officials occasionally will assume they already know the individual and just chit-chat instead of actually interviewing him/her. Doing so is neither fair to the candidate nor the organization. Internal candidates may have ideas about what they would do differently as the City Manager, but have not been willing or able to convey these thoughts to the elected officials, much less act upon them. Unless the same hard questions are asked of the internal candidate as the external candidates, meaningful comparisons between them cannot be drawn.

It should also be recognized that a competent, likable, internal candidate will have a natural advantage in any job competition. To select the known quantity is a natural, human tendency, particularly in public sector recruitments. It feels comfortable and is viewed as safe. It may also be exactly the wrong thing to do. For example, we have seen governing bodies select individuals with whom they were comfortable and assume the individual will grow into the position. In our experience, they generally do not. Once someone has the top position, he/she

has no mentors and it is difficult for them to improve in areas where they are weak. There simply is no one to teach them so they to focus on the areas where they are strong than where they are weak.

Further, if the candidate does not do well in the position, then a year or so later the same governing body is struggling with a difficult decision. What should it do with someone who was a valuable employee but who is not providing the necessary leadership? The choices become to continue with the employee even though he/she is not performing up to standards, demote the employee, or terminate his/her employment altogether. None of these choices is attractive, but one must be selected. Someone who was a perfectly good employee in his/her previous position may be lost. Of course, this same candidate, with a few more years of experience and mentoring, might make an excellent City Manager.

Please understand that we are not trying to discourage the hiring of an internal candidate. We do believe, however, that the internal candidate must be examined just as critically as the external candidates. We have found it helpful to ask the internal candidate what problems he/she sees in the organization and what he/she would propose to resolve them. If the individual does not have a good, specific answer to that question, then he/she is not ready to be the community's City Manager. External candidates will not have the same depth of experience or knowledge about the government, so it would not be fair to expect the same response to this question as you would from the internal candidate.

Another thing to keep in mind is that, if the internal candidate is hired as the City Manager, then a search must begin to fill his/her position. If an outsider is hired, in most cases the internal candidate stays, but is somewhat disappointed. Of course there is also the risk that the internal candidate may be so disappointed that he/she decides to seek employment elsewhere.

Possible Interview Questions

The questions on the next few pages may be useful in determining the information that you need. There are undoubtedly others. The point is to ask the questions that you feel will give you the best idea of what the candidate believes, how he/she will work with you and with the staff, and whether or not he/she is good match for the community.

The following questions are divided into three groups. The first set contains standard introductory questions covering an individual's background, management style, and experience. The second set is designed to provide information about how the candidate will interact with the elected officials and staff, and to focus on particular issues that may be of concern to the community. Set III should always be asked at the end of the interview. Since time will not permit asking all the questions, you should select the ones that are most important to you. The last four should always be asked, and five minutes should be allotted at the end of the interview to ask them.

Possible Interview Questions

Question Set I:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why are you interested in our community?
3. What is your management style?
4. What would your staff say about you as a manager?
5. How would your elected officials say about you?
6. Have you fired people? How did you handle it? How did you feel about it?
7. What do you think your strengths are?
8. What do you think your weaknesses are?
9. What has been your biggest success? Tell us about it.
10. What has been your biggest failure (or mistake) in your career? What did you learn from it?
11. If you were asked to cite one particular situation or event in your career that gave you the greatest satisfaction, what would it be?
12. What would you do during the first six months in our community?
13. What do you hope to learn in the first six months in our community? What do you expect to teach us?
14. What do you believe to be the challenges and opportunities facing our community? How are these likely to change in the future?
15. The City wants a City Manager with new ideas and lots of energy. How do you meet those requirements?
16. What is your value system? How will your values determine how you manage our City?
17. Why should we select you to be our next City Manager?
18. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Question Set II:

1. Explain what you believe the role of our City Manager should be.

2. What are the three most important commandments for a City Manager?

3. Can you give me a breakdown of your typical day as a City Manager?

4. How would you view your relationship with the elected officials?

5. How will you go about building a strong relationship with them? How will you maintain it?

6. How do you build consensus on an elected body when it is deeply divided?

7. What information do you think the governing body needs to have concerning day-to-day operations and on-going projects?

8. How will you keep the elected officials informed?

9. What kind of direction do you expect to get from the elected officials? What will you do if you do not feel they have made it clear how they want the staff to precede on a particular issue?

10. There is an expression, "A good City Manager only needs to be able to count to three." Could you please comment on that statement?

11. What do you do when your views on handling a situation differ from those of the governing body as a whole?

12. What will you do if a particular elected official disagrees with how you believe a situation should be handled?

13. What will you do when an elected official contacts a department head directly and tells him/her to do something?

14. What are your core values and which one is most important to you?

15. Can you describe an ethical issue that you have had to deal with in your career and how you handled it?

16. As a manager, how do you evaluate your own performance?

17. What do you believe to be the highlights of your career over the past three years?

18. How will you build a strong relationship with our existing staff?

19. How many people reported to you in your last job? How did you keep them informed of the community's priorities? What do you intend to do differently if you are appointed here?

20. How will you keep the general employees informed of the elected officials' priorities?

21. To what extent do you believe contact with citizens and citizen's groups is important? How do you typically handle this responsibility? How will you build relationships with the community?

22. How do you plan to communicate with our residents?

23. What kind of relationship do you want to have with the senior managers and the rest of the staff, and how will you establish it?

24. Sensitivity to different genders, races and ethnic groups is a priority for us. Can you provide us with some specific examples of how you have demonstrated your commitment to these principles in the past?

25. How will you go about identifying the organization's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement? Once you have identified them, how will you go about making changes?

26. How will you approach the short and long range planning processes? What system do you use to set goals and objectives? How do you monitor progress against these goals and objectives?

27. History defines the future. Can you please define the character of our community based on what you have seen and then tell what you would like it to look like in 25 years?

28. What will you do if you feel an employee is not doing his/her job in a manner you feel is satisfactory?

29. What do you do when you observe an employee - who works for a department director - who is not doing his/her job the way you think it should be done?

30. Describe the steps you would take if you needed to recruit, say, a new Planning Director.

31. Describe a situation where you had to build a team to solve a problem.

32. How would you go about raising morale in our organization?

33. What was the most difficult situation you faced as a government employee? How did you handle it? What did you learn from it?

34. Describe an incident in which you played a role that embarrassed your government or caused it difficulty. What did you learn from it?

35. What are your long term career goals?

36. What areas of your skills/professional development do you want to work on at this point in your career?

37. How do you ensure that your staff continues to develop professionally?

38. Are you willing to take calculated risks?

39. What kind of decisions did you make in your last job?

40. What kinds of decisions are difficult for you to make?

41. What personal skills do you feel are necessary for someone to be successful in this position?

42. What particular personal characteristic do you have that will most benefit our residents if you are hired?

43. What is your average workweek now, and what would you expect it to be if you came to work here?

44. Why did you leave your last job? (Ask if the candidate is in transition.)

45. Why do you want to leave your current job? (Ask if the candidate is currently employed.)

46. From what you know about our community, what is the most burning issue that we face, and how would you address it?

47. What is your philosophy for developing and implementing a budget for our city?

48. Would you consider implementing a Zero Based Budget?

49. What techniques would you employ to develop and implement a balanced budget in these difficult economic times?

50. What techniques have you employed to reduce payroll expenses without layoffs and without reducing the level of service we provide?

51. How do you encourage staff to stay in your organization?

52. Give me some examples of cases where you have introduced new technologies to improve productivity or service delivery in a local government organization?

53. Like many communities, we are experiencing rapid growth and development. What would you do to protect the character of the community while permitting acceptable growth?

54. Do you view growth as a positive?

55. What experience do you have with rapid growth/development? What should a government be most concerned about when it is in a rapid growth situation?

56. Tell us about your experience closing the gap between what is the ideal amount of infrastructure (roads, drainage, facilities, etc.) and what is actually present.

57. What sort of concessions would you ask of developers when discussing their desire to bring a new development to our community?

58. What experience do you have with redevelopment?

59. Do you think it is necessary or appropriate to redevelop this community? If yes, how would you go about redeveloping it?

60. Do you feel it is desirable to bring new businesses to the community? What kind of businesses would you try to attract?

61. What is your experience with annexation?

62. What role do you feel counties should play when cities want to annex additional land?

63. Describe your experience with out-sourcing and your methodology for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of outsourcing.

64. What is your opinion of sole source procurements?

65. How will you balance the need for timely/efficient procurement with the need for checks and balances?

66. How would you go about building a good relationship with the County?

67. How would you go about building a positive relationship with other governments with whom you will have to deal if you are selected for this position?

68. Describe your experience in dealing with state agencies.

69. Describe your experience dealing with federal agencies.

70. Describe your experience obtaining grants. What agencies would you approach for grants? What kind of grants do you think would benefit us?

71. Are there other external sources of funds (beyond grants) that you would seek out?

72. Have you ever been involved in initiatives to contract out services? Tell us about them. Did these efforts succeed?

73. How do you feel about succession plans for managers and directors? Do you presently have on in your city?

74. Describe the kind of organization for which you would like to work. If you could change one thing in your current (or most recent) job, what would it be?

75. Who do you view as your customers? How will you interact with them?

76. What great idea have you had that did not go anywhere and why did it fail?

77. If we were to look at your personnel file, what would we find? Would there be anything negative?

78. How do you respond when a resident walks into City offices and wants to meet with you about an issue that concerns him/her?

79. Would you make yourself available for two hours a week to see the public on a first-come, first-served basis?

80. How would you address a situation where an employee places the City in an embarrassing light?

81. What do you see as the primary drawback to being the City Manager of our community? What do you know about our operations and current employees?

82. If we hire you, would you seek a salary increase every year?

83. If the community decides to install a plaque somewhere in your honor after you leave your current job, what would it say? Where would they hang it?

84. If they decide to give you a roast, what would people say about you?

85. What was the most pertinent question you were asked today by any one of us? Why do you think it was the most pertinent question? How did you answer it?

86. Would you favor setting up a non-profit to deal with the feral cat and stray dog population in our community? [This question may seem a bit odd but it tests the ability of a candidate to think on his/her feet.]

87. Assume our 100th anniversary is next year. What ideas would you offer to make it a rousing success?

88. What was the last book you read and why did you choose it to read?

89. Who is your favorite comedian and how do you incorporate humor in your management style?

90. What did you do to prepare for today's interview?

91. If you accept this position, how long do you expect to stay?

92. How do you spend your spare time? What are your hobbies?

93. How would you describe your ideal day off?

94. Why should we hire you?

Question Set III:

1. If you are selected as the successful candidate, and understanding that pay and benefits are matters for negotiation, tell us in broad terms what sort of compensation package you would expect?

2. What kind of severance package would you expect if you were terminated?

3. When would you be available to start work?

4. Is there anything else you want to tell us?

5. Are there any questions you would like to ask us?

Topics to Avoid During the Interview Process

A large body of legislation has developed over the years addressing civil rights and race/gender/age discrimination. Questions in these areas should be avoided during the interview process. The process of interviewing and selecting an applicant is no longer a simple matter of conducting a casual conversation and hoping to learn a candidate's strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes. Various civil rights laws now make the average interview a process that should be approached with extreme caution. However, if you keep in mind certain basic rules, you will facilitate the process and avoid problems.

In most instances, asking inappropriate questions may raise an inference of either discrimination or retaliation against a particular candidate. In other instances, such as those involving issues of mental or physical health, inappropriate questions are presumptively discriminatory. Therefore, the interviewer must avoid questions relating to the following:

1. Political affiliation, political views, or voting history.
2. Religious beliefs or practices.
3. A candidate's race.
4. A candidate's age.
5. A candidate's national origin or ancestry.
6. A candidate's family, and whether or not they would be willing/able to join them in the new Town.
7. A candidate's desire to have children or raise a family.
8. Pregnancy and other gender related issues.
9. Sexual orientation or sexual practices.
10. Marital status or personal and private relationships.
11. Potentially controversial issues of race, gender or ethnicity.

Any information a candidate may *volunteer* during the interview process regarding these matters does not render the interview invalid or otherwise taint the process. Consequently, open-ended questions, such as asking if the candidate wants to reveal anything else to the City that has not already been covered, are not prohibited. In fact, they can sometimes provide valuable insight into a candidate's views and perspectives.

With regard to issues of physical or mental health, many questions are appropriate after a conditional offer of employment is made, but must be avoided beforehand. The interviewer must avoid questions relating to the following topics:

Topics to Avoid During the Interview Process

1. A candidate's medical history.

2. Past workers compensation claims.

3. Past use of sick leave.

4. Health of a candidate's family members.

5. Any obvious physical or mental impairment of the candidate. However, it is permissible to ask if the candidate is able to perform the essential functions of the job for which he/she is applying. A better practice is not to ask this type of question at all. Of course, from a practical point of view, it is hard to imagine anyone answering negatively.

6. A candidate's frequency of illegal drug use or addiction. However, it is permissible to ask if the candidate ever used illegal drugs, and if so, the last time he/she did so. Once again, this is a very delicate area that can create significant problems for the employer if the questioning is intrusive.

7. Alcoholism or the frequency of alcohol consumption.

The questions listed above which relate to medical conditions may properly be asked of a candidate after he or she has received a conditional offer of employment. Before an offer is made, however, the questions must be avoided.

If you need further assistance in crafting proper interview questions, please do not hesitate to contact us for further guidance.

Resume

JULIO AVAEL
1720 Johnson Street
Key West, Florida 33040
Phone (305) 293-0589

EDUCATION

- Master's Degree in Public Administration - Nova University - 1982
- Bachelor of Science Degree - Criminal Justice - Florida International University - 1973
- Senior Executive Program in Public Administration - Harvard University - 1981
- State Certified Public Manager Diploma - Florida State University - 2005
- Florida International University Academy for Strategic Management Certificate - 2003
- International City Managers' Association Credentialed

EXPERIENCE

- **Avael and Associates Consulting Firm** - 2008 to present. I established my consulting firm in early 2008 after retiring from the City of Key West.

CITY OF KEY WEST- CITY MANAGER - 1996 to *2007.* Retired November 30, 2007.

- The City of Key West is a commission/manager form of government with a population of 26,000, plus as many as 40,000 tourists daily during the tourist season. Responsibilities included the management of a full service city including the operations and management of the following departments: Emergency Operation Center director 1996 to present; Historic Sea Port, Garrison Bight port operations, fire, police, public works, transportation, finance, human resources, utilities, parks and recreation, information technology, local redevelopment authority, planning, building services, training and engineering services. Staff members totaled 490; the city's budget was $143 million; general revenue was $38 million.

ACHIEVEMENTS

City Managers Office

- The City Manager received an approval rating of over 90% in the city's citywide statistically valid survey in 2005.
- Overall City Hall accomplished high survey marks for being courteous (over 95%) 2005.
- Received accolades from the community and mayor for accomplishments in preparing the city for hurricanes and cleaning the city in record time to continue citywide festivities that brought as many as 65,000 revelers to the island in October of each year.
- Rolled back or maintained the city's millage during the greater part of my tenure and maintained balanced budgets. Ad Valorem property tax rates had steadily decreased as low as 2.0 mills in FY06 and 2.30 mills in FY07. The city residents were generally satisfied as the average cable bill was lower than the average City property tax in the aforementioned years.
- Lead a city team that acquired 32.9 acres of Navy property at no cost to the city. The property is estimated to be worth over $100 million. Newspapers reported "...that it was the most important land acquisition in years."
- Lead a city team that acquired 21.6 acres and 244 apartments from the Navy at a cost of $16.1 million. Estimated worth is over $50 million.
- Increased cruise ship revenues by nearly $5,000,000 or 222% during my tenure. Increased passenger purchasing power by $45,000,000 (NOAA Survey) or $90, million (Price Waterhouse).
- Negotiated amicably Police, Fire and Teamsters union contracts which were accepted by the city commission and community on three occasions during my tenure.
- Established and held thirteen citywide summits involving over 300 residents, businesses and

commissioners in addressing citywide issues regarding cruise ship, homeless and parking citywide concerns. Strategic plans were developed and prioritized goals and objectives established as the result.

- Established a citywide fourteen-week citizen Ambassadors' Academy program that informs residents about the administration of the city. Academy graduates have assumed responsibility for its administration and participate in citywide projects and programs. Additionally, the graduates have monthly luncheon with guest speakers. The ICMA PM Magazine published the article as an innovative project in 2004.
- Instituted the citizen police academy.
- Established the first city team-building teams with the police department while acting as police chief over a six-month period in 1997.
- Initiated the first ever strategic planning program and city business plan, paralleling the Sterling Award process criteria in 1998-2007.
- Established a comprehensive and award winning internet technology computer pc and laptop training programs.

DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEVADA- COUNTY MANAGER - 1993 to 1996.

- Douglas County is a commission/manager form of government. I was responsible for the management of a full service county comprised of 36,000 population, including Lake Tahoe in Northwest Nevada. County staff totaled 428 employees and a $70 million budget. Major departments included public works, community development, human resources, department of the comptroller, communications and emergency services, information systems, parks and recreation, airport and human services. Additionally, established partnerships with the constitutional officers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Balanced the FY 94 & FY 95 budgets that were reflecting $3.9 and $2.4 million deficits, respectively.
- Involved the community in the rightsizing of county government.
- Initiated the Master Plan process in the planning dept. and established protocol procedures for the Planning and Board of County Commissioners.
- Streamlined the Public Works Dept.
- Initiated Team Building, TQM customer services programs, performance measurements and benchmark training programs.
- Established public works, public safety, judicial and general government citizen committees. The committees evaluated, assessed and monitored the county's performance and made recommendations to the county manager and commissioners. .
- Achieved the first ever seven national awards for the county from the National Association of Counties.

FLORIDA INNOVATIONS GROUP-ASSOCIATE - 1993.

- The Innovation Group. Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization provides information services, product evaluation opportunities and networking programs for cities, counties and private corporations.

LEE COUNTY DEPUTY AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR - 1991 to 1993.

- Responsible for the management of a full service county 370,000 population located in Southwest Florida. Managed $973 million budget and 2,069 employees. Responsible for a wide range of departments: Office of management and budget, human resources, transportation,

public safety, community development, economic development, growth management, human services, utilities, solid waste and the office of equal opportunity.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Eliminated an $18 million budget deficit in FY91. Eliminated over $40 million over three years.
- Streamlined operations by eliminating 150 positions, adversely affecting only six employees and presenting balance budgets through 1994. ICMA PM Magazine published an article showing how we were able to accomplish the feat.
- Established a fiscal officers' task force and succeeded in bringing together fiscal officers representing 70 department heads and supervisors; improved fiscal accountability of the fiscal officers, purchasing agents, accountants and budget officers.
- Established a competitive bid process that potentially saved Lee County $15,364,000 in FY 93.
- Established the small business development center for minority entrepreneurs.
- Streamlined contract procedures involving the building department. Decreased turnaround time for approved purchase orders by as many as eight weeks.
- Achieved thirteen National Association of Counties (NACo) awards in FY 92.
- Together with a constitutional officer, corrected a two-year geographic information systems networking problem that interfaced with the utilization of the land use mapping computer programs and the criminal justice computer operations (CJIS).

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES DIRECTOR- 1985 to 1991.

- Managed and supervised Lee County Human Services, Divisions of Social Services which comprised a 110-bed nursing home, community improvement, housing, children's home and veterans services divisions. Managed the public health unit and mental health contracts. The department's budget: $13 million; 160 staff.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Human Services received more NACo awards during my tenure than all county departments combined.
- Eliminated a 30-year nursing home budget, which operated in the red ($900,000 in FY 85).
- Assisted the nursing home in achieving (7) seven unprecedented consecutive superior ratings.
- Established the first (award winning) systematic county contracting and monitoring program.
- Increased the department's revenues by contracting with federal and state agencies and utilizing grants. Reduced the department's budget by approximately 54%.
- Established the first therapeutic program at the children's home; defrayed over 50% of the operating cost and increased revenues.
- Established an internal computer verification Medicaid procedure that identified state billing errors ranging 15% to 20% of the total billings. Savings to county: over $1 million.
- Established a customer-driven coalition comprised of over 300 provider agencies.
- Established the Affordable Housing Task Force; the Homeless Coalition; the Emergency Food and Shelter (FEMA) Board; Social Services Clearing House.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES FLORIDA
ECONOMIC SERVICES PROGRAM ANALYST/SUPERVISOR- 1983 to 1985.

- Managed economic program services in a ten countywide district area. Population consisted of approximately 1.1 million; prepared a program budget nearly $50 million; prepared the economic strategic plan for the district and had programmatic responsibility for 400 staff.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Lowered the districtwide quality control economic services error rate from one of the highest in the nation (21%) to one of the lowest (3%) in less than two years.
- Received the HRS Secretary's State Merit Award.

SERVICE NETWORK MANAGER - 1976 to 1983.

- Managed eleven supervisors and 106 staff members over a three county area; administered $12 million budget; executed $1.5 million contracts; managed Emergency Migrant Programs, AFDC, food stamps, aging and adult services, developmental services, vocational rehabilitation, children, youth and families services.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Established the first (effective) service delivery programs in the most difficult rural area of the district.
- Established collaborative working relationships with migrant advocacy and Hispanic groups, and eliminated monthly customer complaints to the governor's office by 100%.
- Established variable office hours to better serve migrant clients.
- Established the most comprehensive staff diversity programs in the district.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Member, American Academy of Certified Public Manager, 2005 to present; Member, American Society for Public Administrator, 2006 to present; Member, National Association of County/City Administrators and International City Managers Association,1985 to present; Vice President of the Keys Society of Certified Public Managers, 2005 to 2008. Presently, President of the Keys Society of Certified Public Managers; Keys Defense Alliance Board Member 2004 to 2006; Member, Key West Sunrise Rotary Club 1996-present; Board Member, Key West Sunrise Rotary 2004-2005; Member of the City Chamber of Commerce 2006-07; Take Stock in Children *Mentor 2004 to 2007*; Cuban American Heritage Charter Member 2000 to present; Chairman of the City's Charter Review Committee,1998; Member, National Association of Counties Land Use Committee through 1996; Member, Douglas County Emergency Response Council Chairman through 1996; Member, Innovations Group West Operations Committee 1996; Douglas County Emergency Response Council Chairman 1993-1996; Member, Florida Association of Counties Land Use and Growth Management subcommittee 1995; Member, Florida Association of County Aging Executives 1985-1993; Steering committee member, *United Way Human Services Needs Assessment 1990-1992*; *Chairman, Lee County* Federal Emergency Management Agency 1989-1992; President, Florida State Association of County Social Services Executives (FACSSE) 1990-1992; Vice-President, FACSSE 1988-1990; Member, FACSSE 1985-1993; Chairman, Lee County Emergency Providers 1989-1991; Chairman, Southwest Florida Homeless Coalition 1989-1990; Board member, Florida Homeless Coalition 1990; Member, National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations 1990-1993; Member, National Association of County Human Services Administrators 1985-1993; Member, Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 1990-1993.

AWARDS

- Southernmost Human Services League Humanitarian Award for 2007; Lodging Association President's Award, 2003; Pride Alliance, Inc. President's Leadership Award 1999 for "...leadership and commitment to the goals in diversity and inclusiveness...;" City of Key West Mayor's "Commendation of Honorable Services" 1998; City Commission recognition for

"Dedicated and Untiring Work During and after Hurricane Georges, 1998;" Honored by the Honorable Lleana Ros-Lehtinen in the Congressional Record of the 108th congress first session for "...outstanding contribution to the Key West Community," on February 24, 2004; Miami-Dade County Office of the Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners and City of Miami Mayor and City Commissioners proclaimed February 24, 2004 as "Julio Avael Day" for his contributions to his community. Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber "Role Model of the Year" 1993; Kappa Alpha Psi Community Service Award for economic development 1993; Lee County "Humanitarian Award" 1991; National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organization Leadership Award 1991; Harvard Fellowship at John F. Kennedy School of Government 1991; Florida (HRS) Merit Award 1985; Annual Monroe County Distinguished Service Award 1973; Outstanding Young Men of America Award 1973.

PUBLICATION AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Contributing writer for a local magazine, *The Breeze*. Articles appeared monthly from 1996 to 1998.
- "Solving Multi-year Budget Problems in a Single Budget Year Cycle," Public Management Magazine, June 1993.
- "Development of an Ambassador Program," Public Management Magazine 2004.
- FEMA Emergency Management Institute NIMS certifications: IS100, 200, 300 400 and 700.
- Florida International University performance measurement program certification, 2000.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

- Florida State University Public Manager Certification Program volunteer adjunct instructor, 2007.
- Presently Chairman of the Monroe County SHAL grants evaluator and trainer.
- Panelist at the Florida City/County Managers' Association conference at Panama City, Public/Private partnerships in communities," 2006.
- Appointed to the governor's statewide Florida Meritorious Award Committee – 2004
- Take Stock in Children Mentor 2004 to present.
- Keynote address at the American Association of Port Authorities in Miami, January 31, 2000.
- Harvard University Senior Executive 20th Anniversary Reunion and Conference presenter, "Can There Be Progress without Conflict," November 1999.
- National Association of Counties presenter," Establishing effective county agencies contracting programs with the private sector" at the San Antonio, Texas 1990 National Annual Conference.
- Director and host of Point to Point, a local live, weekly television show since 1997.
- Live Radio show interviewee, Bill Becker Show," weekly since 1996.
- Vice-Chairman, Florida H.R.S. Health and Human Services Board; 4,000 employees and $200 million budget. The board provided direction in the implementation of goals relative to the 1992 HRS Act. The board has accountability and responsibility for all health and human services plans; and for providing the integration of all health and social services programs within the district.
- Florida Keys Community College adjunct instructor, Criminology, 1971.

Julio Avael
1720 Johnson St.
Key West, Fl 33040

Dear Mr. Colin Baenziger & Associates:

The position of city manager for Coral Gables has caught my interest. I believe that the city commissioners of Coral Gables are looking for a city manager with my professional background. I recently completed 11 years as city manager for the City of Key West; consequently, I have achieved the distinction of having the longest tenure in its history.

Looking back on those 11 years, it is amazing to see the progress we made. In that time, we:

- Presented balanced budgets while decreasing the city's millage to as low as 2.0 mills.
- Acquired 32.9 acres of Navy property at no cost to the city. The acquisition was valued at over $100 million. Newspapers called the acquisition of the prime water front real estate as, "the most important land acquisition in years."
- Increased cruise ship revenues by 346 percent from 1996-2003. In a 2003 survey, passenger purchasing power showed that cruise ship visitors spent $40 to $90 per passenger while visiting Key West. Seeing that the city has averaged over a million passengers a year over the past few years, that was quite a boom for the local economy.
- Procured $82 million in grants from federal and state governments from 1996-present.
- Led the negotiations that resulted in building 154 affordable housing units and 48 units for human services agencies at Poinciana Plaza Apartments. That land, also acquired from the Navy, was sold to the city for $16 million, a fraction of its $50 million estimated worth.
- Helped negotiate and plan the 96-unit affordable housing complex, Roosevelt Gardens. The investment with that project was estimated at $157,000 a unit, while the average Key West price for each of the units would have been $760,000.
- Negotiated the acquisition of the $5 million Buquebus Ferry Terminal. Since then, the terminal has received over 80,000 passengers yearly.

Established the Ambassador Academy that has graduated over 300 residents and now is administered by the academy graduates.

- Volunteered to host Point to Point, which aired over 400 live TV, call-in shows.

The list goes on and on, to include turning around the building department from it being closed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in 1996 to being a productive part today; fast-tracking a $75 million, seven-year sewer project into a two-year project without sacrificing quality or going over budget; turning around the police department, making it a nationally-recognized and accredited institution; having a nationally recognized top-rated fire department that has accomplished one of the lowest insurance rates (2 ISO class) in the state; having an award winning IT department; and, establishing the city's first mission and vision statements, and strategic and business plans.

I look forward to a personal interview.

Sincerely,

Julio Avael

CB & A Interviews

Julio Avael, Jr.

Education

Master of Public Administration, Nova University, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Bachelor of Science, Criminal Justice, Florida International University, Miami, FL
Senior Executive Program, Public Administration, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
State Certified Public Manager Diploma, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Experience

Consultant, Avael & Associates	2008 – present
City Manager, City of Key West, FL	1996 – 2007
County Manager, Douglas County, NV	1993 – 1996
Associate, Florida Innovations Group, Tampa, FL	1993 – 1993
Lee County, FL	1985 – 1993
Deputy and Administrator (two years) and Human Services Director (six years)	
Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Ft. Myers, FL	1976 – 1985
Analyst/Supervisor, Economic Services Program (two years) and Service Network Manager (seven years)	

Background

Key West, FL, has a population of 26,000, plus as many as 40,000 tourists daily during tourist season. The City has 490 employees, and Mr. Avael directly supervised 12 department heads. The total funds budget is $143 million, with a general fund budget of $38 million. The three most important issues currently facing the City of Key West are:

- Tax reform. The property tax bill passed by the State Legislature will require an additional review of the budget and cuts of approximately 10%. The City was proactive in this matter, reducing the mill rate from 5.2 at one point down to 2.0 last fiscal year.
- Sustaining the influx of tourists. Key West is solely dependent on tourist dollars to support its economy.
- Providing affordable housing in a resort area where average home prices continue to rise.

Interview Comments

Coral Gables is a beautiful community which is facing many of the same issues Mr. Avael has encountered in his career, such as hurricanes, budgetary concerns, tourism, and historic preservation. His financial skills and experience as City Manager in Key West as well as his County Manager experience in Lee County, FL, and Douglas County, NV, make him a good candidate for the Coral Gables City Manager position. He is very proud that he had the longest

tenure of any City Manager in Key West's history - eleven years. Although he recently retired from Key West, he feels he is still young and has a lot to offer. Mr. Avael was born and raised in Key West and the position in Coral Gables would give him the opportunity to use his bilingual skills (English and Spanish). He is very familiar with Dade County and has family members who currently live in Miami.

Mr. Avael describes his management style as laissez faire and democratic. He recognizes the experience and knowledge of his staff and allows them to run their departments as they see fit. He is very hands-off, but is also careful to maintain a supportive connection with his department heads. Of course, he does expects results and holds the staff accountable.

Mr. Avael's approach in the community and with the staff is far more hands-on. While in Key West, he made daily trips on his bicycle or motorcycle to visit parks and recreation facilities, the port authority, and other such areas. He also rides regularly with the police and fire services. He believes in mentoring and facilitating growth through continued education and training. Recently, two department heads who worked under his supervision become certified managers. He is a team player who is always willing to admit and correct mistakes.

Staff members would say Mr. Avael is easy going, that he trusts their judgment, and ensures that they understand the strategic plan in place. They would add that he expects accountability from his staff but also works with them. He is a coach and a mentor.

While the current Mayor of Key West might not have positive impressions of Mr. Avael, 16 other elected officials and 3 prior Mayors with whom he worked appreciated his service. They found him to be customer service oriented and very responsive. Further, his elected officials never had to check on him once he was given an assignment. He always produced results within the allotted time. The elected officials also appreciated his dedication to continuing education and the training of staff.

Mr. Avael feels his most important strength is his budgetary skill. Within the first month of his tenure in Lee County, he was told of a $40 million budgetary deficit. Within the fiscal years, he had cut the $40 million from the budget with minimal effect on staffing – only six actually had to leave employment with the County. While with Douglas County, a $3.4 million shortfall required him also to make budget cuts. Again, he successfully erased the deficit. However, this time no staff members lost their jobs.

Mr. Avael has strong interpersonal skills. He believes in empowering people. He rewards staff and encourages them to further their education. He leads by example and personally has gone on to acquire several certificates and diplomas beyond his Masters degree. He was successful in obtaining a scholarship to Harvard University at age 50.

He is a strong communicator. He wrote a monthly newsletter for 1,200 people and has hosted his own talk show on local government. He filmed more than 400 shows. He believes strongly in sharing information.

Overall, Mr. Avael is most proud of his part in the creation of the Ambassador Program in Key West. The program is a 13-week academy that teaches citizens about the various facets of local government. The program has been so successful that they have graduated 200 citizens since 2000. This program is now entirely organized by the graduates.

Mr. Avael is particularly proud of Key West's acquisition of a 32.4 acre U.S. Navy property. Before his arrival, the city had failed several times in attempts to acquire this property. He worked with the Deputy Secretary of Defense for seven years and ultimately got the property, worth $150 million, at no cost to the city. He went on to add property, purchased from the Navy at well below market value, and built affordable housing units on the land.

Mr. Avael does not look at mistakes as failures but rather as learning opportunities. Failure only comes from a mistake if a person does not learn from the experience. He believes he has not experienced any glaring failures or mistakes during his career. Both the Commission and the public have been very happy with his work.

On occasion, Mr. Avael has found it necessary to fire employees. It is always a difficult task, but he uses progressive discipline and is fair in his dealings. He assists employees, and provides them with the necessary training and opportunities to improve. When a firing is necessary, he gives the employee the option resigning. If an employee is simply a bad fit, he looks for alternative placements for the individual elsewhere in the organization.

Mr. Avael has good rapport with the media. He meets with local media frequently, and does not hesitate to voice his displeasure when news is not presented accurately or fairly. He understands and respects their deadlines and allows journalists to contact him at home when necessary. He feels he has fared very well with the media in Key West, given that the current editor has publicly declared himself a watchdog and no friend of government.

Some primary challenges Mr. Avael sees facing the next City Manager of Coral Gables are:

- The economic slowdown caused by difficulties in the global economy;
- Budgetary shortfalls as a result of new State property tax legislation;
- Gaining the trust of the Commission and staff, and
- Reaching a consensus on goals, objectives and key indicators for City progress.

In his first six months in Coral Gables, Mr. Avael would:

- Listen and learn as much as possible;
- Develop a relationship with the Commission to understand its vision and strategic plan;
- Get to know the department directors;
- Spend time in the field and talk to staff;
- Conduct roundtable discussions with each of the departments and their employees; and

- Meet with residents to obtain their input on what the City needs.

In his leisure time, Mr. Avael enjoys working out, playing dominoes, and evening walks with his dogs. He is also an avid reader.

Reason for Leaving Current Position

In 2006, Mr. Avael announced his retirement 12 months in advance so he could help hire his replacement and ensure a smooth transition. Mr. Avael served for eleven and a half years, the longest tenure in Key West's history. Previously the average tenure for a City Manager had been 18 months. Mr. Avael is proud of the body of work he produced in Key West, but he is ready for new challenges. Although he has retired from Key West, he still feels young and is ready to continue on the path of his chosen career. With his experience and background, he has a great deal more to offer.

Adjectives or Phrases Mr. Avael Uses to Describe Himself:

- Long term focus,
- Analytical,
- Ethical,
- Visionary,
- Extremely motivated,
- Responsible,
- Value driven,
- Results oriented, and
- A Coach.

Current Salary

$142,000 (2007)

Interviewer's Impressions

He is very proud of his long-term tenure in Key West. He understands and respects the roles of elected officials and the City Manager. He takes pride in the fact that when he has helped get citizens and dedicated public servants working together, they have had a very positive impact on the development of a community.

Prepared by:

Mary Greenwood
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Harry Bethel – City Commissioner, City of Key West, FL – (305) 296-4066

Mr. Bethel was on the Commission that hired Mr. Avael. Mr. Avael worked for the city for 11 years, and Mr. Bethel has known Mr. Avael his entire life.

Mr. Avael is an excellent manager, and his accomplishments speak for themselves. Some of his major strengths are his ability to communicate and to organize. In working with staff members, he keeps them motivated and encourages them to further their education and training. He develops teams and gives employees clear objectives.

In terms of weaknesses, Mr. Avael sometimes becomes frustrated with the media. After dealing with a small town newspaper for 11 years, his patience with the media has diminished, but he is always professional with them and acknowledges their requests.

Mr. Avael is wonderfully patient with the community. Residents frequently call to compliment him on his responsiveness. He makes difficult decisions and always places the best interests of the community and the organization first. Recently a vacationing child died from a gas leak in the hotel where his family was staying. Mr. Avael did not hesitate to shut down the hotel operations until the matter could be resolved. It turned out to be the fault of the hotel operator and not the city's. He is an advocate for public safety and does what is necessary to ensure the highest standards are met. He does not hesitate to make decisions and is ready to accept the blame for wrong ones.

Mr. Avael keeps elected officials well informed via phone calls, faxes, and e-mails. He follows through on specific requests from the Council members, and does so without procrastinating. He is pleasant and down to earth. He admits his mistakes and is not afraid to try new approaches.

Mr. Avael makes good hiring decisions. During his tenure, he hired an excellent City Planner. He is very good at analyzing the qualifications of candidates and fitting them to the needs of the position.

Mr. Bethel is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael and would hire him to a City Manager if given the opportunity.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Communicator,
- Organized,
- Mentor,
- Outgoing,
- Down to earth, and
- Proactive

Strengths: Communication skills, organizational skills, ability to motivate

Weaknesses: At times, loses patience with the media

Mark Rossi – City Commissioner, City of Key West, FL – (305) 296-5513

Mr. Rossi worked with Mr. Avael for approximately four years. As a citizen of Key West, Mr. Rossi also observed Mr. Avael function for six years before joining the City Commission.

Mr. Avael is very good at what he does. He is a solid leader. Among his strengths are his organizational skills and his computer proficiency. He has a great deal of experience in dealing with the public and does a tremendous job in meeting their needs. He is outgoing and courteous. He is also willing to try new things. He manages people very well and believes in team building. He knows city government.

As a communicator, Mr. Avael is good, but in Mr. Rossi's opinion, he could use some improvement with regard to elected officials.

Mr. Rossi is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael and would hire him if given the opportunity.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Efficient,
- Knowledgeable,
- Solid,
- Outgoing, and
- Organized.

Strengths: Ability to lead people, and his organizational skills

Weaknesses: Communications

Dan Kolhage – City Commissioner, City of Key West, FL – (305) 296-4006

Mr. Kolhage went to school with Mr. Avael's son and has worked with him during his 10- year tenure with the city.

Mr. Avael is attentive to the needs of the elected officials and has produced a strong body of work. His greatest strength is his ability to communicate. He has exemplarity written and verbal skills. His work is thorough and his follow up is excellent. He is also extremely dedicated to his job. He is always willing to talk to the elected officials, even when he is on vacation, or late at night. He is also very good working with the public. He is an extrovert and enjoys people.

He responds well to the demands of a difficult city. As a problem solver, if Mr. Avael does not have the answer, he knows exactly where to find it. He is proactive in addressing potential problems.

During the late stages of his tenure, the press criticized Mr. Avael because of his differences with some of the Council Members. He handled the criticism very professionally.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Proactive,
- Extrovert,
- Communicator,
- Attentive,
- Stable, and
- Committed.

Strengths: Ability to communicate, and commitment to his job

Weaknesses: None

Arturo Cobo – Resident of Key West, Miami Cuban/American Activist, Key West, FL – (305) 796-6819

Mr. Cobo has associated with Mr. Avael for 25 years. Mr. Cobo has worked with FEMA and the border patrol on behalf of many Cuban immigrants.

Mr. Cobo always found Mr. Avael to be kind, honest, and accessible. He is willing to network and explore the diversity in the community. Mr. Avael has even accompanied Mr. Cobo to Miami to further explore the Cuban culture. Mr. Avael is quick to respond, and always gives an honest, straightforward answer.

Mr. Cobo is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael. Mr. Cobo is honored to call Mr. Avael a friend.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Nice,
- Honest, and
- Accessible.

Strengths: Dedication to the community, and his accessibility

Weaknesses: None

Bill Mauldin – Chief of Police, City of Key West, FL – (305) 809-1040

Chief Mauldin first met Mr. Avael five years ago while attending the City's Ambassador Program as a citizen. Chief Mauldin went on to join the Police Department and believes that Mr. Avael is the best boss he ever had.

Mr. Avael is helpful and likes to mentor and coach employees. He displays excellent leadership skills. He allows employees to do their jobs, but is available for support and advice. He has the ability to coach staff through an issue, while still allowing them to make the decision. Mr. Avael kept Chief Mauldin well informed through regular phone calls and weekly meetings.

Perhaps Mr. Avael's greatest strength is his ability to assimilate information, dissect it, and then make a decision. In a diverse community such as Key West, Mr. Avael is excellent at adapting and making decisions.

A firm believer in customer service, Mr. Avael introduced a software program that allows citizens to register complaints online. The complaints are directed to the department heads, and they are required to respond within 24 hours. He also initiated the Ambassador Program, an academy that teaches the public about the inner workings of government. Mr. Avael is friendly and can communicate with anyone. He makes the community feel at ease, and they can discuss issues with him in a rational manner.

Mr. Avael has high standards for employees joining the organization. He made extreme efforts to ensure that the department heads he hired were the very best.

Chief Mauldin is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael.

Chief Mauldin would definitely hire Mr. Avael as a City or County Manager. It is hard to find a better administrator.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Helpful,
- Mentor,
- Coach,
- Leader,
- Adaptive,
- Innovative, and
- Outgoing.

Strengths: Ability to assimilate information, dissect it, and make decisions.

Weaknesses: None

Merritt Stierheim – Former County Manager, Dade County, FL – (305) 495-3070

Mr. Stierheim became acquainted with Mr. Avael in 1991 during Mr. Avael's tenure in Lee County. Most recently, Mr. Avael and Mr. Stierheim have been part of a team of educators at the masters level Academy for Strategic Management at Florida International University.

Mr. Avael is a believer in continuing education and has involved several of his senior staff in the Academy. Mr. Stierheim has been impressed with the quality of relationships they share. Mr. Avael is an all-around good person. He is incredibly professional. He understands and respects the Council-Manager form of government.

The City of Key West is a difficult political environment and Mr. Avael has navigated it capably for a considerable period of time.

Mr. Stierheim is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael, and believes he would make an excellent addition to any organization.

Adjectives or phrase used to describe Mr. Avael:

- People person,
- Good communicator,
- Professional,
- Knowledgeable, and
- Well qualified.

Strengths: Communication skills, and understanding and respect for the Council-Manager form of government.

Weaknesses: None

Ken Sullivan – Businessman and African-American Activist, Key West, FL -
(305) 809-1229 ext. 51229

Mr. Sullivan has known Mr. Avael since 1996. Mr. Sullivan served on several boards and is very active in the Bahama Village community.

Mr. Avael is the best City Manager that Key West has ever had, in Mr. Sullivan's opinion. His actions are genuine and heart-felt. He has consistently gone above and beyond the requests of the citizens. His greatest strength is his love of people. He is responsive to everyone, including populations that were previously forgotten and neglected. He is the most hands-on manager the City has ever had, and he attends their meetings and speaks when requested.

The community is confident in Mr. Avael's abilities and leans on him for support. After a string of devastating hurricanes, he was able to reassure the community and re-establish normalcy. In terms of innovations, Mr. Avael introduced the Community Policing Program where the community and Police Department work together. Key West has an issue with drug trafficking. With the use of the program, citizens and officers pinpointed poorly lit areas of the community and requested that lighting be introduced. This simple act decreased instances of trafficking in those areas.

Mr. Avael is even-keeled and enjoyable to be around. He is one of the most loyal men Mr. Sullivan knows, and he has the highest ethical and moral character.

Mr. Sullivan is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael personally, but alluded to potentially embarrassing behavior by a member of Mr. Avael's extended family.

Mr. Sullivan believes Mr. Avael is as good as the come and would hire him to be a City or County Manager if given the opportunity.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Loyal
- High moral character
- Genuine
- Kind
- Intelligent
- Experienced

Strengths: Love of people and the community

Weaknesses: None

Ed Scales – Former City Commissioner, City of Key West, FL – (305) 292-8950

Mr. Scales served on the Commission from 2001-2005. Prior to that, he knew Mr. Avael socially and professionally when he did legal work for the city.

Mr. Avael is a very good administrator with a great deal of municipal experience. He is amiable and friendly. He is responsive to elected officials. He keeps them informed so they can make informed decisions. As elected officials, they are always informed long before the media or public hear about issues. Mr. Avael has an appreciation and understanding of the roles of the Commission and the City Manager. He recognizes these roles and is careful to honor them.

In a difficult political environment like Key West, Mr. Avael's ten-year tenure is a testament to his abilities as well as his responsiveness to the public and elected officials.

Because Key West is a small and isolated community with a high cost of living, the number of applicants for senior management positions is very limited. Despite these limitations, Mr. Avael was successful in recruiting and hiring the highest caliber individuals. In Mr. Scales' opinion, that is a significant accomplishment.

Mr. Avael will be one of the first to admit his shortcomings in public speaking. He is not eloquent so others can sometimes explain complex issues so they are more easily understood. He tries very hard to please all the elected officials, sometimes too hard. Mr. Scales recognizes that it is impossible to please everyone, but sometimes no one was pleased because Mr. Avael tried too hard to please everyone.

The majority of tasks given Mr. Avael were completed on time. Budget constraints and personnel shortages affected some projects, and they were delayed.

As a side note, Mr. Avael is an avid percussionist and has been known to get on stage with a band and sit in as a drummer. He is a fun person to be around.

Mr. Scales is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. Avael, and would gladly work with him again.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Avael:

- Friendly,
- Communicator,
- Responsive, and
- People oriented.

Strengths: Ability to keep elected officials well informed

Weaknesses: Public speaking, and his need to please all elected officials.

Completed by:

Alayna Weiss
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for JULIO AVAEL, JR.

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Monroe County, FL	No Records Found
Douglas County, NV	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found
Nevada	States not maintain Criminal Records See County Results above

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Monroe County, FL	*Two Records Found **March 2001** – Other Civil Law Suit filed by Kosmic of Key West, Inc. against Julio Avael, et. al. **Disposition** = June 2001 – Case Dismissed **July 2001** – Other Civil Law Suite filed by Matilda Ramos against Julio Avael, et. al. **Disposition:** July 2003 – Case Dismissed
Douglas County, NV	No Records Found

*** See Candidate Response on Page 4**

Background Check Summary for JULIO AVAEL, JR.

Federal

Florida

*Three Records Found
March 1999 – Violation of Civil Rights Law Suit filed against Candidate in his capacity as City Manager of Key West, Fl along with the President of Key West Cultural Preservation Society, Inc.

Disposition: May 1999 – Order to Dismiss for Statistical Purposes filed

July 2000 – Motion to Dismiss for Failure to Process Granted

October 1998 – Civil Rights Act Law Suit field against individual in Monroe County and the City of Key West Police Department including Mr. Avael in his capacity as City Manager.

Disposition: June 1999 – Case Closed
October 1999 – Notice of Appeal
January 2000 – Notice of Appeal Dismissed

October 1998 – Civil Rights Act Law Suit field against individual in the Attorney General's Office, State Attorney's Office and the City of Key West Police Department including Mr. Avael in his capacity as City Manager.

Disposition: June 1999 – Case Closed
October 1999 – Notice of Appeal
April 2003 – Notice of Appeal Dismissed

*** See Candidate Response on Page 4**

Background Check Summary for JULIO AVAEL, JR.

Nevada	No Records Found
Motor Vehicle	
Florida	No Citations Listed
Credit	Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

Background Check Summary for JULIO AVAEL, JR.

Sent: Friday, June 29, 2007 10:37 AM
To: Kathyrn
Subject: Re: Key Biscayne Background Check Explanation Required

All of the cases are with respect to city business, filed against the city. As city manager, I was named in the suits. You can verify the information with the city attorney, Shawn Smith, at 809-3888.

I have never had any judgments against me, personally, or as the city manager.

Internet Research

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
June 15, 2007

Former manager honored to serve Key West during productive decade

Dear city of Key West residents, directors and employees:

As I turn over the reins of the city to new City Manager Jim Scholl, I want to take this opportunity to thank the city of Key West residents, directors and employees for making the last 10-plus years we've spent together so productive, prosperous and fulfilling.

We've accomplished so much since I was chosen to lead this city, and I couldn't have done it without the help of my wonderful staff and the residents of this beautiful island. All of our city employees consistently lived up to my highest expectations and have always gone the extra mile to make this city what it is today. I am proud of everything we've accomplished.

Looking back on those 10 years, it's just amazing to see the progress we've made. In that time, the city:

. Acquired 32.9 acres of Navy property at no cost to the city, a purchase that was valued at over $50 million. Newspapers called the acquisition of that prime real estate as "the most important land acquisition in years";

. Increased cruise ship revenues by 346 percent from 1996- 2003. In a 2003 survey, passenger purchasing power showed that cruise ship visitors spent $40 to $90 per passenger while visiting Key West. As the city has averaged nearly a million passengers a year over the past few years, that's quite a boon for the local economy;

. Acquired 154 affordable housing units and 48 units for human services agencies at Poinciana Apartments. That land, also acquired from the Navy, was sold to the city for $16 million, a fraction of its $50 million estimated worth;

. Negotiated and planned the 96-unit affordable housing complex Roosevelt Gardens. The investment with that project was estimated at $157,000 a unit, while the average Key West price for each of the units would have been $360,000;

. Negotiated the acquisition of the Buquebus Ferry Terminal and completed its construction. Since then, the terminal has been a huge success, seeing as many as 80,000 passengers a year;

. Established the Ambassador Academy that has graduated over 200 residents and now is administered by the academy graduates;

. Aired over 400 TV shows on Point to Point that offered our viewers factual and informative shows;

. Designed and constructed a state-of-the-art police facility and the first emergency operations center (EOC) at no cost to the city; completed construction on the new fire department;

. Prepared for hurricane seasons by developing strong budget reserves and ensuring residents were protected and well informed before, during and after the events, through the efforts of the EOC and city employees; and

. Cleaned up post hurricane and storm debris on five separate events, in record time, and qualified for up to 100 percent FEMA reimbursements.

The list goes on and on, to include turning around the Building Department from a time when it was closed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in 1996 to being a productive part of this city today; fast-tracking a seven year sewer project into a two year project without sacrificing quality or going over budget; turning around the Police Department, with its internal and external strife, making it a nationally recognized and accredited institution; having a nationally recognized top-rated Fire Department that has accomplished one of the lowest insurance rates in the state; having a nationally and locally recognized and award-winning IT department; establishing the city's first mission and vision statements, strategic and business plans, citywide surveys, and annual list of goals and objectives. Finally, during my tenure, we managed to always maintain a balanced budget and most often the property taxes were rolled back or kept at or near maintenance.

I realize these accomplishments would not have been possible without the support of our residents, my directors and staff. It was an honor for me to take the job of city manager of the city of Key West 10-plus years ago, to come back to the city in which I was born and raised, and to lead it into the next millennium. This is my city, which I will always hold near to my heart. I want to thank all of you for everything you have done and will continue to do for the city of Key West in the future.

I will stay with the city in a consulting capacity through Nov. 30. I congratulate Jim on his appointment as my successor and wish him all the best in the coming years.

My sincere thanks to all of you for a decade of memories.

Julio Avael
Former city manager for the city of Key West.

This is an excerpt from Key West: The Newspaper on June 15th, 2007. It is difficult to assess the reliability of the journal – it seems to be one of those newspapers that is published weekly and focuses on yellow journalism. Generally, while their conclusions may be questionable, their articles have some basis in fact. Hence we included the article so you would be fully informed of what is on the Internet but advise you to take its analysis with a grain or two of salt.

PAGE ONE COMMENTARY: THE RISE AND FALL OF JULIO AVAEL
A DECADE OF SLIME IN CITY GOVERNMENT
by Dennis Reeves Cooper

It was bizarre, for sure, but it was, actually, a fitting end to the tumultuous (and often slimy) decade-long tenure of **Julio Avael** as Key West City Manager. Last week, as soon as the ink was dry on Jim "Dagwood" Scholl's contract to be the new City Manager, Mayor Morgan McPherson immediately stripped **Avael** of the title, responsibilities and power of the job.

Avael protested momentarily, but it soon became painfully obvious to him that McPherson and most of the City Commissioners did not want him in that chair for one more minute! He was simply too dangerous. Who knows what he would have done with a few more weeks on the job? He had already shocked everybody by giving three of his favorite employees $10,000 raises—including Assistant City Manager John Jones, who was just arrested less than two months ago for impersonating a licensed building official, and Police Chief Bill Mauldin, who just got a big raise seven months ago.

Jones will be Acting City Manager until Scholl gets back from vacation in three weeks. **Avael** will continue to work as a "consultant" until his contract expires in November. But he has absolutely no authority, so it is unlikely that he will be able to do any more damage.

IN THE BEGINNING

It seems like only yesterday when **Julio** was, in 1996, just one of the candidates in the running to replace longtime City Manager Felix Cooper. And he was not even one of the top two choices. The two front runners were Cathy Rice, Assistant City Manager in Clearwater, and Acting City Manager Paul Cates, who had taken over after Cooper had been abruptly fired after he was quoted, in Key West The Newspaper saying, "No locals are qualified to be City Manager".

Mayor Dennis Wardlow and Commissioners Harry Bethel and Percy Curry supported Cates. Commissioners Jimmy Weekley, Sally Lewis and Carmen Turner wanted almost anybody but Cates. They were supporting Rice.

Commissioner Merili Mc-Coy was the swing vote. She reportedly did not want Cates, but she wanted a Conch, a native Key Wester. And **Avael** had grown up here and was a graduate of Key West High School. He had worked within the Monroe County government for awhile before

moving on. He had been County Administrator in Lee County, Florida, and was currently County Manager in Douglas County, Nevada.

McCoy reportedly told Wardlow, Bethel and Curry that, unless they threw their support to **Avael**, she would provide the deciding vote for Rice. They capitulated. "At least **Avael**'s a Conch."

And so it came to pass. The Commission voted 4-3 to hire **Julio Avael**.

BAGGAGE

But **Julio** did not come without baggage. On his very first day on the job, he had to call a press conference to respond to the news that his 20-yearold son had been arrested and jailed in Nevada on burglary charges.

A month earlier, we here at KWTN had reported that, back in 1993, **Avael** had been forced to resign as County Administrator in Lee County after being accused of mismanagement and having too-close ties with a developer.

According to the Ft. Myers News-Press, **Avael** had been given the choice of resigning or accepting a demotion to County Human Services Director, the job he had previously held. He accepted the demotion. The News-Press had tagged **Avael** with the nickname of "Hatchetman" because of his often-ruthless treatment of employees.

HATCHETMAN

And, indeed, almost as soon as he took over as City Manager here, rumors began to swirl that, in return for the votes of one or more members of the City Commission, **Avael** had promised to fire Police Chief Ray Peterson.

It was certainly no secret that Mayor Wardlow wanted Peterson out. Wardlow suspected that it had been Peterson who had called in the FBI to investigate corruption in City government here. As a result of that investigation, Wardlow had been indicted and tried in federal court on charges that he had accepted bribes from Attorney John Bigler. Although Wardlow was eventually acquitted, Bigler pled no contest and agreed to give up his license to practice law.

Subsequently, however, the Florida Ethics Commission found Wardlow guilty of ethics violations on the same charges. He was reprimanded and fined.

In mid-March 1997, after a months-long internal investigation, **Avael** suspended Peterson based on, at that time, "secret" charges. But when the "charges" were finally revealed, wrapped in what became to be known as the "Blue Book", it was almost embarrassing. The charges had literally been manufactured. Trumped up. Most were simply absurd. Peterson correctly termed **Avael**'s efforts to build a case against him "a nitpicking administrative atrocity".

Many citizens were outraged. Peterson was one of the most popular police chiefs in the history of the City. Hundreds of citizens attended rallies protesting Peterson's suspension.

To try to give Peterson's crucifixion some semblance of legitimacy, **Avael** told City Attorney Bob Tischenkel to hire a retired judge to come down from Miami and conduct a "hearing". As it turned out, it wasn't much of a hearing. Somebody read the charges and the judge solemnly proclaimed that, "if true", the charges were adequate for the Chief's dismissal. Then he collected his money and went home.

Of course, none of the charges in the Blue Book were ever proven true. In fact, in the end, City officials had to admit, in writing, that they were all "unfounded".

But no matter, **Avael**'s book of charges were enough to force Peterson out— although he was able to retire at the full rank of Police Chief with all back pay and benefits. But this would not be the last attack of the Hatchetman. Not by a long shot.

In early 2001, **Avael** orchestrated the firing of City Building Official Catherine Harding because he was getting pressure from some developers that she "went too much by the book". In the process, **Avael** would not only get caught making up charges (as in the Peterson fiasco), he would also get caught lying to a state investigator.

PATHOLOGICAL LIAR

But as we were all to learn as we watched **Julio** in operation year after year, making up stuff was just another day in the office for him. We were to learn that **Julio** lies so often that he may not even realize that he is doing it. The head doctors call this behavior "pathological".

In 2005, just a few weeks before the last City elections, **Julio** got caught with what the Key West Citizen called a "scandalous proposal," asking the lame duck Commission to extend his contract and give him a big raise. He was concerned that a new Commission might not give him a new multi-year contract— which is exactly what happened.

When the press exposed his devious plan, he said that it had not been his idea— Commissioners Bethel, Tom Oosterhoudt and Jose Menendez had all called him and asked him to bring in a new contract for approval. When that hit the papers, both Bethel and Oosterhoudt called him a liar. It is not clear if Menendez understood the question.

Last October, the Hatchetman struck again: he abruptly fired Code Enforcement Officer Jim Young for (gasp!) daring to cite projects owned or managed by friends or relatives of some of the City Commissioners.

But **Avael** couldn't admit that he had fired Young for actually doing his job, so he made up a couple of charges after the fact and leaked them to the members of the City Commission in an email. But all this did was to expose **Avael**, again, as a liar; and, in this case, an inept liar as well.

"Heads up," **Avael** told the Mayor and Commissioners in his email. "With respect to undercover work (by Jim Young), Mr. Klitenick has concerns that the City has established a phantom company and credit card without my knowledge and the Commission's knowledge," **Avael** wrote. "Credit charges amounting to nearly $20,000 were paid to hotels and bed and breakfast establishments via the phantom company and credit card during the investigations of the transient rentals."

Of course, what **Julio** was attempting to do with that memo was to suggest that Young had, somehow, misspent or even stolen some taxpayer money.

But we here at KWTN were able to quickly document that, when **Julio** had written that memo, he had been fully briefed on the undercover operation.

He knew that there was no phantom company and he knew that not a single penny had ever been charged to the credit card that had been used in the operation. And, perhaps most importantly, he knew that an internal audit had established that any money spent in the undercover operation had been spent properly.

Julio was simply lying to the Commission, attempting to undermine any support Young might have with the Mayor or any of the Commissioners. He even got the name of the alleged "complainer" wrong. When we asked Attorney Richard Klitenick about his name being used in **Julio**'s memo, he denied that he had ever made any such complaint. And, in fact, **Julio** had to call us and tell us that he had really meant to name Attorney Tim Koenig as the "complainer".

We don't know if Koenig really ever complained to **Avael** or not. **Avael** could have made that up, too. But if Koenig did complain, we understand. Reportedly, one of his clients got caught in the sting operation.

WHEN YOU'VE BURIED BODIES, IT'S PROBABLY NOT A GOOD IDEA TO FIRE ANYBODY WHO KNOWS WHERE THEY'RE BURIED

Of course, what **Julio** has learned in recent months is that there is a problem with firing a high-ranking Code enforcement official who knows where to look for buried bodies. The discovery process in Young's pending lawsuit against the City has already turned over all kinds of rats' nests. And both Jones and **Avael** are blaming Young for Jones' arrest and the coercion allegations that have been lodged against **Avael**. **Avael** has not been arrested, but that investigation remains ongoing.

In January 2004, **Avael** also fired Police Chief Buz Dillon. But in this case, **Avael** had to make up reasons for years not to fire Dillon. Dillon was probably the most incompetent Chief in the City's history— but he was **Avael**'s boy. But the truth is that Dillon didn't respect **Avael** much, either. And, finally, in the end, it was **Avael**, the ranking inept official, who got to fire the subordinate inept official.

Avael immediately replaced Dillon with Capt. Bill Fortune, who, back in history, had been forced to resign from the Sheriff's Office after being caught having an affair with an underage boy. He didn't bother to mention that when he applied for a job with the Key West Police Department.

When Fortune retired, **Avael** replaced him with Bill Mauldin, who has done a pretty good job as Chief. But this past April, when **Avael** finally gave up hope that the City Commission was, somehow, going to give him a new contract, he appointed Mauldin as his representative on the City manager Search Committee.

But suddenly, **Julio** threw his hat into the ring to be considered, again, for City Manager. And when it came time for Mauldin to vote on the short list of candidates, instead of rescuing himself, he ranked **Avael** as the number one candidate!

WINK, WINK, NOD, NOD

Then, when **Avael** again decided that he was going to retire, he suddenly gave Mauldin a $10,000 raise, without the traditional review by the City Attorney. Got it? Wink, wink, nod, nod.

Of course, **Avael** is not just an expert in treachery when it comes to dumping inconvenient employees. He has also been known to "arrange" jobs for friends of City Commissioners. Following the election of Danny Kolhage as City Commissioner in 2005, **Julio** ordered the hiring of Greg Veliz as a sewer line inspector. Veliz reportedly was one of Kolhage's longtime friends and one of his most enthusiastic campaign workers. We know that **Julio** ordered that Veliz be hired because that is documented in Veliz' City personnel file. But almost immediately, Veliz began to brag to co-workers that he wouldn't be a sewer line inspector for long. Danny was going to "take care" of him, he reportedly said.

And sure enough, it wasn't long before **Avael** and Kolhage pushed through the creation of a brand new job— Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation. Veliz and one other City employee put in for the job and, as amazing as it may seem, Veliz was selected.

Veliz and the other guy had similar credentials, except that the other guy was not a convicted felon. Veliz had spent several years in federal prison on drug-related charges. He won't talk about the details and whatever background check Human Resources may have conducted, it did not come up with those details. And no one on the selection committee bothered to ask. Go figure.

HELPING THE COMMISSION REGULATE THOSE GODLESS STRIP JOINTS

We published one of our favorite stories about **Julio Avael** back in 2004. After Avael had signed a letter closing down Christie Sweet's lap dance parlor on Southard Street, Sweet showed up at our offices with another young woman in tow. "Mr. **Avael** seemed very anxious to close us down," Sweet told us, "but I happened to know that he likes lap dancers and lap dancing."

And she introduced us to the other woman, who called herself "Brandy".

Brandy said that when she worked at the Red Garter, a local strip club, **Julio** would often come in and pay her money for private dances in the back room. She said that **Julio** had also been one of her regulars when she had worked at another club. Subsequently, Sweet sued the City and won. She received a judgement for $40,000 and was allowed to reopen.

NOTE: Before publishing this story, which appeared on March 12, 2004, under the headline "the City Manager and the Lap Dancer", we sent two faxed requests for comment to **Julio**'s office, telling him what Brandy was telling us. He did not respond to either fax.

But we will point out here again what we pointed out then: By publishing Brandy's revelations, we were not accusing **Julio Avael** of committing any crime. Lap dancing is perfectly legal. And it is not against the law for a man (or a woman) to pay to fondle a lap dancer's breast's in the back room. If **Julio** does that or did that, it is his own business. He didn't have to justify it then and he doesn't have to justify it now.

But we suggested to him at the time that, if he felt compelled to try to explain his relationship with Brandy, we recommended this cover story: "I was just doing research to help the City Commission regulate those Godless strip joints!"

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
June 8, 2007

Avael wants to stay on television
Author: *Ryan McCarthy rmccarthy@keynoter.com*

Julio Avael is no longer Key West's city manager, but that won't slow down his involvement in the community - especially through the television screen, he said.

Avael wants to continue his television show "Point to Point," which airs on Comcast Cable Channel 19 at 8 p.m. Wednesdays. "I made arrangements with Comcast to continue the show," **Avael** said. "I have sponsors and they've been continuing the show for five years now."

But Key West Mayor Morgan McPherson doesn't like the idea of seeing **Avael**'s face on television anymore. "Basically, it's [**Avael**] trying to throw a monkey wrench in one more thing," he said.

McPherson added that he thinks control of the show should go to new City Manager Jim Scholl. Scholl could not be reached by press time. "I don't think that a consultant running the show is in the best interest in Key West," McPherson said.

"Actually, it's my show," **Avael** said. "I am the one who asked for it and got sponsorship." **Avael** said he has hosted more than 400 shows and has many changes in mind he wants to implement. He wants to have more city and county officials as guests, along with more upbeat, political discussion.

According to Comcast Sales Manager Kathy Koury, **Avael** taped a show last Friday and has scheduled a couple more for the near future. "We have spoken but we haven't really come to any agreement," she said. "Nothing has been finalized."

Channel 19 airs about 17 shows a week. The locally generated shows include Cal Sutphin's "Reelin' in the Keys," "Conch Report" with Rick Lopez and "On Tap."

Local news airs Monday through Friday at 6, 9 and 11 p.m.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
May 26, 2007

City leaders question 11th-hour raises
Author: *TIMOTHY O'HARA AND TRACI RORK Citizen Staff*

Weeks before he leaves office, and at a time when Key West faces an uncertain financial future, the city manager gave three top officials $10,000 raises to their annual salaries.

Julio Avael, who retires in August, renewed Police Chief Bill Mauldin's contract a year before it expires, and without the customary review by the city attorney's office. In addition to Mauldin's second salary increase in seven months, the contract includes more time off and an increased clothing allowance.

Avael also gave raises to Assistant City Manager John Jones, who last month was arrested on charges that he signed building permits without having the proper state licenses to do so, and City Transportation Director Myra Wittenberg. She was promoted to a department head position. The City Commission's reaction was mixed. Some commissioners supported **Avael**'s decision, others questioned the timing and fact that neither they nor the city attorney were notified of the police chief's contract renegotiation.

City Manager-select Jim Scholl called the timing "inappropriate," given the fact that the city may have to cut its budget if the state Legislature decides to cut property taxes to 2001 levels during a special session next month. The mayor agreed.

"Overall, all employees deserve raises, but it's not financially prudent for us to extend the budget that may be cut dramatically," Mayor Morgan McPherson said. "I think it's a lack of discretion to single out an individual, instead of looking at the whole."

Commissioner Bill Verge also called **Avael**'s action "inappropriate." "He should have passed on evaluations to the new guy and let him make the decisions on raises and contracts after doing annual reviews," Verge said. "He is basically saddling the new guy with a contract that he had no part in."

Rossi called the police chief's contract "invalid" because it was not reviewed by the city attorney or the commission. City Attorney Shawn Smith said he now is reviewing the contract to determine whether it is legal.

Commissioners Dan Kolhage and Harry Bethel supported Mauldin's 10 percent raise. "The chief is doing a hell of a job," Kolhage said. "Think what we would have to pay to hire a police chief from the outside. ... We are setting a new precedent." Bethel, known as the commission's financial watchdog, added: "I have no problem with the 10 percent raise; he's been the best

police chief we have had in a long time." Under the guidelines of the city charter, **Avael** has the right to approve raises for Jones and Wittenberg, they said.

Commissioner Clayton Lopez supported the police chief's new salary, but questioned the timing of the new contract and raises. "This was not expected," he said. "We are in such an unstable economic position that it is scary."

Mauldin's $117,868 salary, which now rivals Monroe County Sheriff Rick Roth's $118,000 salary, still is not enough compensation for the job he performs, **Avael** said. "When I took over the Police Department 11 years ago, it was under a grand jury investigation and they couldn't believe how anything could get done; it was dysfunctional and the morale was low, and Mauldin turned that all around," **Avael** said Friday. "I told him to take the lead with the transition team and he did a great job. His salary compared to other chiefs is low; he needs a competitive increase and should be rewarded."

Mauldin received an 8 percent salary increase in October, which raised his salary from $99,216 to $107,153. His new contract, granted Monday, bumped his salary to $117,868, plus "compensation for additional hours worked," over 40 hours, the contract states.

Mauldin's vacation days will go from 20 to 30 days, and his sick leave cap will go from 90 to 120 days. If the city fires Mauldin, his severance pay now would be for six months, versus three.

Mauldin said his contract renewal and pay raise reflect the improvements he has made, and his many years of experience. "I work 24-7 and many hours of overtime. I've had 30-plus years in law enforcement and my [previous] salary is not comparable with other chiefs with my responsibilities," Mauldin said. "I've heard nothing but compliments from the commissioners and the mayor for the job that I've done.

"As for **Avael** choosing now, he knew my performance and what I've done and wanted to ensure that it stayed in place. That's fair; he's the outgoing city manager and has the right to make that decision. I took it as a compliment."

Mauldin emphasized **Avael**'s actions were not repayment for a political favor. Mauldin was a member of the search committee for a new city manager when **Avael**, whose contract the City Commission declined to renew, unexpectedly submitted his name to reapply. Mauldin ranked **Avael** as the No. 1 candidate.

Avael eventually withdrew his name after the mayor and commissioners said they did not want him as a candidate.

"If you were to take away the name, [his qualifications] would have been rated highly," Mauldin said. "I have firsthand knowledge of his skills and if you look at the criteria, he fits it all. There should be no question of integrity; he was definitely qualified."

Avael said Jones' raise was justified because he filled in as city manager when he was on sick leave, recuperating from knee surgery. Jones also took over the Code Compliance department in March, when **Avael** moved the director to engineering. His raise is retroactive to that month.

The salary increase comes less than a month after prosecutors formally charged Jones with two counts of impersonating a state-licensed official, allegedly for signing two temporary certificates of occupancy. One was for the Rum Barrel restaurant's upstairs bar, so its grand opening could be held on schedule in February 2005. The other was for a Department of Children and Families trailer on Flagler Avenue, after the state agency's office was flooded in Hurricane Wilma.

Jones is not a state-licensed building inspector and does not have the authority to issue certificates of occupancy. **Avael** justified giving Jones a raise, and long has maintained the state investigation is politically motivated.

"John Jones was responsible for every major project in Key West," **Avael** said. "He fixed the problem at Garrison Bight within several months, creating Houseboat Row, he helped the situation with homeless and built the homeless shelter, and recently he took over code enforcement and straightened that out within six months."

Kolhage called Jones "one of the hardest workers in the city" and cautioned people against rushing to judgment before Jones has had a chance to defend himself in court.

As far as Wittenberg's increase is concerned, **Avael** recently has been stressing the need for the city to increase all department heads' salaries to at least $80,000.tohara@keysnews.com

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
May 4, 2007

Avael exit deal passes
Author: *Kyle Teal kteal@keynoter.com*

The City Commission on Tuesday passed a resolution to end **Julio Avael**'s term as city manager early, on Aug. 15, but keep him working as a consultant through November to smoothen the adjustment period for whoever's chosen as his replacement. "I'm here to serve the City Commission," **Avael** said, quietly.

The original terms of **Avael**'s contract would've kept him on through the end of November, but with an impending hurricane season, along with a slew of other pressing issues Key West will inevitably deal with, the resolution will ensure a smooth swap of responsibilities, as **Avael** can extend his knowledge and expertise to the incoming city manager, commissioners agreed.

Avael is Key West's longest serving city manager, a fact that Commissioner Harry Bethel emphasized, adding **Avael** deserves extra leave time. "Here's a man who's been here 11 years," he said. "He has earned it."

Avael will collect all of his unused annual and sick leave that will continue to accrue until Nov. 30.

Mayor Morgan McPherson has pursued a myriad of motives to fire **Avael** for months, to no avail. The resolution for **Avael**'s early departure was a "compromise" negotiated by Commissioner Mark Rossi.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
April 29, 2007

Accountability buck stops at Avael's desk
Editorial

The image of Assistant City Manager John Jones walking into jail last week to be fingerprinted and processed on charges of misrepresenting himself as a licensed building inspector was disturbing, to say the least.

Jones has been a hardworking city employee taking on any project City Manager **Julio Avael** threw his way, from rousting homeless people from their camps in the mangroves to rounding up chickens and offering to drive them to the mainland himself.

He's been more of a doer than the usual bureaucrat strictly adhering to city policy. But in this case, that might have gotten him in trouble.

State investigators cite two instances in which Jones signed off on certificates of occupancy when a building inspector should have done so. Jones is an engineer, but not a state-certified inspector.

But with the Rum Barrel rushing to be ready in time for its grand opening, and the Department of Children and Families needing a place to help its public assistance clients after losing offices to Hurricane Wilma, Jones perhaps moved too quickly to help.

Jones and **Avael** both have said the certificates of occupancy were signed without **Avael**'s involvement.

But the fact is, Jones works for **Avael**, and all this happened under his watch. It was his job to know what was happening.

Jones very well may have broken the rules, but repercussions should go all the way up the chain, just as the tone **Avael** has set for city government goes down the chain. That tone seems to be that it's more important to accommodate businesses than follow the law.

We all may soon find out if rules were bent for other businesses as the State Attorney's Office investigates all certificates of occupancy signed by Jones or other nonlicensed building inspectors for the past two years.

Avael has habitually sent Jones to do the tough - and often controversial - jobs, and Jones has readily complied. But that does not absolve **Avael** of any blame.

Avael has spent 11 years as city manager of his hometown, one year longer than he should have, thanks to an ill-advised City Commission extending his contract by one year.

Now the search is on to find his replacement by June, and **Avael** has agreed to help with the transition. His contract expires Nov. 30.

On Tuesday, city commissioners will consider ending **Avael**'s employment with the city on Aug. 15, but will still pay him through the end of November in case he's needed during hurricane season.

That technically gives Key West about six more weeks with **Avael** in charge. It won't be pleasant, but we're optimistic the city can survive this acerbic administrative divorce.
- The Citizen

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
April 25, 2007

Avael now on manager list
NAS spokesman Brooks also is interested
Author: *Kyle Teal kteal@keynoter.com*

Tonight at 6 p.m. at the next meeting of the Key West city manager search committee, member Scott Fraser is expected to object to City Manager **Julio Avael** adding his name to the list of applicants for his own job.

Avael was one of four people who threw their hats in the ring Friday, the panel's deadline to apply.

Another ear-perking contender: Naval Air Station Key West spokesman Jim Brooks.

Avael is set to retire in November. But Mayor Morgan McPherson wants to fire him sooner, citing Friday's arrest of Assistant City Manager John Jones on two misdemeanor counts of signing certificates of occupancy without a state license.

Friday's addition of four new names to the manager candidate list brought the total number of applicants to 136. Of that, the top 25 applicants are expected to be narrowed to 15 at tonight's meeting.

City Engineer Roland Flowers was another last-minute applicant, though he scored a combined 6 points based on minimal criteria, missing the amount of points to qualify by a nose. That does not count him out completely, however, as any committee member can add one applicant to the final list from those who didn't make the initial cut.

Commenting as a committee member and not his usual role of media spokesman for the committee, Fraser said his objection to **Avael**'s application stems from a desire to rid the meetings of potential "politicizing."

Avael appointed two committee members: Toni Gage of the Finance Department and Key West Police Chief Bill Mauldin.

Fraser said **Avael**'s candidacy could place those members "between a rock and a hard place."

With the exception of **Avael**, Fraser said the other new applicants, including Brooks, were considered and reviewed closely by the committee.

"I think I have something to offer," Brooks said. He added that other applicants he knows would also make great city managers. "We've spent our entire careers in public service."

Brooks scored 7 points out of the possible 10 for meeting the committee's minimum criteria, which is:

Ten years senior management in city, county, state or federal governmental experience, with three years consistent employment and proven leadership with a medium or large organization. Management experience in a resort or tourism area.

Experience with emergency preparedness and/or disaster management.

Bachelor's degree, master's preferred.

In-depth involvement in civic organizations.

Fraser denied Brooks the point for civic organizations - a point Brooks believed was well deserved, as he is a member of the Rotary and ex-member of the Key West Ambassadors.

"It's kind of like being back in college taking exams and not getting credit for something you got right," Brooks said, adding, "They [the committee] have a challenge and I have a lot of respect for them."

The top 25 candidates whittled from the 136 overall applicants are **Avael**, Brooks, David Anderson, Lester Baird, Keith Bergman, Gretchen Black, Matthew Brock, Hector Chavez, Thomas Christie, Felix Cooper (a former Key West city manager), Larry Deetjen, Gary Edwards, Richard Finn, Edward Gomeau, Jeffrey Hathaway, Gabriel Khalife, Gus Lopez, Michael Mahaney, James Malloy, Thomas Mattis, Kent Myers, David Niemeyer, Jim Scholl, Thomas Thomas and Paul Van Haute.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
March 21, 2007

Avael keeps job, for now
Manager had been facing dismissal resolution
Author: *KYLE TEAL kteal@keynoter.com*

Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** limped into Old City Hall with the assistance of a walker Tuesday, and despite a resolution from Mayor Morgan McPherson to terminate his employment and find an interim manager, **Avael** left the meeting remaining in his job -- at least for now.

Avael, who's run the city for almost 11 years, is slated for retirement at the end of November. Two weeks ago, the City Commission formed a search committee, chaired by McPherson, to find a new city manager. They've since received more than 100 applications.

McPherson decided to withdraw Tuesday's resolution due to the fact every commissioner was not available to discuss the matter. Commissioner Bill Verge was absent, visiting his ailing brother in the hospital.

Old City Hall was abnormally packed with curious and supportive residents. Some, like Alan King, were ready to speak in favor of **Avael** if necessary. "He's answered to everyone in town who's called upon him," King said. "He's done his job and he deserves whatever he needs."

Avael has been recovering from knee surgery but said he is still making calls and plans to be back at work within a couple of weeks.

He said he was pleased to see supporters. "It was very nice to see so many people," **Avael** said. "There were a lot of very well-known folks in the community... It's just wonderful to see that."

His wife, Raiette **Avael**, said reports claiming her husband may have improperly completed paperwork regarding her husband's leave time are false. During an interview with the Keynoter, she revealed documents signed by McPherson that allowed **Avael** up to April 21 of sick leave.

Avael said he decided to have the knee surgery this month because McPherson wanted him to train the incoming city manager for hurricane season in June. **Avael** wanted to be healthy and ready for the task.

But McPherson said the problem began before **Avael** needed the surgery. "The issue is his leadership," McPherson said. "I think that he is moving on to the next item in his life. I want to help him move on and, at the same time, not forget that the city's and community's are first. I think that they need to be attended to."

McPherson gave **Avael** a less-than-glowing report during his last evaluation, an act that fueled the fire of tension already existing between the officials.

Commissioner Clayton Lopez said that **Avael**'s sick leave is irrelevant to the topic at hand, and that the proposed termination is more a wise business move -- a move that should be discussed only with **Avael** healthy and present. "I have a problem with the perception -- him being in the hospital and this [resolution] taking place," he said. "If he were here, so we could talk about it, work it out -- there would be no problem."

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
March 20, 2007

Mayor wants city manger's leave audited
Author: *TIMOTHY O'HARA Citizen Staff*

KEY WEST - Mayor Morgan McPherson has asked for an audit of the city manager's sick leave and vacation time, apparently laying the groundwork for **Julio Avael**'s ouster.

McPherson said last week he intended to ask the Key West City Commission to terminate **Avael**'s contract nine months early. That request is expected to surface at tonight's commission meeting.

Termination of **Avael**'s contract could cost the city as much as $192,000 in earned sick and vacation time, city records show. **Avael** has accrued 120 sick days and 45 days of annual leave, the records reflect.

A clause in **Avael**'s contract caps his annual leave at 30 days, but it sets no cap on his sick leave. City employees, including **Avael**, can roll over unused vacation time into sick leave, human resources guidelines state. But those guidelines - and all three contracts with city workers' unions - state that payout for sick days is capped at 90 days. This would mean the $192,000 figure would drop to $164,000, according to a memo issued by the city's Finance Department on Monday.

Until January, **Avael** was allowed to approve his own leave and sick time. Since then, the mayor's approval has been required, McPherson said.

McPherson has asked the city's auditor, who works directly for the City Commission, to audit all of **Avael**'s sick and vacation time to make sure the records are accurate.

The resolution McPherson plans to bring before the City Commission tonight would terminate **Avael**'s contract without cause. Last year, the commission extended **Avael**'s contract for an additional year, keeping **Avael** in his position until the end of November. The city manager now is on four weeks leave after having knee surgery.

McPherson argues that **Avael** failed to complete proper paperwork and never asked for the leave, but told the commission at a Feb. 6 meeting that he needed the time off. He followed the request the next day with an e-mail alerting commissioners to the time off. McPherson also charges that **Avael** is "not effectively managing" the city.

The mayor said he is not requesting a person from the outside be brought in to run the city until a new city manager is found. Rather, he wants a management team, set up by **Avael**, to manage the city until a new city manager is selected.

Avael either will be at home when he is supposed to be working, or he will be at home with money from the severance pay, McPherson said. "Either way he is going to get his money," he said. "This way we are saving the taxpayers three months worth of salary."

The city manager's contract calls for **Avael** to receive six months of pay if he is fired without cause.

Avael, who earns $132,000 a year, said this is the third time the mayor has audited his leave time, and he accused the mayor of trying to discredit him.

Avael said the mayor and commissioners never objected to his request for time off for knee surgery until McPherson asked that the contract be terminated. He said he scheduled the surgery for spring because the mayor wanted him back before hurricane season, and to help train a new city manager.

Avael established a management team with Assistant City Manager John Jones, Police Chief Bill Mauldin, Parks and Recreation Director Greg Veliz and Information Technology Director Patti McLauchlin. The team is responsible for four separate divisions of the city until he returns, **Avael** said, adding that he stays in constant contact with the management team via the telephone and e-mail as he recuperates at home.

The city manager said he learned from two other city employees that the mayor wanted to terminate his contract. The mayor never contacted him about it, **Avael** said. "I was in shock," **Avael** said Monday. "I had no idea. He said he wanted a smooth transition and that's what I would do. ... They asked me to live up to my end of the bargain and I expect them to live up to theirs." tohara@keysnews.com

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
February 28, 2007

City official earns title

City Manager **Julio Avael** has earned the title of "Credentialed City Manager" from the International City Manager's Association, according to a press release from the city.

Avael said he is one of about 85 city and county managers - out of 471 statewide - who have earned the status from the ICMA.

An ICMA credentialed city manager is defined as one who has attained postgraduate education, has proven knowledge in the management of cities and counties and who has extensive on-the-job experience, its Web site says.

The credentialing requirements cover a series of assessments based on applied knowledge and performance, **Avael** said.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
January 1, 2007

'07 to bring change in city leadership
Author: *TIMOTHY O'HARA Citizen Staff*

KEY WEST - The city has begun its search for a new city manager.

At the December City Commission meeting, commissioners told city staff to open the search process for a new city manager during the first week of January. The city will advertise the position in various trade publications. The City Commission will then form a search committee.

"To do it right, it is going to take four or five months," said City Commissioner Harry Bethel.

Mayor Morgan McPherson wants a new city manager in place by the time hurricane season cranks up this fall. McPherson also wants current City Manger **Julio Avael** to work with the new person for several months.

Avael's contract was to expire last month, but the commission granted him a one-year extension. Bethel said that **Avael**, who has been city manager for 10 years, is welcome to re-apply to be the city's top executive. But he and other commissioners said it is time for the city to start looking at other people for the job. **Avael** has not said whether he would re-apply.

It was a difficult year for the city manager: The city planning director left after a disagreement with **Avael**; the city's Code Enforcement Department came under scrutiny after **Avael** fired Officer Jim Young and moved Director Joe April to the Engineering Department, amidst an in-depth investigation into the Galleon time-share condominium complex. **Avael** named Assistant City Manager John Jones acting

Code Enforcement director. The state office of Business and Professional Regulation also is investigating whether **Avael** and Jones violated state law by granting a temporary certificate of occupancy to the Rum Barrel restaurant on Front Street after April refused to do so.

Since the changes at the Code Enforcement department, Commissioner Mark Rossi criticized **Avael**, saying nothing was being done by to enforce code violations.

In addition, the relationship between Bethel and **Avael** has been strained since last year, when **Avael** wanted his contract renewed early. The two became embroiled in a shouting match at a City Commission meeting, with **Avael** insisting Bethel asked him to renew his contract early. Bethel denied it, then negotiated the one-year extension. tohara@keysnews.com

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
October 17, 2006

Code officer fired
BY TIMOTHY O'HARA, Citizen Staff

KEY WEST -- City Manager **Julio Avael** fired code enforcement officer Jim Young Friday, 10 days after two city commissioners complained publicly about the department being too heavy-handed and not treating residents courteously.

Avael said he offered Young 30 days severance pay if he signs an agreement by today prohibiting him from disparaging the city, and vice versa.

Young has hired an attorney.

Avael on Monday said the code enforcement department will be reorganized, but would not comment on the fate of the employees. **Avael** said he was limited in what he could say about the situation until Young signs the agreement.

Commissioners Harry Bethel and Dan Kolhage told fellow commissioners at an Oct. 3 City Commission meeting that they had received complaints about code enforcement officers. Bethel, whose son had a stop-work order placed on his home last year, likened the officers to the Gestapo.

Bethel on Monday said he was not aware that Young had been fired. Kolhage said he was aware. Neither commissioner asked the city manager to fire Young, they said. "I didn't request this, but I support it," Kolhage said. "They had been spoken to about the heavy-handed attitude of the department." Kolhage said Young became overly aggressive in his investigation of a man who applies henna tattoos, prompting the man to threaten to sue the city.

City Commissioner Bill Verge and Mayor Morgan McPherson said they want Young's firing investigated. Verge said he is concerned about how the firing will affect other city employees and their morale. "This sends the message to all city employees to just sit back and collect your check," said Verge, who has received several e-mails supporting Young. "They should be totally free of political pressures and just do their job the best way they know how."

McPherson said he and **Avael** discussed reorganizing the department -- including moving Young, a former Broward County sheriff's deputy, to the Key West Police Department -- but they never discussed firing him. "I was totally surprised," the mayor said. "I never received complaints about him."

Two years ago, residents and a city committee on tourism, along with then-Mayor Jimmy Weekley, urged the code enforcement department to resolve more than $1 million in uncollected

fines and crack down on Duval Street businesses that violated city code. Young and other officers brought hundreds of businesses and homes into compliance by settling with residents who had outstanding violations.

Officers contend they only are trying to get businesses and homeowners to comply with the rules. During fiscal years 2004-05 and 2005-06, code enforcement officers were assigned to 2,735 cases. Of those, 2,420 have been closed, with $253,138 in fines collected. Young said only 197 had to be resolved by Special Magistrate Jefferson Overby.

Young has hired Morgan & Hendrick law firm to represent him, and attorneys advised him not to comment to The Citizen, he said.

"Jim Young was fired because he was good at his job and he was honest," Hugh Morgan said.

Peters Ginsberg, who had a code enforcement complaint dismissed, called Young "helpful, supportive, friendly and eager to resolve the conflict," according to a letter he wrote to the city. "It's gratifying, as a resident of Key West, to know that such people work in my city's government."

Young also led successful investigations into Blue Heaven restaurant for having too many seats, and a real estate company that illegally rented homes to tourists for several years. Young also was the lead officer in the city's case against the Galleon time-share condominium complex. Galleon attorney Michael Halpern, who recently volunteered his legal services to the city in a lawsuit against Truman Annex, wrote letters to the City Commission asking that Code Enforcement Director Joe April be removed.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
May 12, 2006

Avael's final deal ready
Longest-serving Keys city manager up for contract
Author: *Christine Braden cbraden@keynoter.com*

Following months of speculation and assumptions about the job security of Key West City Manager **Julio Avael**, the Key West City Commission is expected to approve a renegotiated final employment contract with **Avael** Tuesday. "I'm feeling wonderful about the contract," said **Avael**, who received a lot of flack for bringing his contract to commissioners last year with a rumored request for a salary increase. "I'll work as long as the commission wants me to work."

The new contract, negotiated by Commissioner Harry Bethel, is similar to **Avael**'s current deal, with the addition of some added control by the commission. The salary remains fixed at its current $132,265 per year, plus the cost-of-living raise that all city employees receive every year. "It's basically just a rollover of the existing contract," Bethel said.

He said there are only minimal differences between the two contracts.

The first change is the deletion of a six-month automatic renewal clause. Commissioners didn't want such a clause because it would require the new deal to be renegotiated six months prior to its end date.

The commission also cleaned up its evaluation prerequisite within the contract.

"Annually, the City Commission and city manager shall define such goals and performance objectives that they determine necessary for the proper operation of the City Manager's Office," the new contract says.

Upon adoption of the resolution to extend the contract, the commission would determine how best to implement the evaluation process.

Additionally, the contract would allow **Avael** up to $750 annually for a medical physical examination, which is not unusual within many businesses. "I had no problem with it," Bethel said.

The new contract would begin upon approval of the commission and continue until Nov. 30, 2007, per the request of **Avael**, who has hinted he wants to coincide his retirement with that of his wife, Rayette.

"I plan on recommending that we start the search [for a new city manager] around the start of next year," said Bethel, who would like to see the city ahead of the game on hiring a replacement for **Avael**.

Avael's final contract would also require him to participate in the hiring of a new manager when he leaves.

For now, everyone seems pleased a solution has been reached.

"I was born and raised in Key West, I love this town.... I've got what it takes to run this city or any city and I'm happy about [the new contract]," **Avael** said.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
April 26, 2006

Let's hope Avael learns from Symroski debacle

This space has already been used to express our disappointment with Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** for taking action that led to former City Planner Ty Symroski's departure.

Avael, for those who missed it, published an advertisement for Symroski's job in March on a trade Web site for planners. Problem was, Symroski had no plans to leave his post and did not know about the job listing until he was contacted by a reporter from The Citizen. Within two weeks, Symroski had accepted a job as the county's growth management director and a $30,000 a year raise.

The city's Planning Department has been severely understaffed for a year. Turnover, due to the high cost of living in Key West, has hit the Planning Department as hard or harder than other employment sectors. So why drive away a planning director with undergraduate and master's degrees in planning and years of experience in the Keys, including a stint with the state Department of Community Affairs, which oversees development in Monroe County

As a final slap in the face to Symroski, **Avael** has hired a person with no formal planning education and will pay her $15,000 a year more than Symroski's $70,000 annual salary. The new planning director, Gail Kenson, has been Marathon's planning director since 2002. We don't doubt that she will be a capable planning director. The fact that she has had connections with the Keys since moving to Marathon with her parents while in high school helps, because she will be familiar with development and political challenges that will come with the job.

We wish her well. And we hope that the City Commission will watch **Avael** closely to make sure there isn't another debacle like the one that sent Symroski to the county post.

Planners are in high demand, and with Key West's skyrocketing cost of living, it's already difficult to recruit and retain professional planners. What the city's Planning Department needs now is stability so that new planners can get their feet on the ground. As they learn to navigate the complicated building regulations, projects are piling up. They will need time to get used to working together as a team and understanding the management style of their new boss.

Meanwhile, Symroski, a gentlemen to the end, has promised to work closely with the city of Key West. Kenson should be encouraged to consider Symroski a valuable resource with extensive knowledge about projects in Key West.

Avael got into some trouble with the City Commission for his handling of Symroski's job. He should take a lesson from that experience and vow to establish the best lines of communication as possible to allow Kenson to succeed.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
April 21, 2006

Bethel to lead Avael talks
Negotiations are underway for new deal
Author: *Christine Braden cbraden@keynoter.com*

Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** can breath a little easier now that the City Commission has agreed to move forward on renegotiating a one-year contract, but he will face Commissioner Harry Bethel when it comes to working out the terms.

While there had been some speculation about whether **Avael** would have his contract renewed - especially in light of the fact Bethel had requested a resolution to authorize a search for a new city manager - commissioners decided 6-1 to enter into negotiations with **Avael** at Tuesday's commission meeting. Mayor Morgan McPherson dissented after saying he believes a change is needed.

Bethel will lead the contract talks with **Avael**, who earns $132,265 annually.

Thursday afternoon, **Avael**, who wants to retire around the same time as his wife in December 2007, said, "I've spoken with Commissioner Bethel twice since the [commission] meeting."

"So far, it's been very amicable. We're moving forward," he said.

Some say it's ironic Bethel was put in charge of carrying out the desires of the commission regarding **Avael**'s new contract since he led the charge to post an advertisement for the same position.

"I feel very strongly that the time is now to look and see what's out there," he said. "I encourage **[Avael]** to put his application in."

Prior to the vote to renew **Avael**'s contract, several members of the commission were hesitant about certain items it contains, including a six-month automatic renewal clause.

"I would like to see the automatic renewal option in this contract taken out," said Commissioner Mark Rossi, who supported keeping **Avael**.

Other concerns arose from the fact that the current City Commission has no past evaluations of **Avael** to review. He's been city manager 10 years.

"I would also like to see each commissioner evaluate the city manager. It is not the city manager's fault that he was not evaluated," Rossi said.

"There are a lot of changes going on throughout the city and I would hate to see us make some knee-jerk reaction without taking everything into consideration," Commissioner Dan Kolhage said.

Commissioners want to make sure the contract with **Avael** benefits the city but still allows him to continue his management and does not turn him into a lame duck.

Commissioner Bill Verge even suggested adding a notation into the contract that would require **Avael** to give several months notice of his departure should he decide to leave before the end of 2007.

Additionally, Kolhage recommended adding a clause that requests **Avael**'s help in searching for a new city manager when he does leave.

Asked how he felt about these stipulations, **Avael** said, "That's fine with me." I certainly will follow the commission's directions.... I work for the commission," he said.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
April 19, 2006

City manager contract extended one year
BY TIMOTHY O'HARA, Citizen Staff

KEY WEST -- The City Commission agreed to extend City Manager **Julio Avael**'s contract by one year, but did not establish a salary and benefit package.

Avael's contract expires in December. According to the agreement, the commission had until June to begin contract negotiations or advertise the position. If the board hadn't done either by then, **Avael**'s contract automatically would have been extended by a year.

The commission voted 6-1, with Mayor Morgan McPherson dissenting, to begin negotiations on a new one-year contract. The commission did not spell out how much the city manager will be paid or how many vacation and sick days he will be given. Within the last six months, **Avael** was given a cost of living adjustment that bumped up his annual salary from $124,000 to $132,000.

"It's not a political decision," McPherson said. "We need to plan for the future. We need to work toward transition. We need some new leadership."

Before the meeting, Commissioner Harry Bethel had called for **Avael**'s removal. Bethel also wanted new leadership. However, Bethel agreed to be the main negotiator for the new contract. "I assure you that it will be a fair negotiation," Bethel told **Avael** at the meeting.

Karen Thurman, Ken Sullivan, Pat Croce and other prominent business people and local residents wrote letters in support of **Avael**. Sullivan also spoke at the meeting and told the commission that **Avael** was the only city manager to regularly attend community policing meetings in Bahama Village. "Let it roll over and wait a year," Sullivan said.

Avael remained quiet at the meeting until Commissioner Bill Verge asked for his comments.

"We have a plan. We have a foundation," **Avael** said of his administration. "I work for the commission. I will follow the direction of the commission."

Avael has been city manager since 1996. He grew up in the Keys, but moved away for several years and worked for other municipalities. Before coming back to Key West, he worked as the Douglas County Manager in Nevada for three years. He also worked as the county manager in Lee County, Fla.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
March 31, 2006

County fills growth slot
Author: *Alyson Matley amatley@keynoter.com*

Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** says the loss of the city's head planner is a matter of money, pure and simple. "He was making $70,000 here," **Avael** said. "He took a job at $112,000 with a car and a good benefit package. He'll be making almost what I make."

City officials announced Thursday that Planning Director Ty Symroski is leaving his position and taking a job as growth management director for Monroe County. That position, vacant since February, had been staffed by Tim McGarry, who took a similar job in Very Beach.

Avael caused a rift by advertising for a planning chief for the city, a position that seemed, by its description, to be over Symroski. But he said he was merely trying to attract the best candidates with that description.

Several city commissioners criticized the way **Avael** handled the matter.

Symroski is no stranger to all of the Keys.

Before his seven-and-a-half-year stint with Key West, he managed the Marathon office of the Florida Department of Community Affairs. Prior to that, he spent 10 years working in the Monroe County Planning Department. "I'm on a learning curve," he said of jumping back into county planning, "but given my experience with the county, I'm pretty far along that curve."

Symroski earned a reputation as an environmentally concerned public employee during his time with DCA. He says his roots are green and hopes to keep it that way. Symroski says one of his first goals is to fill all of the vacancies in the county Planning Department. Symroski will remain with the city through April 14.

Avael said no decision has been made on who will replace him, but said he has two strong candidates. "The next step," **Avael** said, "is to figure out the pay range. This is a situation we've been facing for the last five or six years. We have difficulty retaining and recruiting employees. The cost of housing has made it almost impossible for a middle manager to live in a house, even to rent."

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
March 24, 2006

Planning chief 'not going anywhere'
Some unhappy with the way position listed
Author: *Christine Braden cbraden@keynoter.com*

In spite of a surprise advertisement for a new Key West city planning director that caused the City Commission to cry foul, City Manager **Julio Avael** said current Director Ty Symroski is not going anywhere. "Ty will continue to be the city planning director," **Avael** said. "This ad placement was only to get someone with experience into the Planning Department."

According to **Avael**, Symroski, who had no prior knowledge of the advertisement on the city Web site and in a planning magazine, has been asking for an administrative assistant for quite a while, and this was how the city manager hoped to get it accomplished.

By advertising with a director title, "We want to attract people that may be able to afford the housing costs," he said. In the past, when the city has hired for different positions in the Planning Department, it has been students "fresh out of college" or employees with no planning experience.

Because of the expensive cost of living in Key West, many Planning Department staff end up leaving after an average of one year right along with droves of other Key West workforce employees. "They work just long enough to say they have some experience and then they move on," **Avael** said. **Avael** said there is a 300 to 400 percent turnover rate in the Planning Department. He also said he was only following a similar procedure used by the City Commission to hire and retain an internal auditor - offer a large enough salary to attract an experienced professional with years of planning know-how under his or her belt. "Most people don't make enough money to stay here because of the housing costs," he said. "By doing this, we're hoping for a planning assistant with a lot of administrative and planning experience."

Symroski "has had problems meeting some deadlines because he just doesn't have the people" required to do the work, **Avael** said. But "he's not being demoted. As far as I'm concerned, he's not going anywhere."

Still, the commission had a hard time swallowing **Avael**'s tactics. "My father even asked me today, 'Did Ty leave?' So that's how convoluted that got," Commissioner Dan Kolhage said.

"In this particular case, it is not whether it should be or shouldn't be, my issue is with the way it was handled and I think it was handled very unprofessionally," Commissioner Bill Verge said.

Commissioner Harry Bethel, who understood that the position was advertised because of Symroski's overwhelming caseload, also agreed that the matter was handled incorrectly.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
September 4, 2005

Wrong time to consider contract extension, raise

Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** did a smart thing Thursday when he withdrew an item from the City Commission agenda for Wednesday's meeting.

When the agenda was first published Thursday, it included a resolution sponsored by Commissioners Harry Bethel, Jose Menendez and Tom Oosterhoudt to extend **Avael**'s contract an additional three years with a hefty raise of almost 25 percent, from an annual salary of almost $125,000 a year to $155,000.

The Citizen's reporting on this proposal caused a minor kerfuffle in City Hall. In response to written questions, **Avael** said the contract extension and raise were the idea of the three sponsoring commissioners. Bethel said it was **Avael**'s idea. Oosterhoudt said **Avael** had contacted him.

But the real question is this: What on earth was **Avael** thinking, putting forward such a proposal less than a month before the most significant city election in years, and in a time of such hardship and uncertainty for so many of the island's citizens and employees

The election issue appears to be what scotched the plan. Several commissioners said they did not think it was appropriate to make this decision before the election. Five of the commission's seven seats are being contested in the Oct. 4 vote, so **Avael** could be working for an entirely different board in a few short weeks.

And it's not like this should be considered an urgent matter. **Avael**'s current contract runs through December 2006. The proposed revisions would extend it until the end of 2009.

In backup documentation for the contract (which do not indicate authorship), it is pointed out that **Avael** makes less than the chief executives of Monroe County and the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority.

That's true, but it's hardly surprising. The county has more employees and FKAA is a vital utility that manages a complex technical system providing us with a necessity of survival, fresh water.

Instead of comparing himself to them, **Avael** should realize how this contract appears to his employees and fellow citizens, many of whom are working hard and struggling to survive in the city he runs.

Few of them get the generous benefits that come with public employment --JAvael now receives 20 vacation days a year and under the proposal that would increase to 24 days (that's almost five work weeks).

Avael's current sick leave accrual, capped at 720 hours, is apparently insufficient and should go up to 1300 hours. That means 18 weeks to 32 1-2 weeks. And under his contract, he gets a payout for accrued sick leave (actually the contract says he would get 1300 hours of sick leave time if he were fired, whether he's got that much accrued or not).

Most folks in the private sector don't get anything like that kind of sick time and you don't get to roll it over or get paid for it when you leave your job.

If **Avael**'s contract is terminated, with or without cause, he gets a lump sum payment of six months salary plus one year's cost of COBRA benefits (which basically means the city pays to keep his health insurance).

Imagine how this looks to the rank and file in the city. They can feel fortunate if they make half **Avael**'s current salary -- and no one has proposed a 25 percent raise for them this year. In fact, the city has been struggling to meet its budget for next year. Even city-sponsored picnics and holiday decorations are on the chopping block.

And worse, imagine how this looks to the many, many island residents who work low-paying service jobs, many without any benefits at all, many unsalaried, where they are only paid for the hours they work. Sick leave isn't a bargaining chip for them. It's a catastrophe.

Avael did the right thing Thursday when he withdrew the item from Wednesday's agenda. No doubt it's embarrassing to have all of this hashed out in public, when he is responsible for a multimillion-dollar concern, with hundreds of employees and immense responsibilities.

But he should also understand how fortunate he is compared to just about everyone else in his place of employment and on this island. Part of public service is to receive generous benefits and job security. Another part is to keep public perception in mind at times like this.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
April 21, 2005

Mauldin faces challenges in job as KWPD chief

The appointment by City Manager **Julio Avael** of Bill Mauldin as the new Police Chief came as a surprise to more than just a few of us. One of the most important jobs in the city, this appointment seems to have been made without an official search for all qualified candidates.

As is commonly the case with such prestigious government positions, recruiting and hiring is typically a transparent and visible process whereby the citizens, elected officials, and city management all take part in the process.

By accepting the decision of City Manager **Julio Avael** to hire Mr. Mauldin, it cannot be said that local government is maintaining an open and participatory process. In the past, the city has advertised an open job position and selected the most qualified applicant from all those submitted, using by a committee or a tiered mechanism.

This is not to say that Mauldin is not qualified for the job. Having run for City Commissioner unsuccessfully last year, he became a well-known and respected member of the community, along with his wife Terri. After his run, he was appointed by Mayor Jimmy Weekley to serve on the city Planning Board, and became employed by the Key West Police department to maintain police accreditation standards.

We certainly wish him all the best in his challenging new role.

With a staff of about 100 (almost one-third of all city employees), a lion's share of the city's property tax dollars, and internal problems that led to the formation of a Civilian Review Board, Mauldin's courage and valor under political fire may be put to the ultimate test as Chief.

Beginning with a high turnover rate (a problem costing the city tax dollars for recruitment, training, and compensation), Mauldin's faced with a police department that serves a community too expensive for his officers to live in, is often publicly and officially scrutinized, and continues to struggle for independence over its own policies and procedures. Some of these problems may also lead to low morale within the ranks.

An ironic twist to Mauldin's appointment, given that for the past year he has been employed to maintain standards of police accreditation at the department, is that his promotion seems to have been the result of violating standards of hiring and promotion within government.

We are concerned that even under the direct supervision of elected city commissioners and the mayor, Mr. **Avael** seems to have made this decision on his own.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
April 8, 2005

New chief steps in
Like many people working in the Keys, the new acting Key West police chief may be a little overqualified for the position.
Author: *Alyson Matley amatley@keynoter.com*

Friday morning, City Manager **Julio Avael** announced the retirement of Chief Bill Fortune and appointed Bill Mauldin as his replacement.

Mauldin has the word "acting" before his new title, but **Avael** said he didn't launch a national search when he learned of Fortune's retirement. "For the acting position, I eliminated advertising nationwide, as I presently believe that we can best serve the community and the department by choosing a member of the department," **Avael** said. Mauldin will serve a probationary period, **Avael** said. "There are some expectations that Mayor [Jimmy] Weekley has and that the [City] Commission has and that I have," he said. "We'll see how well Mr. Mauldin is able to meet them."

"It goes without question I want to stay in the position," said Mauldin, an unsuccessful City Commission candidate in 2003. "But my focus is day to day. But that's kind of how I live my life."

Mauldin, 52, is accreditation manager for the Police Department, but his background covers 25 years of intense law enforcement positions.

According to his resume, he is retired from the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and worked in special operations with the Metropolitan DC Police Department. He was a chief of police in South Carolina and an instructor at the Air Force Special Investigations Office Academy. "I've had an unbelievable life," Mauldin said. "This is one of those opportunities to do something that is so worthwhile."

The Key West Police Department has had a bumpy ride the past few years.

Fortune, who had been retired from the department, returned to the agency in January 2004 when **Avael** asked Buz Dillon to resign, saying he was ineffective.

Dillon was hired as chief in early 1998, taking over for John Kirvan, who was chief for only a month before quitting, citing death threats. Kirvan had replaced Ray Peterson, who accepted a city buyout to leave as allegations of incompetence swirled around him.

In addition, five Key West officers were charged in several incidents in 2002 by the Monroe County State Attorney's Office. As a result, voters created the Citizens Review Board to keep an eye on the department and the behavior of its officers.

Mauldin said he is well aware of that history.

"We're moving forward, and Chief Fortune has helped move this department forward. Our image in the community has improved tremendously during his tenure, and I want to continue that," Mauldin said.

He also said he hopes to sit down with **Avael** to take a hard look at the problem of affordable housing in the Keys. Some people speculate that contract negotiations in the coming months with the police union could be rough.

Fortune said his plans include becoming a snowbird.

"I'm going to enjoy my home in North Carolina, and spend some time in Germany this summer," Fortune said. "I plan to maintain a winter residence down here, so I'm going to turn into a snowbird."

Rotating door

Key West Police Chief Bill Fortune announced Friday he will retire as of April 15. City Manager **Julio Avael** appointed William Mauldin acting chief.

He'll be the sixth chief to head the department in 18 years - an average of three years per chief.

Tom Webster: 1987 to 1991.
Ray Peterson: 1991 to 1997
John Kirvan: 1997 to 1998
Gordon "Buz" Dillon: 1998 to 2004
Bill Fortune: 2004 to 2005

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
March 13, 2005

City manager- Thousands of tickets show city is enforcing parking

Editor's note: A March 4 Citizen editorial called for the city of Key West to improve implementation of its existing residential parking program before adopting a new scheme that restricts citizens' on-street parking to the district in which they live. Following is City Manager **Julio Avael**'s response to that editorial, and his request that a graduate of the city's Ambassador program be invited to sit on The Citizen Editorial Board. It should be noted that board member Mark Howell completed the city manager's program.

BY **JULIO AVAEL**
Guest Columnist

On Friday, March 4, the Key West Citizen ran an editorial about parking problems on the island that did not take into consideration many available facts.

I feel it is important that all options on parking solutions be presented to the Key West City Commission, including the zone system that the Citizen is against. The commissioners would be remiss if they did not have all available information to consider before making its decision.

The fact is that city parking enforcement officers do enforce the rules and residents and visitors are expected to obey them. Seven parking enforcement officers have to cover the island daily from 6 a.m. to midnight. The department is understaffed and budget restraints limit the city's ability to hire or add new positions.

I am surprised that The Citizen's editors have to be reminded that the Sunshine Law requires the city to be open and forthcoming with the residents, and that includes the media. If your editorial writer had bothered to look into the facts about parking enforcement he or she might have been surprised. All this information is public record, but why let facts get in the way.

The writer would have discovered, if he or she had taken the time to check, that from Dec. 1, 2004 to March 1, 2005 city parking enforcement issued more than 13,500 citations. The editorial pointed out that parking enforcement has ticketed vehicles blocking driveways and this bothered your editorial board. It seems when parking enforcement enforces a law, you do not like it; when parking enforcement does not enforce a law, you don't approve. Blocking driveways is a violation of state law.

The public should know that in the time frame mentioned above, 40 tickets were issued for blocked driveways. At the same time, 36 citations were issued for parking illegally in handicapped spots, 3,154 for parking in no parking (includes residential parking spaces); more than 8,000 for overtime parking, and 85 for oversized vehicles.

By doing the math, your editorial board would have discovered that on average, each parking enforcement officer issued more than 640 citations a month. I believe the numbers indicate that the city's parking enforcement officers are doing their jobs well.

This information is available to your editorial board, but it didn't seem to need the facts to write the editorial and that is a shame. More than $426,000 in fines have been issued during the three months, and 53 percent of the fines have been collected. An agency collects the remaining 47 percent and the city pays the agency a small percentage for the service.

And the city has been quite liberal handing out residential stickers to new and part-time residents, your editorial stated. I wonder if anyone on the editorial board is aware of what one needs to obtain a parking permit. A Monroe County license is a permit; a resident who is without the Monroe County license tag must prove residency full or part time by bringing in his or her Florida drivers license, vehicle tag, a utility bill or lease with the local address on it. By the ordinance, anyone meeting these requirements is given a parking permit. Your editorial suggested that a person can walk in, apply and receive a permit, and that is not true.

I know that The Citizen's editor does not feel the city's Ambassador Academy is worth reporting about, but I want to suggest that its reporters and editors would benefit by learning how the city works, who makes it work and what it takes to make it work, directly from the men and women making the daily decisions. Going through the academy would give Citizen reporters the knowledge to understand the ins-and-outs of city government and the rules and regulations that it must work within. The program would give a reporter the opportunity to meet all city directors and the potential to ask any question they want. The 13-week program has benefited more than 100 residents that have graduated. Class five has already begun and is full.

The Citizen's suggestions and appreciation for the city addressing the parking problem is welcomed, but if it came from a person -- or group -- fully aware of what the city has to go through daily, would have made it just that much sweeter. Each Key West City Ambassador gets to ride along with a police officer, a code enforcement officer and a parking enforcement officer and wouldn't it have been nice if the editorial writer had had that experience to draw from before he or she wrote the editorial.

I want to suggest that the Citizen consider choosing a graduate of the Ambassador Academy to join its editorial board. Graduates include many of the island's professional and business leaders.

Julio Avael is Key West city manager.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
December 17, 2004

City moves on Sterling process
Manager says expect 3 years for application
Author: *Christie Phillips cphillips@keynoter.com*

As more and more middle-class workers move out of Key West and others can't afford to move in, City Manager **Julio Avael** hopes his drive for the city to win the Sterling Award will help in the long run.

"With the situation we have here, we're going to have a real hard time finding directors and city workers that can move here," **Avael** said this week. "We're losing employees, and we've been having to do a lot more with a lot less over the years since standards have been raised. People, our citizens, don't want excellence anymore, they want perfection." **Avael** said that by aiming for the Governor's Sterling Award, a form of state recognition for outstanding business practices in both public and private institutions throughout Florida, the city will eventually reduce its costs and be able to function with fewer hands. "Fewer employees will be able to handle the larger workload as we become efficient and concentrate more on results," **Avael** explained.

The city has started the long process toward achieving Sterling status, attempting to achieve a lengthy list of standardized goals aimed at organizational performance excellence.

"Our progress so far is that we have our goals and objectives set, and we've completed the citizen and business surveys, which our goals and objectives are directly related to," **Avael** said. "Now we've established five task force teams to analyze the survey results. They're currently working on that." "This is the first time the city directors have had a guiding document to show what they're doing well and what the citizens are saying they are looking for in their individual departments," city spokesman Michael Haskins said of the task force work and survey results.

Avael said pursuit of the Sterling Award will cost the city an $8,500 application fee. "And we won't pay that until we're ready to apply, which will probably be in three years or so," he added. "It's a long process."

The city has the pro bono consultation expertise of Christine Hefner at its disposal. Hefner works for the city of Coral Springs in Broward County, which has won the state award twice. "Having her consult for us is saving money, and we've already saved more with the use of the city ambassadors," **Avael** said. "We estimate having them help with the survey saved $80,000 to $100,000."

The city ambassadors are local citizens who have gone through a sort of training course to learn more about several aspects of city government.

"And once we've reached the goals of the Sterling process, there will be a savings to the city because of efficiency," Haskins said.

"I'm not so much concerned about the award," **Avael** added. "It's the process. We'll get better performance, more confidence from the citizens, and we'll be a lot more effective and efficient."

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
June 22, 2004

Key West's building chief quits
BY MANDY BOLEN , Citizen Staff Writer

KEY WEST City Manager **Julio Avael** accepted the resignation Monday of the city's chief building official, Charles Stephenson, after discussions about salary increases and job modifications apparently failed. "I'm taking another position somewhere else in Florida," Stephenson said Monday afternoon, not wanting to comment further on his departure.

Avael told the city commissioners in an email Monday that Stephenson had tried to resign Thursday, but **Avael** had refused to accept the resignation and wanted "the opportunity to fully discuss his future with the city. I also pointed out that I was interested in easing some of his stress by making some modifications, if he wished, and that I would also consider additional remuneration for his accomplishments."

But Stephenson asked **Avael** Monday to accept the resignation, saying he wanted to try new challenges, **Avael** said Monday. **Avael** said that the city has been considering separating the responsibilities of code enforcement from the building department for several years to alleviate the workload. "That's still on the table, and I'm looking very seriously at it," **Avael** said.

In the past year, code enforcement has orchestrated a crackdown on Tshirt shops, citing some for violating a city ordinance requiring written estimates of customized work prior to the work being done.

Code enforcement officers recently cited local business owners for violating a city rule limiting the number of flags that can hang on their buildings, sparking some criticism from the community that the city was focusing on the wrong things in its efforts to clean up Duval Street.

In addition to overseeing code enforcement, Stephenson also is in charge of issuing permits for construction and monitoring projects to make sure work adheres to submitted plans.

City Commissioner Tom Oosterhoudt said he would support separating code enforcement and the building department, calling them "separate, but important monsters." "I really think it's an idea whose time has come," Oosterhoudt said, complimenting Stephenson's accomplishments during his two years as the chief building official. "It's a thankless job, and probably the most powerful department in the city other than the city manager's," Oosterhoudt said.

Mayor Jimmy Weekley also expressed appreciation for Stephenson's actions.

"Charles has really taken code enforcement, turned it around and made it work," Weekley said, adding that Stephenson has been fair and evenhanded in enforcing the city's laws, and diligent in researching the laws. "And that's the way it should be done."

Stephenson's resignation is effective July 15, but **Avael** plans to begin the search for a replacement right away, and said he will consider applications from within the city as well as from outside Key West.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
April 30, 2004

Avael gets extension
Key West City Manager Julio Avael received a unanimous vote of confidence from the city commissioners this week when they voted to extend his contract.
Author: *Alyson Matley amatley@keynoter.com*

However, that support came in a shorter version than he had hoped.

Avael had proposed extending his current contract for five years. Commissioner Harry Bethel began the discussion by suggesting shortening that term to three years, and the commission concurred.

The new three-year deal calls for increasing **Avael**'s base salary of $108,794 by the same cost-of-living increase applied to all city employees.

Avael came to the city of Key West in 1996, filling a vacancy left by Felix Cooper.

Avael has taken some criticism in recent months for some of the difficulties the city is facing. Critics hold him responsible in part for increasing the number of cruise ships berthing in Key West Harbor, and he came under fire while the city struggled with the issue of forming a Citizen's Review Board to oversee the Key West Police Department.

Despite some rocky points, speakers at Tuesday's City Commission meeting were supportive of **Avael**. Former County Commissioner Doug Jones told the City Commission that he knew what it was to have problems with staff, after having his own battles with then-County Administrator Tom Brown.

"**[Avael]** doesn't have his own agenda. I think we would be best served if we would keep him for another three to five years," said Jones.

Robert Allen, president of the Police Benevolent Association, agreed. "Mr. **Avael** is a solution seeker, not a problem provider."

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
April 30, 2004

Review augurs chief's exit
City manager said Dillon was weak leader
By Christie Phillips cphillips@keynoter.com

A glance at Buz Dillon's most recent job review shows that it's hardly shocking that Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** ordered the police chief's resignation this week. "His shortcoming over the past several years has been his inability to measure and effectively place his finger on the pulse of the community, to meet the needs of the City Commission and the City Manager's Office," **Avael** wrote in the Oct. 27 staff review.

Avael gave Dillon an overall score of 2.63 points out of 5, meaning he was "not consistently meeting the position requirements in all areas." "I felt new leadership was required," was all **Avael** said Friday to justify the forced resignation. "He built a foundation for the department to work on, and now we're in need of fresh blood." "The chief and I met and talked about his tenure with the city, his career, and his performance, and we came to the agreement that I would accept his resignation," **Avael** said.

The October review gives more explanation into **Avael**'s thinking.

"Dissention among officers seems to have increased due to his alleged biased treatment of certain officers, his unexplained absenteeism and/or reporting late to work, and leaving the station early in the day to play golf or arrive home early," states the review. "His participation in management meetings, although he attends the meetings, lacks enthusiasm and esprit de corps."

Dillon was hired as chief in early 1998, taking over for John Kirvan, who was chief for only a month before quitting, citing death threats. Kirvan had replaced Ray Peterson, who accepted a city buyout to leave as allegations of incompetence swirled around him.

Bill Fortune, who retired from the Key West force as a captain in October, has been named interim chief until a permanent replacement can be made.

During Dillon's tenure, the department has seen the creation of the Citizen Review Board, a police oversight committee formed by voters after several officers were charged with police brutality.

"The formation of the Citizen Review Committee and the passage of the Citizen Review Board by the voters of the city can also be attributed to the chief's inability to effectively listen to and communicate with the residents and to meet their expectations," states the review. "The lack of action to address community issues has resulted in less than average working relationships with certain segments of the community."

Dillon has also been ensnarled in a lawsuit with the American Civil Liberties Union stemming from his arrest of local publisher Dennis Reeves Cooper in 2001 for printing allegations of misconduct by the department, allegedly violating Cooper's First Amendment rights.

To his credit, his tenure has seen the completion of the new police complex on North Roosevelt Boulevard and the department's national accreditation.

"As to the exact reasons ... **Julio** decided he needed to do this, I'm not sure, but I've heard at times the chief was supposed to be at work and he was out golfing and things like that," said Mayor Jimmy Weekley. "I don't know if that's true, but I guess he was not performing to expectations and the city manager thought he should be replaced."

"I was aware of some tension and conflict between [**Avael** and Dillon]," said District VI Commissioner Carmen Turner. "I was surprised by this news, but not shocked."

"We always seem to be at one extreme of the other," Turner noted. "Either we have the up in arms against the administration, or we have the citizens up in arms against the department. I don't know whether [Dillon's resignation] will be good or bad for Key West. It's pretty much par for the course."

"I think Carmen Turner said it best in that I don't think the chief was all that happy in Key West," said District II Commissioner Merili McCoy. "I don't think he was unhappy, though. **Julio** is the public safety director, and he has to do what he thinks is best, so I trust his decision."

"I'm not looking forward to the search process," Turner confessed. "It's critical to fill this position, and fill it well, and we always have a difficult time with it. I hope we can get it right this time."

"Now we'll just have to see what Mr. Fortune does," McCoy said. "I personally want to see heavy community policing, and discipline and management."

Avael said Friday that Dillon will receive six months of severance pay and get a pension from the department. His annual salary was approximately $85,000 a year.

Dillon could not be reached for comment.

Florida Keys Keynoter (Marathon, FL)
April 30, 2004

Avael wants extension
City manager asks for 5 more years
By Tim McDonald tmcdonald@keynoter.com

Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** will ask the city for a five-year contract extension so he can finish his career in the city where he was born.

Avael said he will ask for the same terms in his current contract, which is due to expire next year. Under its terms, he can ask for an extension a year before its termination. "It will take me up to retirement, but my plans are not to retire," said **Avael**, 59. "My plans are to stay here as long as the commission wants me."

The current contract pays **Avael** $108,000 annually. The extension would keep **Avael** in his position from 2003 to 2007.

Avael said he has notified commissioners of his request for an extension, but has not officially put the item on the City Commission agenda. "I've gotten a lot of positive input from them," **Avael** said. "So I'm looking forward to staying in Key West."

Avael has been Key West city manager for six years. Before returning to his hometown, he was county manager in Fort Myers and in Douglas County, Nev., which includes Lake Tahoe.

Born and bred in Key West, **Avael** finished his bachelor's degree at Florida International University after his son's illness forced him to drop out of Florida State. He earned his master's degree from Nova Southeastern University and attended Harvard on a senior executive program.

Avael's father lives in Key West, as do his three grandchildren and other relatives.

Avael recently received the International City/County Management Association Service Award, given by the group's members and executive board.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
January 27, 2004

City manager proposes town hall meetings
BY TIMOTHY O'HARA , Citizen Staff Writer

KEY WEST City Manager **Julio Avael** has a plan he says will give citizens greater access to city commissioners.

Avael wants to set up monthly town hall meetings with residents and commissioners. The meetings in question and answer format would be conducted in each of the city's six districts, **Avael** said.

City department heads, such as the police chief and fire chief, and possibly the mayor would attend the meetings and answer questions, he said.

"I have been trying to get this going for seven years," **Avael** said. "We have a new commissioner and new district lines. I think it's time."

The idea is being met with lukewarm response from some city commissioners. Some questioned how well attended the meetings would be and what purpose they would serve. Commissioner Harry Bethel noted that commissioners already are accessible via the telephone and email.

"I think whenever there is an issue that affects people in the a district, you should have a town hall meeting in that district," Commissioner Ed Scales said. "You may see less attendance if it is not tied to a specific topic. But having town hall meetings are important."

There have been several of productive community meetings recently, including one on the fate of Truman Annex waterfront. That meeting was sponsored by the environmental group Last Stand and attended by nearly all the city commissioners.

Bahama Village Crime Watch meetings also have been successful, Commissioner Carmen Turner said.

"Community meetings are good," Turner said. "The crime watch meetings are very well attended. The subject matter is relevant and there are good things coming out of it."

The Miami Herald
January 17, 2004

POLICE CHIEF ENDS TENSE TENURE
Author: *CARA BUCKLEY, cbuckley@herald.com*

Key West Police Chief Gordon ``Buz'' Dillon, whose five-year performance as the city's top cop was seen as lackluster by city officials, has resigned, City Manager **Julio Avael** said Friday.

``We believe this city is in need of new blood, a change, and that new leadership was required,'' **Avael** said at a morning news conference. Dillon's resignation takes effect Monday. Capt. Bill Fortune, who had retired, will return to act as interim chief.

Avael hired Dillon in 1998, but tensions soon developed between Dillon and the city.

In 1999, **Avael** overrode Dillon's demotion of a 10-year department veteran. Two years later, Dillon's arrest of Dennis Reeves Cooper, a local journalist and publisher, over articles Cooper wrote drew national attention and a lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union. In early 2002, the state attorney's office looked into claims that the city's police used excessive force and lied under oath. In late 2002, voters decided to create a police oversight board.

Dillon, reached by phone Friday, said that **Avael** asked for his resignation Monday, and that the request did not come as a shock. ``I wasn't surprised, because of things that were being said and done,'' said Dillon.

He said he achieved the three goals he set out for himself - ``to get the officers a good facility, good equipment, and to develop a team atmosphere'' - but was leaving with a heavy heart. ``I expected to be here 10 years,'' he said.

During Dillon's tenure, crime rates dropped in pockets of the city and the department moved to a new, multimillion-dollar facility on North Roosevelt Boulevard.

Privately, though, city officials expressed disappointment with Dillon's work. There was a widespread sense, some said, that he was not doing enough, that he worked short hours and rarely ventured into the community. Plans to build the new facility were already under way when he came on board, they said, and the department's accreditation by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation was the fruit of another officer's work.

``I don't know that Buz was happy here,'' said Commissioner Merili McCoy, adding that she hoped to see more community policing in the city.

Dillon, whose annual salary was $90,270, will receive six months' severance pay and retirement benefits.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
January 15, 2004

On The Buz, Citizen agendas, celebrating poultry and group groa

Key West is abuzz about Buz! City Manager **Julio Avael** and Public Information Officer Michael Haskins tried their best to keep a lid on the news until their official press conference Friday, apparently to keep Dennis Reeves Cooper from getting the scoop in Key West The Newspaper. But you just can't contain something like that. The coconut telegraph was crackling by Thursday afternoon with word that **Julio** had asked for Police Chief Gordon "Buz" Dillon's resignation.

Cooper, who was arrested on the former chief's orders after printing allegations of wrongdoing by police officers, still missed it. Sorry, Coop.

Julio apparently had been waiting out Dillon's contract to make the move, which took most folks by surprise. **Julio**'s only explanation: It's time for new blood. It seems strange hearing that from a Conch.

* * *

A groan rose up in this newsroom Wednesday as a Tourist Development Council press release circulated among staff. The topic: Chicken Fest Key West.

The great debate over a population explosion among the city's free roaming chickens has been growing in city commission chambers and in this newspaper's feedback column, the Citizen's Voice.

The announcement came a couple of days after Key West Assistant City Manager John Jones was interviewed on National Public Radio's All Things Considered, offering to personally drive a truckload of Key West chickens to NPR's D.C. headquarters bringing a few extra for the Capitol lawn.

City Manager **Julio Avael** and his pet rooster, Rambo, are expected to appear in a segment on NBC Nightly News any day now he was interviewed by NBC's Tom Brokaw earlier this week.

But a four day festival celebrating free roaming urban chickens? Already I've heard that powerboat racing promoter Lee Mills is preparing a TDC proposal for a competing poultry event a week prior to Chicken Fest Key West he has a commitment from the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association to sanction the event and is considering Iguana Fests for Big Pine Key and Marathon.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
June 27, 2003

Key West shuffles managers
BY GINNY HALLER , keysnews.com

KEY WEST Key West City Manager **Julio Avael** announced a reorganization of city department heads Friday that he says will "streamline," "centralize" and "improve" city government.

Avael also announced next year's budget has been prepared for city commission review in the annual budget meetings held in July and August.

The budget calls for a rollback, which means the city will not increase the rate at which it taxes property owners in the coming year.

"I have known that doing 'business as usual' would not measure up to the challenges ahead in Key West," **Avael** said Friday. "'Doing more with less' has been a reality and comments I frequently hear from residents, commissioners and by civic organizations such as the [Key West] Chamber of Commerce."

The managerial changes will give residents a one stop center, said **Avael**. The changes in engineering, transportation and parking enforcement reflect a lessening of **Avael**'s, day today supervision over city managers. Before, 17 people answered directly to him; with these changes it will be no more than seven people.

The changes include:

Parking enforcement will be transferred to the Key West police department as of July 21. **Avael** said this move will allow for better coordination of parking violations, especially with residential infractions. The move will offer much needed physical protection by the police for city enforcement associates, he said.

Key West Bight Superintendent Mark Tait is picking up responsibility for Garrison Bight in mid-August, at which point he will be in charge of all marina programs and projects and answer to Director of Port Operations Raymond Archer.

Avael passed off direct supervision of the Department of Transportation to David Fernandez, director of utilities. Myra Hernandez will continue as DOT manager, reporting to Fernandez instead of **Avael**.

Roland Flowers, city engineer, assumes authority for engineering services in mid-August. "As the city engineer, he [Flowers] is responsible for reviewing and stamping constructing

documents," said **Avael**. "Therefore, the transfer will ease the process and add another much needed engineer to engineering services."

Annalise Mannix-Lachner will continue as manager of engineering services, reporting to Flowers instead of **Avael**.

"I believe the reduction in numbers of people the city manager needs to communicate the policies and strategies of our city goals, and to get feedback from, will help ensure the team stays intact," said Mannix-Lachner.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
November 12, 2002

Is the time right for city to extend city manager's job?

Timing is everything, especially in sex and politics, so when City Manager **Julio Avael** asks that his employment contract be extended for five years, and that the proposition be taken up a year before his old contract expires, it is a matter of some general interest among city hall watchers.

The current contract expires Nov. 30, 2003, but **Avael** would like it to be negotiated now so that it does not fall in the middle of next fall's municipal elections - always such a distraction.

Avael is basically asking for the same money and benefits he's getting now, plus COLA; that is, a salary of $108,700 ($8,000 less than the governor of Florida), plus accruing vacation leave at 30 days a year and sick pay at the same rate as all city employees. If the city commission, his boss, ousts him, the city would pay him six months severance, plus one year's cost of his COBRA benefits. It is a fairly standard contract with no little hidden surprises, as best we can tell.

So what is going on? Is this a good time for **Julio** to press this requests? Does he have enough votes for this to sail through? Probably.

We find no center of opposition amongst the commissioners, no desire to throw the rascal out, as many townsfolk seem to want. According to commissioners, he keeps them well informed, no surprises, makes sure to act on complaints in their districts, and he keeps city staff energized and happy.

Plus, it is exceedingly difficult and dicey to go out into the marketplace looking for a first-rate manager. You never know what you are going to get, and a bad choice can cost the city millions and set vital projects back by years. Even if you get a good one, the learning curve is a year at minimum, so there is plenty of downside and frustration possible when a city goes looking.

On the other hand, there is much mistrust of Mr. **Avael** in town.

People think he is devious or downright Machiavellian, pointing to his startlingly disingenuous action on the Citizen Review Board in which he stacked meetings with opponents of the board and then proclaimed authoritatively that there was absolutely no interest in Key West in having instances of police brutality investigated outside the police department. It was a laugh, but Mr. **Avael** missed the humor and continued to proclaim with great sincerity that Key West did not want an oversight board.

When it came to a vote, Mr. **Avael** and his minions lost nine out of 10 precincts and 60 percent of the vote in a bitter, divisive race.

Then there is the matter of the cruise ship facing off with the power boats for dock space for one of the races. We are ignorant of the details except one: The flap came down to the very last minute, with the power boaters threatening to leave forever.

How did it get that far? Could the city manager not step in? Did he draw enough water to affect the negotiations if he had stepped in?

The most crushing loss the town has faced recently is the loss of the 144 housing units at Poinciana, supposedly coming to us from the Navy through the BRAC process. Unfortunately, someone was paying too much attention to the sexy property at the Mole and not near enough attention to Poinciana.

The city had put consultant Chris Lehman, a savvy and highly successful lobbyist, in the endless halls of the Pentagon to guide our negotiations with the Navy. Mr. **Avael** and the city commission at some point, obviously prematurely, decided Mr. Lehman was no longer necessary to our efforts. From that moment on, our people were dealing way over their heads, and we are losing a great treasure because of city staff hubris.

Is Mr. **Avael** just the right fit for our island, or is he costing us too much?

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
May 4, 2001

Building director is fired, again
'As far as I'm concerned, that's it,' Avael says
By EMILY ROACH , Citizen Staff Writer

After three weeks of battling for her job, building director Catherine Harding received a termination letter Thursday from city manager **Julio Avael**.

Harding portrayed herself as strict but principled. And she had many support letters describing the help she had given during her year and a half as building director, a position she held with the full-fledged title only since November.

Avael painted a picture of an abrupt and uncompromising department head who failed to work with customers or other city employees. He had many complaining letters and staff reports to point to as proof. Ultimately, **Avael** decided Thursday her two-year tenure with the city was over. "As far as I'm concerned, that's it," he said.

Harding had vowed to take the fight to court, if necessary. Her husband, Frank Harding, said Thursday she was consulting with her attorneys and would not comment.

Many local builders weighed in on Harding in the past weeks, both pro and con, sending letters to city offices. And commissioners Merili McCoy and Tom Oosterhoudt both publicly supported efforts Harding made to uphold city building laws. "She did a lot of good things for the city," McCoy said. "I wished it could have been worked out, but we've got to go forward now."

Three weeks ago, Harding was pressed to resign. She refused. When she returned to work after the three-day Easter weekend, Harding was given a termination letter from **Avael** and sent home. The next day, **Avael** rescinded the termination and advised she bring a lawyer to her predetermination hearing, which took place Monday. Harding argued Monday that the mayor and commissioners should hear the case.

Other issues have clouded the firing controversy.

Harding, 59, questioned during her Monday hearing whether Charles Stephenson was qualified to run the building department on an interim basis.

Stephenson, 47, does not hold the official or provisional building code administrator license required by state law to approve building inspectors' cases.

However, he applied for it Monday. And **Avael** said he checked with the attorney general's office, which shut down the Key West building department four years ago because inspectors lacked the proper licenses.

At the time, Stephenson was one of those unlicensed to do the job he was performing in the city building department. "To serve as a building code administrator, to perform the duties of building code administrator, you have to have a license," said Lonnie Parizek, spokeswoman for the Department of Business and Professional Regulation. However, to apply for the provisional license, which allows three years to take the official examination, a person is required to be newly hired or newly promoted into the position. Stephenson got his inspector's license after the department was chastised. He has worked in engineering and, mostly recently, as the lateral-testing coordinator.

"I have every bit of confidence that everything will be fine," said Stephenson, who applied for the building director's job when Harding was selected and was asked by **Avael** to fill the role the first time Harding was fired.

Ironically, **Avael** also asked Stephenson to check out allegations made by a local man that Harding illegally hired him for electrical and plumbing work at her home shortly after she moved to Key West.

Jesus Cepero and Felix Palacios said they performed work for Harding even after telling her they were unlicensed to do it. Harding denied any wrongdoing, saying the men represented themselves as licensed contractors. "She's trying to make me look like the bad guy," Palacios said earlier this week.

Meanwhile, Stephenson's report found that Harding pulled permits as a homeowner to fix up her home and put in an accessory unit, the jobs the two said they did for her. City inspectors check for properly done work, not who performs the work. Some permits are still active, but the deadline for a final inspection has not passed. And work on the accessory unit indicates electrical work, but has no separate permit nor inspection, Stephenson reported.

"Work performed must be in compliance to codes and be inspected for the safety and welfare of the public," Stephenson reported to **Avael**. "Homeowners are required to provide direct supervision of the work, which is always difficult if not impossible to refute." For now, the matter is on the back burner, said **Avael**.

It appears Harding should have paid workers compensation, federal insurance and hourly wages, not to mention hire licensed contractors, **Avael** said. But he has not forwarded any information to state business regulators. His primary focus Thursday was settling the termination issue, **Avael** said.

Harding received notice by hand delivery Thursday afternoon that she was fired.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
June 20, 2000

Avael leads Key West well

Ask yourself: Is Key West city government operating better now than it did four years ago?

If you answer "yes" - and most residents probably would - then it is an endorsement, in part, of the efforts of city manager **Julio Avael**.

When he walked on the job four years ago, **Avael** entered a government badly in need of a new attitude. Morale was down, as was public opinion.

The solution?

"The first thing we did was an environmental scan, which assessed the needs of the community," **Avael** said during a recent interview.

When that assessment showed that residents were distrustful with the way the city was being run, **Avael** said he adopted a new plan - "open the doors of government to the community and involve the citizens in the decision making."

This philosophy may seem like hooey to some, but it appears to be working.

Referring to city workers as "associates" and residents as "customers" highlights both the cooperative effort needed to get things accomplished and for whom those efforts are intended.

Other innovations include training programs for department managers, "city summits" - which include community representation - and more involvement of women and minorities in the decision-making process.

And much of this progress has come during some trying times. Leaking sewer pipes have kept people out of the near-shore waters for a year and the resulting repair work has exacerbated an already serious traffic problem.

But the city moves forward - and expediently. In these times of crisis, the city, its management and its elected officials are reacting strongly.

Is the city running better now than four years ago?

You bet. And the commission was correct in extending **Avael**'s contract another five years.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
June 11, 2000

City manager eyes another 5-year contract
By TOM WALKER , Citizen Staff Writer

Ask city manager **Julio Avael** about the state of Key West and you'll likely hear, "The spirit of cooperation and community responsibility is alive and well."

About to enter the last year of a five-year contract and having negotiated with the city commission for an extension to 2006, **Avael** doesn't appear to be slowing down in his efforts to "reinvent" Key West.

When he walked on the job four years ago to replace Felix Cooper, **Avael** said he saw an island city in need of improvement. "The first thing we did was an environmental scan, which assessed the needs of the community," **Avael** said during an interview Friday.

When it became apparent that residents had grown weary of the way previous administrations were run, **Avael** said he adopted a philosophy - "open the doors of government to the community and involve the citizens in the decision making." City workers are referred to as "associates" now, not just employees, and each resident of Key West is viewed as a "customer." "It's important that we establish a collaborative relationship with our residents and have a partnership with community organizations," **Avael** said.

In speaking, **Avael** rarely uses "I," choosing instead to tout the achievements during his tenure in a collective voice that gives credit to those involved in running the city.

Within his first year, **Avael** hired Paul Clayton as a consultant to jump-start the process. A combination of training programs for department managers and "city summits," which included representation from the community, helped to establish a set of goals and objectives, **Avael** said. He also changed the racial makeup of the departments heads. "The first time I walked into a meeting, all I saw were males," he recalled.

Now, **Avael** boasts, "Minorities make up 45 percent of the executive staff." "We depoliticized the process of hiring managers by using a cross cut of community leaders to help make those appointments," he explained. **Avael** used those same concepts to revamp the entire building department, which in previous years was beleaguered with problems to the point of catching the attention of outside agencies.

While he did not elaborate on the history of those problems, **Avael** said the Florida Department of Law enforcement "is very happy with us."

In past years, the appearance of a "shooting from the hip" style of decision making tended to cast a cloud of suspicion over City Hall.

But today, **Avael** - never farther than arm's reach from his laptop computer - relies on information gathered in an "executive summary" as a guide in assessing the impact an issue will ultimately have on Key West.

"We don't want to hear a manager say 'I feel,'" **Avael** said, "We want decisions justified through empirical data and performance measurements. "Through this method we've been able to get 75 percent of those issues placed on the commission's consent agenda."

Judging from the collection of framed family photos that line his desk, **Avael** isn't all statistics and pie charts.

Avael said he and wife, RaiEtte, are at the gym each morning at six. On weekends, he chases after his three grandchildren. "They love the playground and the pool in Bahama Village," he said.

Avael said he's looking forward to tackling the challenges faced by the city for at least the next six years - which includes the Smathers Beach re-nourishment project and the proposed annexation of Stock Island and Key Haven. "There's a lot of affordable-housing opportunities on Stock Island," he said, adding that local business owners who live in Key Haven "could have a choice in choosing their community leaders."

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
December 12, 1999

Avael says he feared Chapp
By DICK WAGNER , Citizen Senior Writer

KEY WEST - As the city concluded its case in the accusation-filled trial of fired police Lt. Tom Chapp, City Manager **Julio Avael** told a jury that he feared Chapp might harm him or his family, a violent characterization that Chapp's lawyer heatedly claimed was untrue.

The lawyers will give closing arguments at 1 p.m. Monday before Judge Michael Moore in U.S. District Court on Simonton Street.

Chapp, 45, who received a permanent-disability pension after he was fired for insubordination in 1997, is seeking unspecified damages. "He wants his name cleared," attorney William Friedlander said Saturday. "He's never once said what he wants in damages. But he's said a hundred times that he wants to set the record straight."

Under questioning Friday by Michael Whelan, the city's attorney, **Avael** said that he was informed in February 1997 that Chapp was investigating him, then-Mayor Dennis Wardlow and City Commissioner Carmen Turner "for corruption." He said that after he was told Chapp had violent tendencies, he took precautions, including installing a burglar light in front of his house. He also testified that he borrowed a shotgun. "I was told he was capable of acts of violence and I was concerned for my family," **Avael** said.

Friedlander suggested on cross-examination that the reason **Avael** borrowed the gun was because he had gambling debts in Las Vegas. "I resent that you say I owe money in Las Vegas," **Avael** told Friedlander. "And I resent that you say Tom Chapp is capable of violence," Friedlander said.

Avael also said his decision to fire Chapp "had nothing to do with whether I was afraid of him" and that it was because Chapp had failed to report to meetings about internal-affairs complaints against him, that he refused to sign documents and that he wouldn't show up for medical examinations. "I made the decision based on an evaluation [of Chapp] by [Inspector] Robert Christensen," **Avael** testified. "It was extremely detailed. I had no other choice."

Friedlander asked **Avael**, "Can you show the jury a piece of paper anywhere in the bowels of this city that Chapp has ever been accused of an act of violence?" **Avael** couldn't.

Avael testified that he believed Chapp and his lawyer, Diane Covan, were trying to extort him. He said he learned from City Attorney Bob Tischenkel that Covan allegedly offered two books Chapp had compiled on **Avael** in exchange for $50,000. "She was selling information," **Avael** said. "I thought it was unethical."

Chapp has contended that, except for a resume, there was no information on **Avael** in those books. And an investigation by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement concluded that Covan had done nothing wrong.

Friedlander contends that under the Police Benevolent Association contract, the city had an obligation to try to find another job for Chapp, who was suffering from pancreatitis and hypertension. "Did the city offer an alternative job to Chapp? Was there any effort to determine if a job was available?" Friedlander asked **Avael**. He said it hadn't and there wasn't.

Avael also said Chapp violated police policy when he wrote a letter to local newspapers that gave his views on police presence in Bahama Village on New Year's Eve and was critical of eight police officers who walked out on a gay minister during a prayer meeting.

Avael reprimanded Ray Peterson, then the police chief, because of Chapp's letter, which he said contained "misguided opinions" on Bahama Village culture.

But Tischenkel testified Friday that, in 1997, writing a letter to the editor was not against police-department policy. Tischenkel also described Chapp's predetermination hearing, which was conducted by acting police chief David Lariz and lasted three minutes. "It's an opportunity for an employee to have his or her day in court," Tischenkel said.

Chapp, who was on sick leave early in 1997, did not attend the hearing because he claimed he was too ill, but Covan faxed a statement responding to the allegations against her client. "I was frustrated that Chapp wasn't there," Tischenkel said. "This would have been his opportunity to work things out."

Tischenkel, who was told by Covan that Chapp "can't get three feet away from a bathroom," said the city tried to get Chapp's medical records but he wouldn't produce them. "If he had, I could have gone to the police department and said, 'Let this guy alone,' " Tischenkel testified.

Christensen, the police inspector assigned to investigate the allegations against Chapp, was the city's last witness. He said that Chapp did not cooperate in the investigation, refused to sign documents and wouldn't keep appointments for medical exams. "We wanted to verify that Tom was sick," Christensen testified. "If we knew, we could have left him alone to hopefully get better."

Christensen said the investigations into the internal-affairs complaints against Chapp still have not been completed. "I can't without having Tom Chapp give his side," he said. Asked by Whelan if he was biased against Chapp, Christensen said he wasn't. "I considered him a friend; still do," Christensen said.

And then Friedlander got up and said, "What about his acts of violence?" Christensen said there weren't any.

Key West Citizen, The (FL)
December 8, 1999

Covan City, Avael 'ruthless'
By Dick Wagner , Citizen Senior Writer

KEY WEST - Tom Chapp and former city attorney Diane Covan did not try to extort the city in their attempt to get a settlement for the fired Key West police lieutenant, a Florida Department of Law Enforcement inspector testified Tuesday in Chapp's jury trial at the federal courthouse.

The allegations "were either unfounded or falsely reported," said John Gordy, who said he has worked the last 17 years investigating charges of improprieties against public officials. Gordy was called to the stand in mid-afternoon by William Friedlander, Chapp's lawyer.

That followed hours of testimony by Covan, during which she insisted that Chapp was illegally fired on charges of insubordination in April 1997, that his rights were violated and that he had no opportunity to clear his name.

The day ended with Ray Peterson - the former police chief who was demoted to captain and who eventually retired under a settlement - lauding Chapp's devotion to developing professionalism in the police department.

The actions against Chapp and Peterson created a political fissure in the city and led to feelings of animosity that are still fresh today.

Covan also testified that she received a "bizarre" phone call from City Manager **Julio Avael** in March 1997, in which she said **Avael** told her that he had learned "you have a book that has investigative material about me that you're willing to sell for $50,000." Covan said that after the phone call she went to Bob Tischenkel in the city attorney's office and, without his knowledge, tape-recorded a conversation. She read that transcript Tuesday. In it she tells Tischenkel that Chapp is a very sick man who is being harassed. "If he gets screwed [by the city], he might do all sorts of stuff," she goes on to say.

Gordy testified that Tischenkel later told FDLE agents Covan hadn't committed extortion, though he had said so in an earlier affidavit.

With Chapp operating the fast-forward button, Friedlander then played a videotape that the FDLE secretly took during a meeting later that March between **Avael**, Chapp and Covan.

At that meeting, Covan is seen telling **Avael** that Chapp, who was her client, wants a medical retirement through the police pension board. The second option would be a payment of $50,000 with the stipulation that Chapp would release all his claims against the city.

At that point, **Avael** says he believes the information in the so-called "book" is about an investigation on him. "The focus is not you, not on the mayor (Dennis Wardlow)," Covan says to **Avael** on the tape. "It's all about Tom's charges. Just articles about Tom. Don't think you're buying the book." Covan goes on to tell **Avael** during the recording, "Everybody's looking for dirt. Let's do it the easy way. Let's just let Tom Chapp out of here. He doesn't want lots of money. He just wants to move. He's a good cop, he's been good for the city ... and he's sick."

At the time, Chapp suffered from high blood pressure and severe stomach and bowel problems that prevented him from attending some hearings in regard to his case. Chapp tells **Avael** on the tape that he "was submarined, taken off at the knees" after an article he wrote on police procedure and ethics appeared in The Citizen and the weekly Key West The Newspaper. In it, Chapp discussed Peterson's decision to pull his men out of Bahama Village on New Year's Eve 1996, when some residents were shooting guns into the air. After Chapp's newspaper piece came out, **Avael** reprimanded Peterson and five police internal-affairs complaints were filed against Chapp.

"Because it was Peterson being disciplined and not Chapp, Chapp never got an opportunity to clear his name," Covan testified. Some people thought the article condoned such celebrating. Covan tells **Avael** on the tape, "It was one of the most high-minded, beautiful things I've read." She also tells **Avael** that she would sue if necessary to get Chapp "what he deserves."

During morning cross-examination by Miami attorney Michael Whelan, the city's counsel, Covan testified that she had loved her job as city attorney and did not want to walk away from it. "I had a perfect record," she said. "And I was not going to let that man (**Avael**) do something to me. "The city was ruthless against Mr. Chapp, the same way Mr. **Avael** was ruthless with me and with Chief Peterson."

When Whelan asked her if it bothered her sense of ethics that she was suing her ex-employer, Covan said, "Mr. Chapp needed me because I was willing to stand up to those people." Whelan disagreed with Covan's contention that Chapp, as a member of the civil service, had been entitled to a hearing before the civil-service board and, if needed, an appeal to the circuit court.

Unwavering throughout most of her testimony, Covan at last buckled slightly under Whelan's relentless and repetitive questioning. "Right now I have a headache and I've been testifying for days," she said when Whelan continued to doubt that she had tried to go to arbitration, a hearing that might have enabled Chapp to clear himself. Covan said a hearing before the Police Benevolent Association would have been fruitless.

Friedlander called former police Capt. Donald Grantham and Peterson to conclude the day's testimony. Grantham, who chaired the police pension-review board in 1997, said the board agreed to give Chapp a non-work-related, permanent disability.

Peterson, who came to Key West as a police captain in 1990 and was promoted to chief, testified that he was impressed by Chapp's work as an officer, though the two had many disagreements

and Chapp had once filed a grievance against Peterson. "He was very interested in professionalism," Peterson said Peterson characterized the police department then as having "undercurrents." "Police officers live in their own world of being cops," he testified. "They come in harboring certain likes and dislikes. Some were not so happy that I spent a lot of time in Bahama Village and others objected to the fact I have several gay friends.

"Tom Chapp never harbored those kinds of hatreds."

The trial resumes this morning at 9 before U.S. District Judge Michael Moore.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
May 13, 1997

CHIEF FIGHTS HIS DEMOTION
Author: *Herald Keys Bureau*

As expected, suspended Key West Police Chief Ray Peterson is fighting his demotion.

City Manager **Julio Avael** announced Friday that he had decided to demote the embattled chief to the rank of captain -- the same level Peterson was hired at in 1991. He was also served with a $13,000 pay cut.

Peterson had been on leave since March, while accusations against him were investigated. Starting Friday, he is officially serving a 30-day suspension. **Avael** has accused Peterson of insubordination and incompetence on the job.

On Monday, Peterson filed an appeal to his punishment. The appeal could be heard by the city's civil service board.

Still in dispute: whether Peterson's case should be heard by the Key West City Commission. Under the city charter, the commission must approve before the city manager can remove a department head.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
June 12, 1996

MANAGER'S CONTRACT GETS OK
Author: *Herald Keys Bureau*

City commissioners have agreed on a contract with the new city manager, **Julio Avael**.

Under the three-year contract approved Monday night, **Avael** will earn $89,000 a year and get a $10,000 moving allowance. In case of dismissal, he will get three months of severance pay.

Avael was selected to succeed City Manager Felix Cooper, who resigned in February. Assistant City Manager Paul Cates has filled in as acting manager.

Avael, a Key Wester who now is manager of Douglas County, Nev., will start work on July 15.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
November 27, 1993

WOULD-BE HRS CHIEF BOWS OUT
Author: *CHARISSE L. GRANT Herald Staff Writer*

A top candidate to head the state welfare agency for Dade and Monroe counties has pulled out of the race, leaving two contenders for the job.

Former Lee County Administrator **Julio Avael** withdrew this week to take a job as county administrator in Nevada's Douglas County, which includes Lake Tahoe. He interviewed for that position before appearing Nov. 12 before the committee screening candidates for Dade-Monroe district administrator of Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services.

"The HRS decision was not going to be made as soon as I hoped it would be," **Avael** said Friday. "After weighing the advantages and disadvantages, I thought it would be in my best interest to accept the county administrator offer."

State HRS Secretary Jim Towey, notified of **Avael**'s decision on Monday, intends to make his choice from the two remaining candidates -- acting HRS Administrator Anita Bock and Duane Zussy, an assistant chief for the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Zussy has prior experience in social service administration and health care management.

The final decision may come as soon as next week, said HRS spokeswoman Lisa Hutcheson. **Avael** accepted the $75,000-a-year Nevada job Nov. 19, the same day the screening committee issued its recommendations. **Avael** was the second candidate to withdraw from a pool of five people the screening committee picked to interview before recommending three to Towey.

Nancy Masiarcyzk, a manager of social and economic programs for the state Department of Transportation, pulled out the day before the Nov. 12 interviews for personal reasons. The committee did not recommend Maria Gandell, a clinical social worker from Tampa.

Resume

STEVEN STEWART CROWELL, JR.

2032 Silver Palm Road
North Port, Florida 34288
(941) 429-5050 (home)
(941) 429-7076 (work)

EMPLOYMENT:

CITY MANAGER
City of North Port, Florida
(www.cityofnorthport.com)
July 2005 to Present

Chief Administrative Officer of an extremely fast growing (sixth in the United States in 2007-2008), full service, stand alone southwestern Florida municipality, consisting of approximately 103 square miles of area (fourth largest in Florida) with a population of approximately 57,000 people (build out population projection is 200,000 people). Appointed by, and report to, a five member elected body. Responsible for the direction of the following departments/functions: Police; Fire/Rescue; Public Works (including Solid Waste); Planning, Zoning, and Engineering; Parks; Finance; General Services; Building (permitting, inspection, code enforcement); Utilities; Economic Development; and Community Outreach.

Responsible for a budget of approximately $134,000,000 (reduced from a high of approximately $154,000,000) with 604 fulltime employees (reduced from a high of 650 employees). The City has three bargaining units which represent many of the employees. Budget expenditures were reduced without an increase in ad valorem taxes and without reducing levels of service, even though during this time there were State imposed revenue limitations.

Community focus is on improving quality of life. Prior to incorporation, North Port began as a planned community with 80,000 platted lots. Several years ago, North Port began experiencing substantial growth. In response to the growth, my focus was on improving City operations and systems, as well as improving community infrastructure (i.e. roads, bridges, utilities, facilities, grounds, etc.) and managing growth, with increasing attention to environmental sustainability, while preparing for the future.

In addition to leading the organization and managing day-to-day operations, a representative sample of accomplishments (with Commission and staff) includes, but is not limited to: 1) developed and articulated organizational culture and expectations which increased employee accountability, responsiveness, and creativity; 2) managing growth and related impacts, including working with staff on establishing growth management plans, ordinances, and principals; 3) improved customer service, including implementing a "customer service" philosophy, resulting in the development of a "Customer Bill of Rights"; 4) improved financial operations of the City including implementing a zero based budget approach resulting in budget savings, improved financial reporting and analysis; 5) increased employee input on operational issues,

including personnel manual revisions, implemented employee meetings with the City Manager, formalized responses to employee suggestions, improved employee award recognition; 6) increased strategic planning (including adoption of economic development strategic plan), implemented various departmental operational improvement plans/audits and master planning initiatives; 7) improved community outreach, increased the amount of positive media coverage about the City, built partnerships with other organizations to accomplish community goals; 8) improved the overall economic development (i.e. business diversification and job creation) function of the City, including the implementation of a City "branding" initiative, restructured the Economic Development division of the City to more closely align with City goals, thus better situating the City for expanding and attracting new businesses; 9) increased City grant revenues; and 10) improved capital project planning, budgeting, and construction.

CITY MANAGER
City of Greenwood Village, Colorado
(www.greenwoodvillage.com)
April 1994 to July 2005

Chief Administrative Officer of a growing, suburban Denver community with a permanent population of approximately 15,000 people and a daytime population of 53,000 people (due to large number of commercial employers within the Village). Most of the Denver Technological Center, a premier mixed-use development, is located in Greenwood Village. Appointed by, and reported directly to, a nine member Mayor and City Council. Responsibilities included the direction of the following departments: Police; Public Works; Community Development; Parks, Trails, and Recreation; Finance; Administrative Services (Human Resources, City Clerk, Municipal Court, and Information and Technology); and Community Outreach as part of the City Manager's Office.

Responsible for a budget of approximately $38 million, with approximately 248 full time employees.

Community focus was on providing an exceptionally high quality of life with a commensurate level of municipal services. Several accomplishments were made in developing, implementing, and maintaining significant quality of life improvements, including implementation of an outcome based management philosophy.

In addition to leading the organization and managing day-to-day operations, a representative sample of accomplishments (with Council and staff) included, but was not limited to: 1) implemented a "customer service" philosophy; 2) implemented an outcome based achievement/performance measurement philosophy; 3) led planning and strategy efforts to maximize development potential of the "Village Center" a 47 acre, high density, mixed use, transit adjacent (light rail, bus, pedestrian, and vehicular) development; 4) increased employee participation and input on various organizational issues; 5) improved financial planning and reporting to the City Council, including development of capital programming and implemented the use of revenue and expenditure forecasting; 6) assisted the City Council in developing and implementing a strategic plan focusing on "quality of life" issues; 7) directed staff on issues related to growth management, including "smart growth" issues and annexations; 8) improved information and technology capabilities of the organization, including initiating the

preparation of a related strategic plan; 9) improved community outreach efforts, reinforcing the mission and strategic plan of the Village (a citizen survey indicated that Village outreach efforts were the most useful source of public information about Village activities); 10) initiated and directed staff in the preparation and implementation of a community survey to assist in program development and service delivery; 11) directed staff in the design and/or construction of various municipal facilities (including the renovation of City Hall, a significant component of which was to better facilitate customer service); 12) initiated the development of a "youth commission" providing youth an opportunity to have input on Village related youth issues; 13) directed staff and assisted Council in addressing various environmental issues including water quality, drainage, and airport noise; and 14) implemented a local circulator bus system.

CITY MANAGER
City of Commerce City, Colorado
July 1989 to April 1994

Chief Administrative Officer of a growing suburban Denver community with a permanent population of approximately 18,000 people and a daytime population of over 50,000 people (due to a large number of industrial and commercial employers). The City is adjacent to Denver International Airport, which is one of the busiest airports in the world. Responsibilities included direction of the following departments: Police; Public Works; Community Development (including Housing Authority); Parks and Recreation; Finance; and Economic Development.

Responsible for an operating budget of approximately $13 million, with approximately 145 full-time employees.

Major accomplishments included, but were not limited to: 1) oversaw annexation and initial development strategy of the "Airport Environs" Plan a (43 square mile area) residential and commercial development adjacent to the Denver International Airport; 2) addressed environmental issues; 3) oversaw the planning, financing and design of Buffalo Run Golf Course; 4) ensured achievement of City Council growth management goals; 5) reorganized several departments which included establishing employee committees to provide input on suggested changes (including implementing Community Oriented Policing); 6) improved financial management, including implementation of a capital improvement plan; 7) recommended and implemented several programs and procedural changes designed to encourage economic development efforts; 8) increased strategic planning and goal setting for City Council and staff; 9) implemented customer service programs; and 10) significant involvement on airport noise issues associated with Denver International Airport.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
City of La Vista, Nebraska
February 1986 to July 1989

Chief Administrative Officer of a rapidly growing suburban Omaha community of approximately 11,000 people. Responsible for the direction of the following departments: Public Works; Police; Fire; Building Inspection; Library; Recreation; Park Maintenance; and Sewer Utility.

Assisted the Mayor and City Council in identifying, developing and articulating the

"vision" for La Vista through successful implementation of strategic planning and goal setting. This process included: 1) significantly improving the public perception of La Vista (receiving national recognition for a municipal marketing program); 2) successfully implementing various economic development programs, (including the use of public/private partnerships); and 3) managing growth (annexations, development, infrastructure construction, zoning, comprehensive planning, etc.) to achieve the goals identified by the Mayor and City Council.

Other significant accomplishments included, but were not limited to, the following: 1) improved financial and risk management operations; 2) computerized all City departments; 3) increased grant revenues; 4) improved budgeting procedures; 5) implemented a five year capital improvement program; 6) improved employee morale; 7) revised departmental operations of several departments to reduce operating costs and improve service to citizens; 8) personally negotiating labor contracts (which included a police union); 9) improved intergovernmental relations; and 10) increased responsiveness (customer service) to citizens. Received ICMA award in Public Safety for combining detective services with an adjoining community, thus improving services and reducing costs.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
City of David City, Nebraska
August 1984 to February 1986

Chief Administrative Officer of a full service City of approximately 2,600 people which included a municipal airport; water treatment plant; electrical distribution and auxiliary power generating plant; sewage treatment; solid waste disposal; and a Housing Authority. Responsible for the direction of the following departments: Police; Building Inspection; Public Works (electric, water, and sewer utilities); Parks and Auditorium; Library; and Streets.

Significant major accomplishments included, but were not limited to: 1) implemented a computerized electrical load management program (resulting in first year savings of approximately $20,000); 2) computerized office operations and utility billing; 3) increased grant application and administration, implemented a revolving loan program for economic development; 4) improved employee morale and training; 5) implemented various financial improvements; 6) improved construction planning and management; and 7) improved citizen's perception of the City.

MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT
City of Dallas, Texas
December 1982 to August 1984

Management Assistant to the Assistant City Manager - June 1983 to August 1984

Provided managerial support to the Assistant City Manager responsible for the following departments: Public Works; Aviation; Water Utilities; Parks and Recreation; Dallas Transit System and Surtran (a regional airport bus system). Responsibilities included: 1) developing policy recommendations for the Mayor and City Council; 2) representing the Assistant City Manager; 3) analyzing departmental budgets; 4) liaison and problem solving work with departments and the City Council; 5) resolution of citizen service requests; 6) reviewing or preparing City Council meeting agenda items and addressing

related issues with department directors, staff, or Councilmembers; and 7) program evaluation.

Agenda Coordinator, Budget and Research Department - December 1982 to June 1983
Responsible for coordinating the City Council agenda process. This position included production of the agenda document, resolution of problems concerning complex or controversial agenda items, monitoring of City Council Communications and other support documentation, and ensuring the accuracy of all agenda items. Promoted to the above position.

Management Assistant, Police Department - July 1982 to December 1982
Responsible for various Police Department research projects, including officer shift analysis. Duties included: primary data collection; computer assisted data analysis; statistical data interpretation; report writing; and project presentation. Other experience included budgeting; personnel administration; project evaluation; grant writing; and program planning. Promoted to the above position.

GRADUATE INTERN
Office of the Mayor - City of Annapolis, Maryland
May 1981 to August 1981
Internship for MPA degree. Position provided experience in municipal organization, operation, and management. Prepared cost analysis study for consolidation of City bus and vehicle maintenance operations and facilities.

STORE MANAGER
The Gap Stores, Inc. - Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina
May 1978 to December 1980
Store Manager for a national retail clothing chain. Responsibilities included: implementation and management of operational, managerial, financial, and personnel systems. Duties included hiring and termination of employees; recruiting management personnel; employee training; sales forecasting; budgeting; expense and inventory control; customer relations; and store merchandising.

EDUCATION:

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY - Morgantown, West Virginia:
Master of Public Administration; 1982
Bachelor of Science: Economics; 1978
Bachelor of Science: Business Administration; 1977

PUBLIC EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE - Austin, Texas; 1991

HONORS:

Recipient of International City /County Management Association Credentialed Manager Designation
Selected by *BIZ 941 Magazine* in 2008 as one of seven "Best Bosses" in the region
Selected by *Sarasota Magazine* in 2007 as one of the "100 Most Powerful People in Town"

(Sarasota County)
Florida City Manager of the Year Finalist (2008)
Recipient of International City/County Management Association Award for Program Excellence in Public Safety, 1988
Granted a West Virginia University Fellowship for Public Administration
Pi Alpha Alpha - Public Administration Honorary, prior member

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

International City/County Management Association - member
Fund for the Profession Committee - former member
Professional Development Committee - former Chair
Florida City/County Management Association - member
Florida Special District Association - member
Community Association Institute - member
ASIS (American Society for Industrial Security) - member
Member of various other professional organizations

REFERENCES:
Available upon request

December 18, 2008

Mr. Colin Baenziger
President
12970 Dartford Trail
Suite 8
Wellington, Florida 33414

Dear Mr. Baenziger:

Enclosed please find my résumé in consideration of the Coral Gables City Manager position. Although I am happy in my current position, I am excited about the professional challenges the Coral Gables position would offer and the opportunity to again serve in a primer high quality of life city.

Based on my discussion with you, I am confident I possess the attributes and experience requested in the Coral Gables profile. I have experience in an **extremely high quality of life** city, with primer mixed use development: Greenwood Village, Colorado. I have **Florida municipal experience** in a city with a population of over 57,000 people: North Port, Florida. I have experience building relationships (working on campus expansion and development) with two small **institutions of higher learning**. The University of Miami also has property in North Port. I have experience in a **very large city**: Dallas, Texas. I also have experience in the **private sector**.

I have over 25 years of proven municipal management experience in large and small municipalities, including experience in ethnically and culturally diverse communities. The International City/County Management Association has designated me as a Credentialed Manager (based on experience, education, ethics, and training). I am passionate about municipal government; I have a very strong customer service focus; I am strong in managing and leading operations; and I have a proven record of success in managing and leading different types of cities in various states. I have experience managing in cities with a significant commercial sector. I have a reputation as an extremely ethical City Manager.

I am currently the City Manager of North Port, Florida. North Port has a population of approximately 57,000 people; with an area of 103 square miles; and a $134 million budget (budget high was approximately $154 million). North Port was experiencing substantial growth (sixth fastest growing city in the United States), until the current economic conditions reduced residential development; commercial development is still fairly strong. This recent growth impact necessitated an increased emphasis on the development of the City, both physically (aesthetically) and in operations. North Port is served by, and surrounds, two small campuses: Manatee Community College and the University of South Florida. I am personally working with the President and Vice-President/CEO of each institution to expand their campuses in North Port. The

University of Miami also has a small research facility and property (Little Salt Spring) in North Port, which President Shalala has recently visited.

I have substantial experience in a **VERY** high quality city with a fluctuating daily population similar to Coral Gables. Greenwood Village, Colorado had a permanent population of approximately 15,000 people (in eight square miles); however, the daytime population was approximately 53,000 people (with commensurate service levels) due to the large number of businesses located in the City, including Fortune 500 companies. Greenwood Village is home to the Denver Technological Center, a premier mixed-use development. Greenwood Village has a variety of high quality housing. The City had a major focus on an extremely high quality of life and development. I know what quality development and operations are, and I have been successful in leading these types of organizations.

I am confident that my personal references will substantiate that one of my strengths is implementation of directives by the elected body. I hold my staff and myself accountable for a high level of operational expertise.

I initiated a comprehensive focus on customer service in all the cities I have served. I hold employees accountable for working with customers to address the problems/concerns of the customer. I can provide numerous examples of customer service improvements I have initiated.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you in further detail my experience and accomplishments. Please feel free to contact me at the following address:

Steven S. Crowell, Jr.
2032 Silver Palm Road
North Port, Florida 34288
(941) 429-5050 (home)

Sincerely,

Steven S. Crowell, Jr.

CB & A Interviews

Steven Stewart Crowell Jr.

Education

MPA, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia
BS, Economics, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia
BS, Business Administration, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia

Experience

City Manager, North Port, FL	2005 – Present
City Manager, Greenwood Village, CO	1994 – 2005
City Manager, Commerce City, CO	1989 – 1994
City Administrator, La Vista, NE	1986 – 1989
City Administrator, David City, NE	1984 – 1986
Management Assistant, Dallas, TX	1982 – 1984

Background

The population of North Port is 57,000 with a build out potential of 200,000. It is a relatively new City and has faced substantial growth in the last seven years. This last year they were the 6th fastest growing city in the country. When Mr. Crowell was hired the population was approximately 40,000 people, and a few years prior to that it had been around 20,000. The City has 604 staff members, reduced from 650 due to the economic downturn. Twelve department heads and the Assistant City Manager report to Mr. Crowell. The current budget is $134 million (reduced from $154 million).

The greatest challenges facing the City of North Port are:

- Rapid Growth: The City has outgrown the organization system that served it reasonably well when it was a small town;
- Economy Downturn: The City's growth has halted and it has had to make quick adjustments to compensate. These include tough decisions such as recent layoffs;
- Demand for more service in spite of limited resources; and
- Several significant infrastructure expansion projects including water and sewer such as an upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant.

Interview Comments

Coral Gables is a city with a high quality of life city and, in that regard, is much like Greenwood Village, CO where he was the Manager for eleven years. Greenwood Village is the home of many affluent professionals and a number of large companies. After managing in Greenwood Village for a few years, he knew what the Council Members were thinking before they voiced it. That is the type of relationship he looks forward to in Coral Gables. Mr. Crowell is attracted by

the City's maturity and high level of service Coral Gables provides to its residents. He feels he has the right experience to lead and contribute to the organization. He is a high level professional and brings high standards to the cities he manages. In recognition of his abilities, Northport recently nominated him to be Florida's City Manager of the Year.

When asked about his management style, Mr. Crowell commented that he is first and foremost a team player. He brings all departments together and fosters unity of purpose. He wants to better the City and knows he needs the total effort of all the members on his team. He has strong interpersonal skills and is able to build on the strengths of his employees. He considers himself a facilitator, not a micromanager.

Mr. Crowell does not consider himself a numbers guy. He is not a person who measures success by statistics. For example the library started a "learn to read" program and had 10 people enrolled. The following year 15 people enrolled and many started to praise the success of the program. Instead of focusing on how few were enrolled, Mr. Crowell asked how many of those people can now read. He wants observable success and change.

If Mr. Crowell's staff were consulted, they would say he is a manager who challenges them to grow. He asks questions which make them think about their decisions. He lets them do their jobs but is supportive when they need assistance.

When asked about what his elected officials might say, Mr. Crowell noted that he works for five commissioners. Three of these Commissioners are newly elected and he is adjusting to their styles. He had an excellent relationship with the previous commission. They worked as a team and moved the City forward. The commission was faced with tough decisions and they were clear in their expectations. He followed through on decisions they made. He has not always agreed with their decisions, but his job is to carry out the elected officials' policies.

One of Mr. Crowell's greatest strengths is that he is achievement oriented. When he was hired in North Port, many capital projects were languishing. These included parks, fire stations, constructing City Hall and road improvements. He was able to kick start these projects and has seen them through to completion. Another of his strengths is his organizational and planning skills. For him, organization begins with strategic planning. He believes that once you know where you are going, then you can develop goals, objectives and tasks. From there, everything else falls into place and organization comes easily. It is obvious where resources need to go and what needs to happen next. Finally, customer service is very important to him and something he is very good at improving within his government. When he arrived in North Port, customer service was not a priority and he knew that had to change. One of his first steps was to create a "Customer Bill of Rights." It now hangs in every building in the City and is a constant reminder to the staff that government is all about the service it provides to its customers. The Bill has been followed up with training and the City's managers now place an emphasis on running their operations with the customers in mind. A natural outgrowth of that philosophy occurred in Greenwood Village when they designed the new city hall. Interestingly, the focus during the design was on what elements would assist the staff in providing the best customer service.

When asked what his greatest achievement has been, he did not point to a building or a successful referendum but cited the development of his employees. He has taught his staff to work together, to be change oriented and to work beyond departmental lines. One example of how he facilitates change and builds teamwork is the quarterly bus tour. He gathers all department directors onto a bus, and they tour the City to look at each others projects while discussing the City's needs and how they could work together. This trip broadens the perspectives of the management team and helps them view the City as a whole, instead of viewing it through their own specialty's glasses. Another part of his team building effort is to be certain every staff member realizes his or her work is important and contributes making the City what it is. One way he does that is by spending a day a month in the field working with city employees. He rides a garbage truck, drives the grader or helps do inspections. Aside from helping with the team building, it also gives him a better feel for the organization and where resources may be needed.

The most important part of Mr. Crowell's job is hiring employees and he spends whatever time is needed to hire the right people. Like strategic planning, it simply makes everything else go more smoothly. Hence, he does not settle for second best. For example, when he hired a new police chief, he went through three rounds of interviews before finding the right person for the organization. He received criticism from the media but took comfort in the fact that Chief is the right person for the job and not just someone sitting there because he had to fill a vacancy.

In terms of failings, Mr. Crowell regrets that he did not foresee the current economic downturn. He simply did not expect such an abrupt stop in growth. In hindsight, he would have slowed hiring and that might have mitigated some of the layoffs. If he had one thing to do over, he would change how he approached his job when he was newly hired in North Port. The City had been without a manager for some time and he was hard pressed to take care of many lingering problems. In re-evaluating how he performed, he feels he should have taken more time to develop relationships and meet with people rather than sift through paperwork.

Mr. Crowell believes the most significant issues facing Coral Gables are:

- Preparing the City for the continuing effects of the deteriorating economy;
- Maintaining the high quality of life in the City; and
- Promoting the values of the City.

During his first six months in Coral Gables, Mr. Crowell will:

- Develop relationships with the staff, Council, and community members;
- Evaluate the sophistication of the systems already in place; and
- Analyze how the City is measuring its successes.

Mr. Crowell is very open with the media and tries to help them do their job. If he is a meeting that is not critical and is needed by a member of the press, his assistant has been instructed to interrupt him.

There is nothing controversial or embarrassing in his background. Mr. Crowell considers himself to be very ethical and does his job following his moral compass.

In his leisure time, Mr. Crowell loves attending his children's sporting events. He is also a runner and an outdoors person.

Reason for wanting to leave current position:

Mr. Crowell is happy in North Port. Simply put, the position in Coral Gables is very attractive for him, and he is drawn to the City's value system. If successful, he would be leaving North Port on good terms.

Adjectives or phrases Mr. Crowell used to describe himself are:

- Principled;
- Good humored;
- Customer service oriented;
- Patient;
- Result oriented; and
- Ethical and honest.

Current Base Salary

$ 168,000

Interviewer's Impressions

Trustworthy and driven to improve the communities he works for. Capable, knowledgeable and calm although he admits being very excited about the prospect of working in Coral Gables. Thinks carefully before speaking.

Interviewed by:

Tallie Menzie
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Vanessa Carusone, Chair, Previous Commissioner, North Port, FL 941-822-9725

Ms. Carusone met Mr. Crowell in 2005 when he began as Northport's City Manager.

Mr. Crowell is an energetic manager with a unique and effective management style. He lets his management team do their jobs but make certain they function as a team and are united in purpose. He is an excellent public speaker and he captures the attention of audiences.

Mr. Crowell sets clear boundary lines between himself and the elected officials. He respects the decisions of the Commission and handles the administration of the City well. North Port's population has grown over 50% during the last five years and through it all, Mr. Crowell has demonstrated that he can prepare for and manage the changes. He has an open door policy and is always available when a Commissioner needs him. He takes criticism well. When Commissioners ask him to improve in some area, he makes a sincere effort to do so

Mr. Crowell has brought the City to a new level of professionalism. He also has a good relationship with the surrounding cities and the county.

Ms. Carusone would hire him again. Mr. Crowell is an excellent choice for any City or County Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Good sense of humor,
- Intelligent,
- Professional,
- Responsible,
- Hard Working, and
- Responsive.

Strengths: Leadership ability.

Weaknesses: He can be passionate on behalf of his staff.

Tom Jones, New Commissioner, North Port, FL 941-429-7071

Mr. Jones has known Mr. Crowell since he was hired in North Port in 2005. Mr. Jones was a long time community activist prior to his election and is very familiar with Mr. Crowell's management.

Mr. Crowell is professional and organized and you can not find a better city manager. He surrounds himself with good staff members. He simply hires competent professionals and is very good at assessing people's capabilities.

Mr. Crowell is an effective public speaker. For example, when he gave the 'State of the City' report with a power point presentation, it was both captivating and informative. He has also improved productivity and efficiency within North Port's departments. For example, he merged two departments thereby consolidating management and eliminating some administrative salaries. That effort saved the City a not inconsiderable amount of money.

Mr. Crowell does not have anything controversial in his background. He is a good family man, and he keeps a low profile. He simply goes quietly and competently about doing his job. He is a doer and gets it done.

Mr. Jones would hire him as a City Manager. In fact, he could not recommend a better person for a City Manager position. Mr. Crowell was nominated for City Manager of the Year last year and he should have won it. He is wonderful.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Diligent,
- Thorough,
- Attentive,
- Detail oriented,
- Strong organizational skills, and
- Hard worker.

Strengths: Organizational skills.

Weaknesses: None of note.

David Garofalo, Commissioner, North Port, FL 941- 429-7069

Mr. Garofalo is a very new commissioner and has only recently begun working closely with Mr. Crowell.

Mr. Crowell is an exceptional manager and very thorough. He meets the deadlines given to him and accomplishes whatever is asked of him. He hires good people. In fact, he has found replacements for a few department heads and they have all been exceptional choices. He surrounds himself with strong employees.

Historically, Mr. Crowell has done an excellent job of building a consensus within the Commission. He is, however, a bit challenged right now as the Commission has three new commissioners and the chemistry on the Commission is still being sorted out. When the new Commission was elected, Mr. Crowell held a meeting to discuss their expectations of him and that helped.

Mr. Crowell holds weekly department head meetings and unifies his staff. The staff holds him in very high regard.

Mr. Garofalo would hire him as a City Manager. He is a great City Manager and that is saying something. Being a City Manager is one of the toughest jobs out there and you have to give Mr. Crowell credit for doing the job so well. Mr. Crowell has an impeccable reputation.

The only criticism Mr. Garofalo has is that he would like to be a bigger part of the budget process.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Determined,
- Strong willed,
- Organized,
- Thorough,
- Dependable, and
- Makes good decisions.

Strengths: Hiring exceptional personnel.

Weaknesses: Can take things a little personally.

Barbara Gross, Previous Commissioner, North Port, FL 941-423-8314

Ms. Gross has known Mr. Crowell since he was hired in 2005.

Mr. Crowell finishes projects and accomplishes what he sets out to do. Two examples are the completion of fire stations, and many roads.

Mr. Crowell keeps the Commission well informed but he is also careful not to inundate them with unnecessary information. He is always available to the commissioners and open to answering any questions they might have. He has a very good relationship with the staff. He utilizes his employees well and builds on their strengths. He is also is a good public speaker.

Mr. Crowell is doing the best he can in these tough financial times and has handled the strain well. He built a cushion for the City, but layoffs were still required.

Ms. Gross recommends Mr. Crowell for any City or County Manager position though he would be a great loss to the City. Any City or County would be lucky to have him.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Team player,
- Delegates,
- Responsible,
- Good person,
- Professional, and
- Experienced.

Strengths: Uses his management team.

Weaknesses: Takes a long time to hire people though he makes excellent choices.

Richard Lockhart, Previous Chair Commissioner, North Port, FL 941- 426-4628

Mr. Lockhart served on the commission for the last eight years and has known Mr. Crowell since 2005.

Mr. Crowell has left his mark on North Port. The new Commission wants to micromanage him and get involved in the day-to-day administration of the City. Frankly, the new Commission does not understand the City Manager form of government.

Mr. Crowell is an outstanding City Manager. He runs the administration flawlessly. He has made some changes to staff and they were for the betterment of the organization. Mr. Crowell works with his staff as a team and listens to staff's input prior to making final decisions.

As the City Manager, he has been able to help the City grow with little disruption which is not easy. Developers and citizens are often at odds with one another but he has been able to minimize those issues. Mr. Crowell makes his decisions based on the best interests of the City. Growth is now basically frozen with the current state of the economy. Consequently, he is using the time to be sure the City is ready for the next wave. To do so, he is expanding both the sewer system and water plant among other things. He has also made many changes to the organization including the creation of the Engineering Department to be certain the City will be ready. One of the keys to his success is that he does not try to do his job alone but rather seeks qualified personnel to assist him.

Mr. Crowell works collectively with Commissioners. Mr. Lockhart recommends him for any City or County Manager position. He wishes only the best for Mr. Crowell.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Detail oriented,
- Trustworthy,
- Foresight,

- Professional,
- Good man, and
- Team effort.

Strengths: He sees what needs to be done and gets it done.

Weaknesses: Short tempered at times.

Jim Sanderson, City Manager, Greenwood Village, CO 303-486-5740

Mr. Sanderson has known Mr. Crowell since the mid 1980's. He first met him while Mr. Crowell was the City Administrator in La Vista Nebraska. At that time, Mr. Crowell hired Mr. Sanderson to be Commerce City, Colorado's Police Chief. Later Mr. Sanderson followed him to Greenwood Village as the Public Works Director and Mr. Sanderson took his place as the City Manager in Greenwood Village after he left. Greenwood Village is very upscale and it is difficult to meet the expectations of the citizens. Mr. Crowell is a hard act to follow.

In Greenwood Village, Mr. Crowell used a customer service survey to determine why the City was not delivering the best customer service. He identified the tools the staff was missing and then did a series of training sessions to help the staff improve. The citizens commented that the City did an excellent job of under-promising and over-delivering.

Mr. Crowell unified the City and brought together a good executive team. He has a gift for assessing staff's abilities. He made his staff stretch and think. One unusual characteristic of the management team was that it was not afraid to cross departmental lines to assist one another. Frankly, his management style made the job much more fun at Greenwood Village. He left his mark on the culture of the organization. Additionally, the citizens loved Mr. Crowell and everyone in Greenwood Village hated to see him.

Mr. Crowell had a solid relationship with the Council. It had eight members and a Mayor. He facilitated retreats and did a good job of consensus building. He was able to get the Council Members on the same page and that was impressive. He was very responsive to their needs and gave them thorough and complete background information so they could make high quality decisions.

Mr. Crowell was not involved in anything negative or controversial while he was in Greenwood Village.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Open,
- Honest,
- Thorough,
- Delivers to the community,

- Focused on customer service, and
- Easy to get along with.

Strengths: Assesses the organization, facilitates solutions, and makes the changes necessary to build a team.

Weaknesses: It takes time to adjust to the high expectations of Mr. Crowell professionally.

Robert Robinson, City Attorney, North Port, FL 941-366-7550

Mr. Robinson has known Mr. Crowell since May of 2005.

Mr. Crowell has done an excellent job with North Port. The City has been transitioning from a small town into a medium size city, and he assisted wonderfully in that transition. Over the past few years, it has had the greatest building boom the area has ever seen and he managed the government seemingly effortlessly throughout. He hires good people and provides additional training for any staff members who need it.

The City is a better place because Mr. Crowell has managed there. He emphasizes customer service and made it a true priority of the organization. He also stresses economic development and organized an economic development board to promote it.

When Mr. Crowell speaks, he has something important to say. He does not talk for the sake of talking. He is very involved in the presentations to the City Commission. He is very well liked in the organization. The staff, elected officials and the public would hate to see him go.

Mr. Robinson would absolutely recommend Mr. Crowell as a City or County Manager.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Amiable upon first contact,
- Well spoken,
- Proper,
- Professional,
- Customer service oriented, and
- Trustworthy.

Strengths: Customer service and economic development.

Weaknesses: It takes some time to get to know Mr. Crowell (this is not necessarily a negative).

William Taffe, Fire Chief, North Port, FL 941-240-8151

Mr. Taffe has 30 years in the business and has known Mr. Crowell since 2005.

Mr. Taffe has worked for many city managers and Mr. Crowell is the finest he has ever seen. He is an inspiring manager, not a micromanager. He expects department heads to run their departments though he is always there as a resource. He guides department heads but does not make decisions for them.

Mr. Crowell is a progressive manager. He challenges his employees and asks them to stretch. For example, he challenged the City's fire personnel to implement green initiatives. He has fostered the concept of the entire City staff being one team. He has even asked Mr. Taffe for input into the overall budget process, which is a little out of his realm in fire safety management.

Mr. Crowell brings the employees out of their comfort zone to help them grow. He also emphasizes that everyone should help everyone else because they are all part of the same organization. He is a very good public speaker. He is very highly regarded in the community. One of his initiatives was the formation of a community development resource group to help attract businesses. He is outstanding at forming strong relationships with surrounding communities. When addressing the Commission, he is soft spoken and respects the decisions they make. He will give his opinion when asked, but does not intervene in the decision making process.

Mr. Crowell has transformed the City. He has taken the City from a small town community to a progressive community and has given it a new vision for the future. He is a transformative agent. One of his more interesting innovations an annual bus tour throughout the community with all the management team. The idea is for the department heads to see, as group, what needs to be done and where improvements can be made. He challenges leaders in the City to think outside the box.

When asked about controversy, Mr. Taffe mentioned the Fire Union has challenged Mr. Crowell in the negotiations and there have been disputes. Mr. Taffe believes these issues are not due to a lack of trying on Mr. Crowell's part.

Mr. Taffe strongly recommends Mr. Crowell for any local government leadership position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Fair,
- Intellectual,
- Quiet,
- Understanding,
- Humorous and fun,
- Leadership.

Strengths: Fosters and mentors leaders.

Weaknesses: None.

Terry Lewis, Police Chief, North Port, FL 941-685-9192

Mr. Lewis was hired by Mr. Crowell in 2006 to be the Police Chief in North Port.

Mr. Crowell lets the department heads do their jobs. He is the best leader Mr. Lewis has ever known. While he meets with each member of his management team one-on-one, he is a firm believer in teamwork. Each department shares in finding solutions for the problems of other departments. He brings diverse people together.

Mr. Crowell's ethics are above reproach. He has an excellent reputation at both the county and state level. He is customer focused and an excellent manager. He is a good steward of the public trust and the public funds.

Mr. Crowell does not have anything controversial in his background. He is not afraid to take a stand. He has brought a sense of professionalism and integrity to North Port where it did not exist before.

Mr. Lewis would unequivocally recommend him as a City Manager. It would be a loss to any City if they did *not* hire him.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Crowell are:

- Ethical,
- Honorable,
- People person,
- Strong leader,
- Man of integrity, and
- Goal oriented.

Strengths: Team leadership and integrity.

Weaknesses: None.

Prepared by:

Tallie Menzie
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for
STEVEN S. CROWELL, JR.

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Sarasota County, FL	No Records Found
Arapahoe County, CO	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found
Colorado	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Sarasota County, FL	No Records Found
Arapahoe County, CO	*Record Found February 2001 – Plaintiff in Small Claims Law Suit **Disposition** = May 2001, Dismissed With Prejudice
Federal	
Florida	No Records Found
Colorado	*Record Found May 1997 Prisoner Civil rights Law Suit filed against Arapahoe County, et. al. **Disposition** = October 1997 – Dismissed Without Prejudice

Motor Vehicle	
Florida	No Records Found
Credit	Very Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

*See Candidate Explanation for Records Found on Page 2

From: unrivaled@verizon.net [mailto:unrivaled@verizon.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2009 6:26 AM
To: kknutson@cb-asso.com
Subject: Re: Coral Gables Background Report Findings that Require an Explanation

Sorry, I had forgotten about the Eurosport issue. I had a car repaired by Eurosport. The repair was not done to my satisfaction. I attempted to resolve the issue with the owner of the business, to no avail. I initiated (I was the Plaintiff) action in Small Claims Court. The amount in dispute was $140.00. The owner and I agreed in mediation to resolve the dispute to my satisfaction. I will attempt to send, under a separate e-mail, some documentation of the above. This was an issue over "principal." I attempted to resolve the issue prior to initialing Court action.

This reminds me of another incident in which I initiated (I was the Plaintiff) action in small Claims Court. When I accepted the North Port City Manager position I rented a room for a short period of time. At the conclusion of the rental term, the landlord stated that I did not provide sufficient notice and kept my security deposit. I attempted to resolve the issue with the landlord, to no avail. I initiated action in Small Claims Court and the Court found in my favor. I cannot find my records on this incident. I do not recall the amount in dispute, but was small, no more than a few hundred dollars. I can try to get a copy of the Stipulation from the Court, but that will take some time. Again, this was an issue of "principle" in which I attempted to resolve the issue directly with the landlord, but eventually decided to initiate action. Again, the decision was in my favor.

I do not know what the other items are. Looks like some prisioners in County jail sued the Police Department in Greenwood Village. As City Manager, I was identified in various legal actions involving the cities I served on behalf of those cities.

Please let me know if I can provide additional information.

Thanks

Steve Crowell

Internet Research

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 8, 2009

Seeking to manage a city to the south
STEVE CROWELL: North Port official applies for Coral Gables job
Author: *JOHN DAVIS john.davis@heraldtribune.com*

City Manager **Steve Crowell** is on the list of candidates for the top executive job in Coral Gables, a city of 42,000 south of Miami.

Crowell, 53, said his interest in the Coral Gales city manager job does not indicate dissatisfaction with his current position.

"This is not anything negative about North Port or the new commission or anything like that," said **Crowell**.

Crowell, who came to North Port in 2005, applied for the Coral Gales job about a month ago. Coral Gables began looking for a new top administrator in October when then-City Manager David Brown announced he was leaving after a police investigation concluded that Brown tried to cover up certain expenditures made on his city-issued Visa card, the Miami Herald reported. Brown was not charged with a crime.

Brown was supposed to stay on the job until Jan. 31, giving the city time to find his replacement. But he resigned unexpectedly in November after the mayor's former administrative assistant filed a sexual harassment complaint against Brown, according to the Herald.

Coral Gable leaders are on a nationwide search for Brown's replacement, and plan to narrow the list to 10 or so finalists, but **Crowell** said Wednesday he does not know whether he will be on that list, noting that he has not been invited to interview for the job.

Crowell said that, while he is interested in the Coral Gables job, he is not on a "full-fledged job hunt right now."

North Port Commissioner Jim Blucher was surprised by the news that **Crowell**, who makes about $160,000 a year, was considering a move.

"I'll be anxious to talk to Steve afterwards, to see if I can find out exactly why he was thinking about doing that," Blucher said.

Crowell, who has a master's degree in public administration from West Virginia University, left a job as city manager of Greenwood Village, Colo., to come to North Port.

In the past year he has overseen budget cutbacks and downsizing of the city's staff as North Port lost nearly $2 billion of its tax base amid declining property values and a construction slowdown.

North Port Sun (FL)
September 5, 2008

North Port budgeting raises eyebrows, questions
Author: *TERRY O'CONNOR*

NORTH PORT -- Even in these tough economic times, which required 27 city employee layoffs in 2008, the proposed $133.7 million North Port budget is still undeniably flush with cash. With the construction industry in the doldrums and property values plunging, North Port resident Andy Hawkinson is asking why millions in surplus funds are being rolled back into reserves rather than being spent on economic stimulation. He claims North Port City Manager **Steve Crowell** is bloating the budget with an unnecessary 20 percent in reserve operating funding. **Crowell** said the reserves give North Port a safety net other cities envy. He points out the North Port city budget has received unqualified support from independent auditors for the past 20 years, including the last six budgets under Finance Director Terri Gould.

That brings up another sore spot. Hawkinson asks why **Crowell** and the City Commission will not appoint a city auditor as outlined by the North Port charter. **Crowell** said the city contract with independent auditor CPA Associates of Bradenton serves the same function.

Crowell emphasizes the City Commission has the final word on budgetary matters. He merely makes recommendations, he said.

"There's no hard-and-fast rule on 20 percent reserves," **Crowell** said. "There could be less or more. I've always thought it was better to have money than to use it for cash flow.

"Could our reserves be less than 20 percent? Probably. That 20 percent is a policy decision. We could free up more money, no doubt about that."

The five city commissioners ultimately decide budget reserve amounts after taking into account the city manager's recommendations, Commissioner Jim Blucher said.

"The 20 percent reserve is important to me mainly for all the work we have to do with infrastructure," Blucher said. "The higher reserve will keep us moving forward during bad times. I don't think that's exorbitant."

Hawkinson will tell anyone who wants to listen, and some who would rather not, that North Port's budget is being mismanaged by **Crowell**, Gould and the commissioners. Particularly in these tough economic times, Hawkinson believes reserves could be put to much better use than collecting interest.

"Is there some money available in the treasury that could provide some stimulus and relief?" Hawkinson asks. "Yes. The general fund can spare $10 million easily, the (tax-abandoned) lot fund has $16 million and the 1-cent fund has $17.8 million."

City Commission Chairman Fred Tower III said Hawkinson does not agree with city budgeting philosophy, but that doesn't make it wrong.

"It's the same thing to me as a family budget," Tower said. "Do you want to have a savings account or do you want to live paycheck to paycheck? Most financially responsible families always have some money put aside for emergencies. And that is the philosophy of the city manager and Terri Gould -- to have that money available."

Doing homework

Hawkinson said the commissioners are betraying the public trust by relying on **Crowell** too much and not doing their homework on the budget.

"It's **Crowell**. The commission doesn't understand any of this. They're not elected to understand any of this," Hawkinson said. "If this were going on in the private sector ... they'd be fired. They're too easy to manipulate."

Gould said city budget reserves come in handy when unexpected expenses arise, as they inevitably do.

"My first year, we wrecked three police cars," Gould said. "There was no money in the budget to fix them. We needed to buy police cars quick. So we used the contingency fund."

Tower agrees. "I'm comfortable with the reserve," Tower said. "Basically, I'm a financial conservative and believe you should always be prepared for tomorrow, yet still provide needed services for the system. We are doing both with the budget."

Hawkinson remains unsatisfied by city official explanations. He says **Crowell** is misdirecting the commissioners and the public.

"I am not saying spend it all, just tell the truth," Hawkinson said. "Absolutely, unequivocally, he is misinforming the people. The city has $203 million in the bank today, right at this moment." **Crowell** wants his critics, particularly Hawkinson, to use the proper terminology and see the full picture when discussing city reserves. He believes his positions have been misrepresented.

"I've never said to pad budgets by 20 percent," **Crowell** said. "One thing that gets me riled up is when someone calls me a liar. If people ask me if I want 20 percent in reserve (for operating funds), my answer would be I recommended a higher reserve. It isn't illegal. It isn't unethical. It's a policy decision."

One happy byproduct of the plump reserves is property taxes did not increase, despite slumping property tax revenues, although **Crowell** did recommend a millage boost.

"That's a pretty important point," **Crowell** said. "You could also argue expenditures could be less and you'd pay less in property taxes. That's a valid point. It's a policy decision."
Cities with low Single A rated bonds such as North Port have average reserves of more than 20 percent, Gould said. As proof, she points to Moody's Report, which pegs the average city reserve at 23.8 percent.

"For the size of our city and the amount of our growth, we're very satisfied," Gould said. "We're doing very well with the Single A rating."

Hawkinson said Sarasota gets by with just 8 percent in reserve operating funding.

"The generally accepted accepted rule ... in budgeting was 3 percent to 5 percent in reserves 10 years ago," Hawkinson said. "The current budget philosophy projects 5 percent to 17 percent reserve, in order to protect against budget fluctuations."

Hawkinson said he and **Crowell** used to be on the same page about budgeting. But no more.

"I have probably 100 e-mails on my computer from **Steve Crowell**," Hawkinson said. "We've looked at the budget together and seemed to be on the same wavelength. He looked at my concerns -- then I never heard another word from him. Then it became sort of an antagonistic relationship when I realized how poorly the product was put together and how uninformed the citizens were."

Looking toward the future

The new budget will have a first reading at 6 p.m. Thursday at City Hall, which is required by the state. Sept. 25 is the scheduled second reading. **Crowell** said the budget will reflect a shortfall of revenues needed to address North Port projects now.

"As a young city with a whole lot of infrastructure needs, we probably don't have enough revenue to keep up with demand," **Crowell** said. "To handle any of those needs, we will probably have to go out for general obligation funds. We'll probably have to go out soon."
North Port is the only city in the state that forbids city officials from pledging sales tax funding to projects. It must hold a citizens referendum to do so.

General fund spending, however, is not restricted, which gives **Crowell** and the commissioners a great deal of discretionary spending power. The general fund has a projected budget balance of $36.4 million, down $5.7 million from last year's budget.

Gould said budgeted numbers are only projections at the start of the year -- not separate pots of money.

"You start with an audited fund balance at the beginning of the year," Gould said. "You start with real numbers there, and the rest are projections."

Crowell said too many people don't understand that basic premise: Audited fund balances are real money at the start of the fiscal year, while all other figures are what he calls conservative fiscal estimates.
"I'm good, Terri is better, but sometimes we have to take a guess at (spending projections)," **Crowell** said. "It's a projection, but you don't want to be under on revenue."

Tower said **Crowell** and Gould have provided "great city management."

"Some people don't agree with that, but we do have great city management," he said. "We have a vision for the future and I'd like to see it realized."

The tough budget questions won't end in fiscal year 2008-09 if property values continue to decline in North Port. The new city commissioners will have to learn all about the budget then. "2010 is going to be much more difficult to budget for," **Crowell** said. "We're going to see much less revenue."

North Port 2008-09 budget
OPERATING EXPENDITURES
Fund New budget Change Percent change 20 percent reserve
General $36,486,664 ($5,725,640) (13.56) $7,297,333
Utility funds $31,948,203 ($22,423,187) (41.24) $6,389,641
Road/Drainage $17,582,118 (901,908) (4.88) $3,516,424
Solid waste $9,055,206 $1,370,251 17.83 $1,811,041
Fire rescue $8,012,414 $1,298,139 19.33 $1,602,483
Fleet $3,050,908 ($219,309) (6.71) $610,182
Building fund $2,105,105 ($1,234,935) (36.97) $421,021
Special revenue $99,040 ($79,320) (44.47) $19,808
Total $108,339,658 ($27,915,909) (25.76) $21,667,931
(decrease)

TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES
Category New budget Percent of budget
District assessments $27,624,656 20.66
Water and sewer $14,453,165 10.81
Appropriated fund $14,258,901 10.66
Utility taxes $13,393,571 10.01
Services $11,614,337 8.68
Impact fees $11,058,773 8.27
Ad valorem taxes $10,814,401 8.09
Intergovernmental $7,121,003 5.32

Debt proceeds $6,655,000 4.98
Other sources $5,878,025 4.4
Miscellaneous $5,532,896 4.14
Interest earnings $3,023,036 2.26
Licenses/permits $1,901,242 1.42
Fines and forfeits $412,200 0.3
Total $133,741,206 100 (decrease)

Source: City Manager **Steve Crowell**'s proposed budget for fiscal year 2008-09.

Venice Gondolier Sun (FL)
August 3, 2008

High quantity of quality
Emphasis on quality of life keeps city employees mindful of providing good customer service.
Author: *ED SCOTT*

NORTH PORT -- City Manager **Steve Crowell** handed Police Chief Terry Lewis a copy of an article he read in a government trade magazine.

"'Hybrid Police Patrol Vehicles Praised,'" Lewis said later, reading the story's title. Instead of "FYI" or asking for Lewis's opinion of the article, **Crowell**'s accompanying sticky note said, "And my question is?"

"He makes you think," Lewis said. "He doesn't answer. He doesn't direct. He says, 'What do you think my question might be?' That's how he challenges me ... and all of us. That's really something to work for."

Crowell's management style also pleases his bosses, North Port City Commissioners, who gave him mostly high marks during his annual evaluation -- and a 5 percent raise, moving his salary from $160,000 to $168,000. "I'd like it to have been more," Chairman Fred Tower III said.
As he begins his fourth year as city manager, **Crowell**, 53, still stresses the importance of improving North Port quality of life. Whether he's implementing commissioner policies or directing his department heads and 586 city employees, **Crowell** recognizes "We're here to improve that quality of life. How we go about that is important."

From good customer service to meeting challenges before they become problems, the main thing is for city departments to share similar goals, **Crowell** said.

For example, safety is not just the police and fire departments' responsibility. The Public Works department and Parks and Recreation division play roles as well.

"We try to get (employees) to understand that they have a vested interest in what that other department is doing," **Crowell** said. "Everybody has a component of quality of life."

From new-employee orientations through their last day working for the city, **Crowell** wants staffers to understand what quality of life means and how each can contribute.

Some residents and employees associate quality of life with the code words "Safe. Clean. Pretty. Fun," a slogan the city has promoted. **Crowell** said there are countless ways to define quality of life.

He tells new employees they "are here to make a positive contribution and difference" to the city. A good example is the Price Boulevard Work group run by Ben Newman, a city engineer. "That public process of discussion, where we bring in the community and we talk about Price Boulevard and what the options may be," City Engineer Pat Collins said. "That in itself causes the community to get together and it forces conversation. That conversation adds to the quality of life."

Other quality of life goals and accomplishments:

* The Public Works Department rehabilitated 120 of some 800 miles of city roads, a $13 million project. The PWD customer service program uses software to manage customer complaints and responses to them. "That has helped us to be more responsive to the public," Public Works Director Branford Adumuah said.

* Lewis encourages police department employees to concentrate on solving problems and being reactive. They held the inaugural Citizens Law Enforcement Academy. They also upgraded their software, allowing computer-savvy citizens to have access to police records, and encourage organizations such as Community Health Action Team to hold CHAT meetings at the department.

* Even though they provide an internal service, Finance Director Terri Gold says her employees contribute to "Safe. Clean. Pretty. Fun."

"Sometimes it's a little more difficult to see," Gould said, "and that's challenging for me." Finance received an award this year for the city's budget being "a good communication device, and I think that's critical in that that provides an education tool to the community, which adds to their understanding of what's going on in government, so it's not some secret place where nobody understands what's going on." Her employees also use face time with residents paying utility bills to promote city activities such as the Freedom Festival.

* **Crowell** directed employee layoffs this year, primarily due to the reduction of Building Department activity. Director Scott Williams called it a "challenging" year. Despite reduced staffing, North Port became a "Tree City USA" and worked with the Information and Technology division to upgrade software. Williams' goal is online permitting.

* Establishing the new activity center in the Yorkshire Street/Raintree Boulevard area should lead to higher-paying jobs, City Planner Sam Jones said. "Not just retail, which is what we are getting in all of our activity centers, but hopefully more of the high-tech ... so the citizens will have some money to enjoy the quality of life. Jones said implementing the Myakkahatchee Creek master plan over the next 10 years will help it become North Port's version of New York's Central Park.

* Employee, community and customer outreach are the focus of the General Services department's quality of life effort. I&T manager Brad Schuette calls the city's new $2 million

Family Service Center, expected to open in September, "a really exciting addition," where the city predicts serving 7,000 people per year to start.

* One way Fire Rescue contributes to North Port fun is with mascot Sparky, Fire Chief Bill Taaffe said. "We put him out there in all these public events ... about one every three days. "That gives the firefighters an opportunity to engage the parents -- while the kids are meeting Sparky and getting their picture taken -- and get our safety message across.

"You can make work fun and you can enjoy doing it and still provide a service to the community."

* Assistant City Manager Danny Schult said quality of life improvements go beyond the things citizen can feel and touch.

"One of the more important improvements has been the change in city government, more specifically the organization itself," Schult e-mailed. "(City government) has become more accessible and more responsive to our citizens. This can be seen in development of the "Citizen Bill of Rights," a document that sets out what North Port citizens can expect from the employees of the city."

* Outreach is an important part of the Utility Department, Director Cindi Mick said. "One thing we hear on a daily basis from **Steve** is the importance of connecting and reaching out to the public, so the public understands what we do and the public understands that we care about them. That's what we're here for, to make their quality of life good here in North Port."

North Port Sun (FL)
September 30, 2007

Howard James column: Who is that mysterious man who runs the city?

:
When City Manager **Steve Crowell** was a boy, his science teacher asked a question: "Why do cities put their water towers high on a hill?"

One youngster suggested officials wanted people to see the city's name painted on the side of the tower.

Crowell thought for a minute, then offered the real answer -- it had something to do with using gravity to deliver water to the community.

North Port's future city manager says he first became curious about how cities functioned on that day, but had no clue then that he would manage cities as a career. Instead he was familiar with military bases and how a general served as "manager."

Born at Fort McClellan, at the edge of Anniston, Ala., **Crowell** doesn't have a traditional home town. In fact the base was closed in 1999. During his father's career, the **Crowell** family moved to Hawaii, Germany, and Washington, DC. as well as places less glamorous.

Crowell has long had an interest in economics and politics and how cities function. He also enjoys collecting campaign memorabilia.

After high school, he was offered a wrestling scholarship at West Virginia University in Morgantown, W.Va. At first he wanted to major in economics, but was told he would never find a job in that field. His first degree, in 1977, was in business administration. The following year he earned a bachelor's degree in economics.

After graduation from WVU, he went to work opening stores for the Gap. Single at the time, moving from town to town: opening stores was a comfortable career for an army brat.

Then one day he spotted a newspaper ad for a city looking for a manager. The candidate needed a master's degree. **Crowell** quit his job at the Gap, returned to WVU, and graduated in 1982 with a master's degree in public administration.

After a short stint in the city of Annapolis, Md., as a management intern, he applied for a job as an administrative assistant in the Dallas city manager's office. A total of 450 candidates applied for 12 positions. **Crowell** proudly tells of how he was one of the 12 hired.

One of his first assignments involved doing research for the police department, looking at the possibility of such things as officers working 10 hour shifts. Later he worked on city budgeting and he learned about other city departments. His mentor was an assistant city manager responsible for public works, planning, the airport and housing. It was at this point **Crowell** began his search for his first job as a city manager.

First stints as city manager

He landed a job in David City, Neb., a tiny town of 2,500, where he also served as a volunteer fireman and drove the ambulance. **Crowell** recalls how, when working on the budget, he would have to stop and rush to a fire or to an accident. But it was in little David City where he began honing his skill as a city manager.

After a year and a half, he moved on to La Vista, Neb., a community of 18,000. The city constructed highway interchanges, upgraded the sewer system and made other improvements in the infrastructure. **Crowell** said it wasn't what most would call "fun stuff." But it helped him learn more about developing and running a city. **Crowell** remained in La Vista for more than two years -- long enough to meet and ask a La Vista girl to become his wife.

When he returned to visit LaVista a couple of years ago, he felt a sense of satisfaction in how the city has developed, using the infrastructure he had helped create.

In time, an executive recruiter urged **Crowell** to check out an opportunity in Commerce City, Colo., a city close to Denver. Again the city was larger and growing rapidly. He worked there from the summer of 1989 until the spring of 1994.

His next stop was Greenwood Village, Colo., a smaller, more affluent, upscale community that included mansions on large estates. **Crowell** was manager there for 12 years. The three **Crowell** daughters were born in Greenwood Village. He enjoyed the assignment because he learned how to run a different kind of city, one with dense development that included tall office buildings.

When the North Port position opened, an executive recruiter called again. **Crowell** decided to apply. He still wonders why he was second choice for the job. **Crowell** has long liked Florida and loves water. There are no ocean beaches in Nebraska or Colorado.

"I've always enjoyed fixing things," he adds. With its soaring growth and other challenges "North Port sounded like a fun place."

Crowell tries to take time out of each day to run. Not only does it help him keep trim, but he is away from ringing phones and it offers a quiet, private time to think about city problems.
After being hired, did he arrive with a ready made list of solutions? He acknowledges some mangers do that. But **Crowell** says it isn't his style. Instead he likes to listen to the people before he establishes his priorities.

He also prefers to remain slightly in the background. He encourages the elected officials to produce their policy decisions. He sees his job as carrying out the commissioner's instructions, whether he likes what they want done, or not. It reminds one of how **Crowell**'s father, a full Army colonel, must have faithfully respond to the demands of the generals he served under. "They say 'do it,' and we do it," **Crowell** notes.

The army trains its officers to "delegate to strength." **Crowell** seems to have a similar theory of management.

He explains he likes to hire people who have similar "values." But when I asked him what he meant by that, he conceded it was hard for him to explain. **Crowell** talked of trying to hire people who are truthful and honest, men and women who believe in excellent customer service, and who are dedicated to improving the lives of citizens. A number of those who have been hired in his first two years are women.

His "values" approach also involves "getting the right people in the right spots." Then he mentioned how his assistant, Danny Schult, "makes the same decision that I would make." **Crowell** is willing to hire people with limited experience if they have the values he is looking for, including what he calls "outreach" and a focus on "outcomes" or getting the job done. How does he feel about the progress in his first two years in North Port?

"You can't just wave a magic wand and get everything fixed in a year or two," he says. Solving North Port's problems requires, as he explained earlier, first getting the right people in the right spots. Several department heads have departed since **Crowell** has arrived. He won't criticize them. His replacements have been honest and talented.

After more than an hour interview, and having talked to **Crowell** before, I walked away from our meeting still feeling I don't really know **Steven S. Crowell** Jr. very well. He is approachable and answers every question fully. But he doesn't volunteer much.

I left with the feeling **Crowell** reveals only what he wants people to see. I can only wonder what it would be like to just sit down and chat without my reporter's pad and pencil.

North Port Sun (FL)
September 14, 2007

North Port City manager's salary boosted
Steve Crowell will earn an extra $15,550 annually
Commissioners praised City Manager Steve Crowell's management style.
Author: *ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER*

NORTH PORT -- City Commissioners awarded City Manager **Steve Crowell** a healthy raise Monday night based on their annual evaluation of his performance.

Crowell's annual salary will increase, retroactive to July 5, from $144,450 to $160,000, an increase of $15,550. Commissioners also approved an increase to Crowell's monthly car allowance from $400 to $650.

An initial motion by Commissioner Dick Lockhart would have increased **Crowell**'s salary by only 7 percent, but other commissioners felt **Crowell** was worth more. All city employees can earn only up to a 7 percent raise depending on their pay range.

"I don't think 7 percent is sufficient," said Commissioner Jim Blucher. "I think the city manager has done an excellent job. I know that's $10,000 under Sarasota, but we can't go that far in one jump."

Commission Chair Barbara Gross said the management team's "camaraderie" was a direct sign of how successful **Crowell** has been.

"(They) were really proud of our city manager," she said. "And the customer service has gotten better."

Commission Vice Chair Fred Tower III said the city is "a lot further along" than when **Crowell** started two years ago.

"When I first got elected three years ago, the people who are still here were good then, but they're better now because of what he's brought to it," Tower said. "A good leader has good people around him, and good people don't work for a bad leader."

Commissioner Vanessa Carusone, who offered **Crowell** the most critiques on her evaluation sheets, approved of the $160,000 and was quick to point out she really is behind the city manager.

"The key to my evaluation (of **Crowell**) was the summary. He is a wonderful city manager. I would not trade him, he's not allowed to be fired -- FYI -- and I truly have no complaints about him."

In Cape Coral the city manager earns $161,491; the Punta Gorda city manager makes $122,922, the city of Sarasota manager earns $170,000 and the Venice city manager makes $149,000. The Charlotte County administrator makes $161,491; the Sarasota County administrator earns $208,707.

Crowell thanked the commission for the raise and the critiques.

Englewood Sun (FL)
August 15, 2007

City Manager Steve Crowell received mostly high marks
Author: *ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER*

NORTH PORT -- Better late than never.
Commissioners have finally completed their evaluations of City Manager **Steve Crowell**. Although he is supposed to receive his evaluation before the anniversary of his hiring --July 5 -- this is the second year in a row the commission has been late completing them.

Each commissioner ranked **Crowell** in each category on a scale of one to 10, as well as offering comments and recommendations. Overall, reviews were positive.

Commissioner Dick Lockhart said "from what I have heard from lawyers and developers, (**Crowell**) rates a 10," in communication and leadership, where "reorganization up to now has been outstanding."

Commission Chair Barbara Gross gave **Crowell** 10s in all but one category, customer service, where she gave him a score of nine.

"I am still concerned about customer service in some departments, although things have improved greatly," she wrote in her comments. "We still have complaints about some departments not getting back to the citizens in a timely manner. The management team seems to be cooperating well, but the employees from different departments need to inform each other of things they see that don't come under their departments."

In his first year on the dais, Commissioner Jim Blucher furnished **Crowell** feedback in every category. His lowest score came in the vision and actualizing category.

"The vision the city manager has for the city seems at times different than that of the city commission," Blucher said. "We need to be on the same base when it comes to our vision for the future of North Port. Economic development and how to bring high paying jobs into the city is one example."

Commission Vice Chair Fred Tower III also gave **Crowell** high marks on everything. He said **Crowell**'s fiscal planning and execution, in light of the 2007-2008 budget presentations the "best in three years and very comprehensive." Tower also praised **Crowell**'s consensus-building.

Venice Gondolier Sun (FL)
June 29, 2007

Elaine Allen-Emrich column: City manager sizes up the state of the city

As I listened to City Manager **Steve Crowell** explain the many changes North Port has undergone in the past year, I smiled as I knew most of what he was talking about and could follow along easily.

However, he presented some new information Thursday at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon that was astonishing.

For example: He explained North Port's growth in FPL accounts was 13.6 percent. FPL's systemwide growth was 2.2 percent. This is from FPL's March report.

North Port was third in the FPL service area in cities over 10,000 customers and number one in account growth in cities over 25,000 customers.

Their figures include having 24,894 residential customers; 1,324 commercial customers and 822 industrial customers.

According to **Crowell**'s research, FPL services 820 industrial customers in unincorporated Sarasota County. That means North Port actually has slightly more industrial businesses than some areas of Sarasota County.

North Port also grew faster in 2006 than any other area of Sarasota County.

Crowell said the census report was just released and lists North Port as having 51,000 residents. The city estimates it will have 55,000 residents living here in 2008. That's pretty good news, as the census bureau had really outdated and unreliable information about North Port's growth for so many years. That bad information actually hurt North Port's efforts to get a hospital three years ago.

According to population figures, there are now about 8,561 school students in North Port, with 9,199 projected for 2008, a 7 percent increase.

More interesting facts were that the North Port Fire Rescue District handled 2,744 calls in 2000. In 2007, firefighters and paramedics have handled 4,936 with three months left in the fiscal year. Fire rescue responded to 4,288 calls in 2006; 4,101 in 2005 and 3,368 in 2004.

The police department has responded to more than 60,660 calls this year. That includes everything from domestic arguments to bank robberies, crashes, homicides, burglaries and public service calls.

Crowell said it costs $102,000 to put one police officer on the street, including his vehicle, training and equipment.

The Solid Waste District collected 28,431 tons of trash in 2005; 32,465 tons in 2006 and so far this year picked up 34,363 tons. The district collected 3,000 tons of recyclables in 2005; 3,600 tons in 2006 and 4,100 tons so far this year.

The number of collection trucks at Solid Waste grew from 20 in 2005 to 33 in 2007.
North Port's taxable value went from $4,931,137,038 in 2006-07 to $5,303,104,054 in 2007-08. This is higher than Venice and the town of Longboat Key.

Residential building permits from 2005 totaled 3,516; in 2006 there were 4,252 and so far in 2007, they're at 817. They are projected at 730 in 2008.

There are more than 100 fewer homes sold this year than last year at this time.

Lastly, city commissioners have allocated most of the abandoned (escheated) lot money which totaled $34 million. They set aside $13 million for road resurfacing; $5 million for Toledo Blade improvements; $8 million for a teen center/multiuse facility and park improvements ($600,000 is for a BMX bike park); $240,000 for lights at the George D. Mullen Community Activity Center and $4.1 million for the Myakkahatchee Creek Corridor lots purchase. The remaining money has not been allocated.

While munching on cheesecake, I was trying to take in as much as I could. Most of this information is on the city's Web site. It's just really exciting when you hear how much is going on in North Port.

North Port Sun (FL)
June 29, 2007

City Manager offers state of city speech
Author: *ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER*

* City Manager **Steve Crowell**'s State of the City address touched on advances in the city, property tax changes, population.

NORTH PORT -- City Manager **Steve Crowell** began his State of the City address by flashing a picture of socialite Paris Hilton onto large screens in the dining room at Heron Creek Gold & Country Club.

"This is one thing we're not going to talk about today," he said as laughter echoed throughout the room.

Crowell was positive and upbeat as he spoke. It took place Thursday as part of the North Port Area Chamber of Commerce's 2007 Annual Partners Meeting and Luncheon.

One of **Crowell**'s main points was property tax reform. He said that three things came together to create what he called "the perfect storm."

The first was a lower budget due to a decrease in building revenues.

"The second is the property tax reduction the commission approved this year -- the year we're in now," he said. "The reduced the millage from 4.9 mills to 3.3 mills. That's a 332 percent reduction now, and we had to adjust to that. It reduced our revenue by $5.8 million."
Crowell said the third element was the state.

"Fill in the blanks," he said. "Some people say they're messing with it, some people say they're fixing it. I have a couple other words for it that my assistant refused to type in (to my presentation)."

He noted the reality of declining building permits over the past three years, but said it was by no means a "doom and gloom" situation. Residential building permits have dropped from 3,516 in 2005, to 817 so far in 2007. But **Crowell** refused to bow to negatives.

"The people we talk to expect things to pick up in '08," he said. "We're going to continue to monitor the numbers."

Crowell said the state was suggesting a $31.6 billion reduction during the next five years.

"Cities and counties will all cut revenue to 2006 levels," he said. "We the city are at the end of the budgeting process and to have this hit us now is very difficult. The devil's in the details, but I don't know how they came up with some of this stuff."

Crowell also noted a state-recognized increase in North Port's population. "Now, we have a population of 51,000 with 8,561 school-aged children," he said. "In 2008, we're projected to have a population of 55,000 with 9,199 children in schools. That's an increase of 7 percent." He said that FPL recognizes 24,894 residential customers, 1,324 commercial and 822 industrial customers in North Port.

"Those 822 industrial customers are actually two more than unincorporated Sarasota County," said **Crowell**. "That was a little surprising and I don't think many people know that."
He said North Port Police and fire department calls have also increased.

Crowell teased the crowd, saying he's had several "very exciting meetings" this week with some possible major projects with interest in coming to North Port.

Buz Sawyer, who wrote the city song "We are North Port," closed out the luncheon. Before he sang, he recalled how much the city has grown in the short seven years he's lived here.

"You should have seen it back then," he said. "I'm a youngster compared to those who have been here 15 or 20 years. I remember when the intersection at Price and Sumter (boulevards) was a four-way stop!"

After the luncheon ended, **Crowell** originally refused to name any of the possible "exciting" projects he'd mentioned earlier, although he admitted they weren't stores, restaurants or theme parks.

"Nope," he said, grinning.

Asked if there was a hotel or a movie theater in the offing, he didn't say no.

"That would be a good guess," he said.

North Port Sun (FL)
June 4, 2007

North Port ponders customer rights
Goal of Tuesday meeting to improve service
Author: *ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER*

NORTH PORT -- Watching the news last winter, City Manager **Steve Crowell** had an idea.

"When Jet Blue (Airlines) was having all those problems with customer service and they had all those people sitting (on planes) on the runways in the snow, they came up with a Customer Bill of Rights," **Crowell** recalled. "So I was thinking, you know, maybe that would be something that we could do from the city point of view to show what city employees hope to provide."

So the city is holding a special town hall meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at City Hall to begin development of its own Customer Bill of Rights.

Peggy Parillo, public relations supervisor for the Utility Department, said **Crowell** formed a committee of city employees last year to work on cultivating better customer service practices. Some members of the committee include Planning & Zoning Director Sam Jones and City Engineer Pat Collins.

"(Utilities Director) Cindi Mick is the chair, and they've been meeting regularly to deal with various customer service things," said Parillo. "It only made sense to ask customers to attend." She said invitations were sent to all city advisory board members, as well as local homeowners associations including Heron Creek, Jockey Club, Bobcat Trail and the five manufactured home parks.

"The meeting is open to the public," Parillo continued. "But you always want to try to get as many people to show up to these meetings as possible, so we took that extra step of inviting people. And we're hoping that a lot of our (city) employees come."

Crowell said he did some research, but wasn't able to find any other city that had a Customer Bill of Rights, but he said that doesn't mean such a thing doesn't exist in a different form. "And I hate to keep using the word 'customers' for our citizens, but that's what they essentially are for the city," he said. "(The meeting) is really to help develop what some of the expectations will be."

Parillo said the meeting should last about an hour or so. It will begin with a presentation about what the customer service committee is looking for, then will open the floor up to citizens for their ideas.

"We'll probably break people up into small groups to brainstorm," she said.

The meeting isn't designed to be a complaint-fest, however.

"I've had a few phone calls from people who have some specific things they would like attention paid to in the city, and they have asked me if it's the right forum. But it isn't designed as a town forum where you can talk about any topic," said Parillo. "We hope to help increase customer service. Now, if they have complaints about how they've been treated as a customer by the city, that's fine."

Once all suggestions are compiled, the Customer Bill of Rights will be released to the public and will be posted on the City of North Port Web site, at www.cityofnorthport.com.

North Port Sun (FL)
April 26, 2007

City Manager to choose author
50th anniversary book needs writer
Author: *ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER*

* Commissioners asked City Manager **Steve Crowell** to choose which of five prospective authors is the best to write a history of the city of North Port.

NORTH PORT -- A proposed history book for the city's 50 anniversary has been placed in the hands of City Manager **Steve Crowell**.

Commissioners discussed who should write the book during their regular meeting Monday. Five prospective authors -- four who came forward within the last three weeks -- as well as one movie company, have submitted bids to work on the project.

Initially, Commission Chair Barbara Gross hoped to give the task to the Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee.

"When they come back to us at a joint meeting, they could come back to us and they could give us their opinion," Gross said.

Joan Morgan, former city commissioner and a member of the 50th Anniversary Committee, said the committee wants the book to be entirely the commission's decision.

"We don't want it to be political," Morgan said. "We don't want this to be the political football, so it's yours."

Morgan said she didn't think it was fair that the commission had accepted additional proposals after only one came in on time.

"All bids should be open once, period, and that's not fair to the original bidder," she said. "And I don't want this to be a picture book or a church directory. To do this book properly is going to take a lot of time, and if we keep postponing and postponing this, some of the people who we really need to get interviewed are ailing in health."

Sarasota resident Rosanne Knorr is one of the five who submitted a proposal to write the book. Knorr, who has written 13 books -- one to commemorate Atlanta for the 1996 Olympic Games -- is a former creative writing teacher at the Ringling School of Art & Design Continuing Education. She agreed with Morgan that the process should start soon.

"You have to not look at the price, you have to find the best person to do this," said Knorr, who, in materials submitted with her bid, said the cost of writing a non-fiction book usually ranges between $25,000 and $75,000. "When you're looking for a writer, you need someone who's capable of doing large, book-length design and who can dig out the right graphics. You can't do it piecemeal."

Commissioner Dick Lockhart, who came up with the idea for the book in the first place, was also convinced the committee shouldn't be involved in selecting the book's writer.

"Only one person can write this book," he said. "I suggest we ask the four or five people who want to write to come and give their qualifications and experience. Let them expound on what they have done. I think it will be obvious who has more to offer, and it will be easier to pick the proper person."

Commissioner Jim Blucher agreed it wasn't the committee's job to say which of the five applicants are qualified.

"If these are the qualified applicants, give them to the city manager and let him take the politics out of it," Blucher said.

Lockhart said that would be putting City Manager **Steve Crowell** in "quite a spot." **Crowell**, however, said staff would be happy to make a recommendation.

"That's what we wanted to do, but every time we've tried to do that, someone new makes a proposal," he said. "We may want to expand that as well, since commissioners (Fred) Tower and (Vanessa) Carusone gave me some examples."

Crowell added it would be possible to reach a decision by the May 14 regular meeting. The commission unanimously agreed to "let the city manager do it."

"This is not to prevent the staff from looking beyond these applicants," Carusone said. "It does not tie their hands from looking to the first applicant, because it's not fair to that person that these other people came in afterward, and of course they're going to come in lower. So I say, take it out of our hands -- call me selfish -- but I have no problem with that."

North Port Sun (FL)
December 25, 2006

Steven Crowell
Some things you didn't know about Steve Crowell
Author: *SUSAN E. HOFFMAN*
North Port Assistant Editor

NORTH PORT -- North Port City Manager **Steve Crowell** is one of the city's most visible figures, but not many people know him "up close and personal."

So the Sun recently spent time with him to learn a few interesting facts.

First, he explained that his last name rhymes with 'crow,' the bird, rather than with 'plow.' He is an avid collector of presidential signatures and campaign memorabilia.

"I have buttons and posters, some going back many years," he said. "Even as a kid I was interested in presidential campaigns."

But his interested was promoted to hobby status when he worked during his college years for the special police for the city of Boston.

"We were not much more than glorified security guards," **Crowell** said. "We had occasion to go into a room vacated by some recently-graduated students, and there was a Nixon campaign poster they had left behind. That's what got me started."

He has since added to his collection by buying items through online auctions and receiving things from family or friends.

"I dream of getting a Lincoln autograph some day," he said.

Crowell added that he had a summer job with the Boston special police during the country's bicentennial.

"The Queen of England was coming as part of the festivities, and I remember the secret service even went into the sewers to check them out."

His interest in law enforcement arose during the same time.

"I remember, on one of our regular rounds, we saw a man with what seemed to be a gun," he said. "My heart was pounding as my supervisor went after him. He turned out to be a carpenter with a hammer in his hand."

Crowell's father was in the Army. He was born in Alabama, but his family moved around a lot. Few know that **Crowell** was a skilled wrestler, and in fact went to college at West Virginia University on a wrestling grant-in-aid.

"But college was really tough," he said, and he was majoring in Business Administration and Economics. He soon had to give up wrestling before it affected his grades.

After college, **Crowell** started working in customer service for the Gap stores, in Annapolis. He saw an ad for a city manager.

"That job looked really interesting to me," he said. He studied the qualifications, and that prompted him to work on a master's in Public Administration, for which he received a fellowship. **Crowell** discovered Urban Economics really interested him.

Crowell worked in Dallas, Texas, first in the police department, later on some huge projects in the city manager's office.

Crowell said, if he hadn't gone into city government, he might like to have been either a teacher or in law enforcement.

Crowell plays drums, and he especially likes old-time rock 'n' roll.

He is also an avid runner, "since high school," although he does not run competitively. He enjoys biking and water sports as well. He even runs in the afternoon between city meetings.
If there is one thing he wishes North Port had, it would be a beach.

"It's one of the first places I went when I first came to North Port to interview," he said. "Unfortunately, now that I'm here, I just haven't had as much time to go to the beach as I'd like." He said he also wishes North Port had some more stores, "especially with teenage daughters" who are learning to drive now.

One of the hardest things he had to do when he accepted the job in North Port, he said, was selling his prized 1957 Porsche 356.

"I hated to let that go. I sold it on eBay." He said he sold it to a man in Seattle who bought it without ever coming to see the car in person. "It went really well."

His first year in North Port has been a learning experience for him. "I'm trying to get a sense of what the community wants," he said. He is pleased that people seem to be "involved in the city -- they're engaged and they care about the community."

"I've noticed there are always people who come up with suggestions on how to improve things," he said. "I may not always agree with them, but it's great to get that input.

North Port Sun (FL)
July 3, 2006

North Port's City Budget: All In The Timing
Author: *STEVE SMITH*

NORTH PORT --As City Manager **Steve Crowell** approaches his first year anniversary on the job, he finds himself faced with the challenge of arriving at a proper, timely and comprehensive manner in which North Port's city budget is configured, reviewed, and approved.

The first part of July, the county appraisers must send to the Department of Community Affairs, the State Department of Revenue and the County Commissioners their projected revenues. This is the amount of money they anticipate receiving from county property tax assessment. Many surrounding towns get started on that process early.

In the city of Punta Gorda, evaluations of goals and objectives begin as early as the previous fall. By January, city departments draft their Capital Improvement Programs and by February, they are already drafting line item budgets. Also during this period preliminary meetings take place between city departments and the city council as the big picture begins to take shape. March and April are devoted to work sessions focusing on particular areas of need. By the end of June, the city manager's proposed budget is completed and distributed to the city council. The council then begins a work session to review the numbers and respond with questions and comments.

The city of Sarasota's process begins in early January. Projections are made for the coming year in terms of fund balances, revenue for fiscal capacity, and general expenses. In February, budget instructions are sent out to the city's 30 or so departments to keep them on track for organizing and supplying their numbers in a timely fashion. March and April are devoted to the goals, objectives, and budget issues raised by each department for additional hires, equipment, and so on. The departments must describe clearly and distinctly why they need these increases. The Finance Department then reviews everything and makes allocation recommendations. By the end of June a budget is ready for review by the commission.

Charlotte County's first Municipal Service Benefit Unit workshop is held the first week of May and the preliminary budget update is in by May 31. The CIP workshop takes place the first week of June and the second MSBU workshop happens in the last week of June. Public hearings will be held July 12 and 13 this year, one in Englewood and one in Murdock.

The city of Venice has preliminary budgets worked up and submitted to the city manager by the end of May. The City Manager then submits a revised budget to the commissioners by the end of June.

All of the above municipalities have provisions for the implementation of adjustments throughout their budgetary processes.

Until this year, North Port was allowed mid-year adjustments to its budget. City Manager **Steve Crowell** implemented a change to that practice.

"They shouldn't need mid-year adjustments if they did their budget right the first time," he said. "For this year, we talked about trying to make sure that we got all of the things thought out and addressed with the initial budget, which they did. We make adjustments throughout the year, but not for big things, like personnel and those kinds of things. I'm not a big advocate of doing mid-year adjustments."

Crowell said department heads first put their budgets together.

"And hopefully I get all those budgets at the same time," he said. "I then look at all those pieces and put together the whole, the finance director and I, and then we send that on to the commission and they obviously make the decision they want to make."

Part of the problem in moving a budget forward is making sure everyone involved in the process, including commissioners, understands what is being presented to them. The verbiage and format of a proposed budget can be difficult to understand.

Crowell balked at the question if this year's budget would be "more" layman and commissioner friendly?

"I don't accept that," replied **Crowell**. "I don't know what that reference is about. You're dealing with over $100 million worth of various funds. It's complicated. It's not like a checking or a savings account. We think this year's budget will be easier to understand, but there will be some form and content dictated by the state. We go through the process and the workshops, where we explain what's happening and why, and get into as much detail as the commission wants to. We do want to improve on the format of the budget, which we will certainly work on."

Crowell added that one new implementation this year is a "forecasting model" offering city officials an opportunity to look at possible scenarios -- the impact of growth being one of those -- and what the consequences will have on the city budget.

The issue of timeliness weighs heavily on everyone involved in putting together this year's North Port city budget. As the deadline approaches, questions arise: Have city officials given the process enough time, and would they have been better off starting the process earlier?

Crowell agreed the process should be done earlier. However, **Crowell** said this year staff was relying on a positive vote from commissioners to more than double impact fees before they could complete their budgets.

The city's first budget meeting is planned for 6 p.m. on Wednesday at City Hall.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
June 26, 2006

Crowell's candor
Mild-mannered city manager issues a challenge

Steven Crowell has a quick smile and an easygoing demeanor. He tends to listen more than he talks. Those are traits that the North Port city manager needs at this juncture in the city's evolution as a city.

City officials must do their part to maintain order at public hearings, where rowdy behavior has been an unfortunate North Port tradition. The city manager also can help set the tone for the City Commission, which once had a reputation for incivility. Arguments and name-calling were common, but the commission is more collegial now -- even when there are disagreements over issues.

His mild-mannered demeanor may have led some citizens to conclude that **Crowell**, who became city manager a year ago, is too laid back, too averse to confrontation.

But **Crowell** was sufficiently forceful in an annual state-of-the-city speech he gave Thursday at an event sponsored by the North Port Chamber of Commerce.

Crowell accurately compared North Port to a teenager struggling to grow up. The growing city is in rapid transition, he said, and a maturation process is under way.

Crowell said the city needs leaders who base decisions on the "facts of the issue" and have the "courage and conviction" to stand by those decisions.

He obviously was referring to a 3-2 City Commission vote this month against tripling impact fees on new construction. The commissioners previously had said they would enact the fee increase to raise money for city services.

We applaud **Crowell**'s candor -- as well as his political courage and conviction.

North Port Sun (FL)
June 23, 2006

Crowell shares vision of city's future
Author: *SUSAN E. HOFFMAN*

NORTH PORT -- City Manager **Steve Crowell** joked that none of his "bosses," the city commissioners, were present at the North Port Area Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting Thursday. The crowd of business owners laughed.

As the keynote speaker at the chamber's 21st annual luncheon at Heron Creek Golf & Country Club, **Crowell**'s speech somewhat mirrored the chamber's theme "Building on a Firm Foundation." As chamber members updated members on the planned new chamber offices and visitors center near the new City Hall, **Crowell** spoke about the many new developments planned for North Port in the year 2015.

Crowell teamed up with North Port Planning & Zoning Director Sam Jones to give a snapshot of the city at its inception in the late 1950s, when there were few roads and only 178 residents. Back then, 166 homes were built in a year and a new home cost $12,000 to $18,000.

Crowell and Jones then gave a glimpse of how the city is expected to grow in the future. Population projections peg North Port at 212,000 to 279,000 people within the next 20 or 30 years.

"The role of government is to steer," **Crowell** said. "It's not to row the boat: that's up to the people to do." Government should guide the city to accommodate and prepare for its growth, **Crowell** said.

Jones' presentation noted several of the changes to come soon, including new large residential developments, more commercial development, and additional city services that will be required. Parks and recreation, transportation, utilities, economic development and affordable housing are issues that will continue to loom large in the city's future.

"My hope," **Crowell** continued, "is that we will continue our efforts to address affordable housing and the youth of our city." **Crowell** added that residents need to strengthen their sense of community identity and pride, saying, "It's a North Port thing."

Returning to his analogy, **Crowell** said, "Steering is so much easier if you know where you're going." It is up to the city to develop its vision.

Crowell concluded, "Last year city engineer Pat Collins asked, 'What have we done as a community to make a positive difference?' Beginning today, I say, 'What are you doing to make this a better place?'"

North Port Sun (FL)
February 25, 2006

Crowell addresses seniors
City manager discusses growth issues
Author: *SUSAN E. HOFFMAN*

NORTH PORT -- City Manager **Steve Crowell** told an audience of senior citizens that, in 1959, the median-house price in North Port was only $16,000. North Port had only 178 residents and three city employees. At the time a loaf of bread was only18 cents and a gallon of gas just 32 cents.

"Today," **Crowell** said, "that median home price is up to $220,000, and the population is closer to 49,000. We have 565 city employees. And as most of you know, a loaf of bread is $1.89 and gas is well over $2."

Crowell had been invited to speak to seniors at their monthly pot luck luncheon on Thursday, and he came with a presentation to show how North Port has grown.

Johanna Maxey, the program director, arranged for **Crowell** to speak to the group over the lunch hour.

"The tremendous growth we've experienced has changed the city drastically," he said, "in some ways for the better, in some ways maybe not."

Crowell noted a state court recently denied a request to build a hospital here.

"They did that on the basis that we did not have enough population to warrant a hospital," he said. "Obviously, the judge was not looking at the same figures I'm looking at on our growing population."

Crowell prepared a presentation to compare the North Port of 1959 with today. He noted, for instance, that 45 years ago only 166-building permits were issued annually. Last year, more than 4,000 permits were pulled for new homes.

Since 1959, the city budget has gone from $23,370 to $111 million.

"Changes this drastic in our growth mean that other things need to be addressed," **Crowell** said. He invited the audience to tell him what they saw as the major issues facing the city in view of this growth.

The audience offered several ideas. "Roads ... hospital ... garbage ... traffic ... safety!"

"We need some industries here," one person suggested. "We need something so people can get decent jobs. The prices are going up and they can't afford to live here without good-paying jobs."

"Affordable housing," said another.

"Yes, that's part of the same problem," **Crowell** suggested. "And we have seen dramatic increases in the cost of housing here."

His presentation showed that a typical General Development Corporation home built in 1959 for about $19,000 was now valued at about $96,000. He also explained that in 1959, there were only 125 developed lots in North Port. Today there are more than 30,000.

"And they're in the process of building another 15,000 lots at the Isles of Athena, and another 15,000 lots at Thomas Ranch. And that's how many? Another 30,000," **Crowell** said.

Some audience members questioned high taxes and wondered what services residents are getting for their money. **Crowell** noted that as growth continues, it puts a greater demand on traditional city services such as firefighting and crime control.

"Some of these costs we have to recover from the developers who are profiting," he said. "Right now we either make them do things like installing sidewalks and infrastructure, or sometimes we'll have them give us the money and we'll do it, when it's part of a larger city plan."

Crowell also said the city is trying to assure that water supplies are adequate.

"We have talked with the Peace River authority and we are assured of having adequate water supplies in the future," he said.

Some audience members seemed to view **Crowell**'s talk as a chance to raise neighborhood-specific issues, but **Crowell** suggested they contact specific city departments directly about such problems. He invited audience members to bring their concerns to the city any time they had questions.

Venice Gondolier Sun (FL)
January 8, 2006

City manager Steve Crowell needs support

North Port City Manager **Steven Crowell**, who has been here less than a year, keeps finding new things to put on his "to do" list, including problems created by predecessors.

Few cities in America are growing so rapidly. In a few years, North Port's population will outdistance the city of Sarasota.

With the new city hall opening soon, after a delay, **Crowell** and his staff must deal with design flaws. City commissioners, including the chairman, won't be able to see citizens in the first several rows of the new commission chamber. A similar problem apparently exists for the city's receptionist in the lobby. Some say a very short person, hunched down, might slip by without being noticed. Individuals with handicaps will find the long walk to the front door challenging, especially when it rains.

Although the city has some open park land, residents still lack an adequate place to exercise their dogs. And instead of creating "pocket" parks with swing sets in local neighborhoods, a decision was made to sell all building lots abandoned by former owners to raise revenue.

Crowell's ability to do his job has, to some degree, been undercut by commissioners who tend to micro-manage the city. Commissioners ran things after the last manager resigned. Instead of now asking **Crowell** for his opinion, or instructing him to produce answers when issues come up at commission meetings, some provide specific research and even knee jerk solutions.

Although they seldom ask to sit down and talk to department heads about their work, some commissioners publicly criticize the manager's professional staff (people **Crowell** may not have hired) so severely that the individuals feel demoralized. A few have resigned. Others, while not being openly attacked, indicate they are insecure. A few complain privately.

Meanwhile, roads are falling apart. The city's tree canopy is disappearing as lots are bulldozed. **Crowell** must find ways to improve the city's long-strained relationship with the Sarasota County administration and commissioners. The city needs to help secure state permission for a hospital built here. As building lot and home prices soar, the city needs to find reasonably priced housing for workers in lower pay grades. And the city has not been truly tested yet by a direct hit by a hurricane. Most of the 103 square miles of city land is flat and low-lying, and some areas flood in torrential rain.

Now, with the city's economic development director leaving, **Crowell** is reportedly studying a preliminary report drafted by Jay Aldridge, an economic development expert.

A few days ago we urged the city to help create an independent economic development group that is not subject to the city's struggles. We believe the board should be made up of individuals can make things happen, not just nice or interested citizens. It is our understanding Aldridge is recommending a similar approach to **Crowell** and the commissioners. For the good of the city, we hope officials will follow Jay Aldridge's recommendations. That should help reduce **Crowell**'s workload.

Venice Gondolier Sun (FL)
January 2, 2006

Meet City Manager Steve Crowell
Author: *ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER*

NORTH PORT-- He wasn't the city's first choice, and the position had been vacant for over a year.

But in the five months that have passed since City Manager **Steve Crowell** accepted his position with the city, **Crowell** has proved himself a competent city manager who is working hard to be accessible to citizens.

"Our overall intent is to provide citizens with more opportunities to be informed and to communicate their concerns," **Crowell** said. "I am also planning on meeting with individual neighborhood groups to discuss issues and concerns in the near future."

In October, **Crowell** has also began setting aside time a half hour before city commission meetings to meet with citizens who wish to discuss any issue with him.

The one-on-one meetings are just one of several ways in which city officials will be reaching out to residents in an effort to improve services and to seek their guidance in determining the city's future, he explained.

"The things that are important to me are customer service and making sure that we've looked at what we're doing and why. Part of that goes back that accountability and responsibility," he said. "I want to just make sure that what we're doing is consistent with what we're trying to accomplish. I like to talk in terms of outcomes: What's the big picture, what are we trying to get accomplished here? Lets make sure that what we're doing is working toward a particular outcome. And if not, then we can question why we're doing it."

In July, **Crowell** moved to North Port from Greenwood Village, Colo., where he was city manager for 11 years. His wife, Bridget, and three daughters, Tina, 15, Lauren, 14, and Morgan, 11, also relocated.

His accepted the city manager position partially because of his love of sailing and water sports, but **Crowell** really decided to come here because he wanted a challenge.

"(Coming here gave me) an opportunity to work on some of the big issues in North Port, growth and finances certainly being two of those," **Crowell** said. "North Port is a little larger community, a different organization from what I was working in. (It was) a good professional opportunity."

Crowell's first impressions of North Port was that there was going to be a lot of work ahead of him.

"There's a lot of work, a lot of getting up to speed!" he said. "Obviously I am getting inserted into different projects as they come up, and I've been trying to learn some of the history as I go along."

Crowell thinks his primary role as city manager involves making sure other city employees have all the resources they need to do their jobs properly.

"Generally that's the way I view my job: making sure we get the job done and policies implemented," he said. "And hopefully helping elected officials understand the effects policy decisions may have on operations. The city commission's been great. Commissioners have been very good in dealing with some very tough issues. And I am very pleased with the quality and dedication of the staff. There's a lot going on!"

Charlotte Sun (Port Charlotte, FL)
November 6, 2005

Levko Klos
We have a city manager who can do the job

How quickly time flies. Mid-October has come and gone and very few of us realized that **Steven Crowell**, our city manager, has been at the helm of the city for more than 100 days. I recently sat down with **Crowell** to get his perspective on a number of issues during his first three months.

For those who have not had the pleasure of meeting **Crowell**, he confidently conveys the attributes of a seasoned executive who is comfortable answering questions.

Beyond that, he is very approachable and encourages a dialogue with residents. He points out that he especially enjoys discussing any topic when the individual offers a solution to a specific problem. I hope that everyone will take advantage of this open door policy.

My first question to **Crowell** was meant to gage his comfort level. However, it quickly evolved into a discussion of topics which showed me that he has a very good grasp and understanding of the complex issues that North Port faces today and well into the future.

Crowell started out by saying that since his arrival, he has tried to meet as many people as possible to gage their thoughts on their sense of community.

One of his objectives is to establish great customer service as a key value. At last week's employee recognition dinner, **Crowell** challenged the employees to create and implement a model within three years that will be viewed as a regional standard that other communities will adapt as the bench mark for customer service.

Anticipating and meeting the needs of residents, correcting problems before they arise is definitely a goal we can all support.

The first hundred days have seen our new city manager cope with a number of significant challenges that have shown both employees and residents that he is up to the demanding challenge of effectively running our city.

First, with only two weeks on the job, **Crowell** reviewed departmental budgets and eliminated millions of dollars in proposed spending. He successfully navigated the issue that involved increasing the non ad-valorem taxes. When hurricanes Dennis and Wilma threatened our area, he participated in the Emergency Operations Center.

Crowell is carefully accessing each department, its employees and their internal operation. He is very careful to explain that every department, including his own, always has room to improve.

His vision is that each department should be "fully integrated" with the other departments, and not just protecting their "turf."

The topic of growth and development produced one of **Crowell**'s most interesting observations. The commission must interpret what the community considers important. The commission then must reinforce those values through an articulated policy that produces the desired results. Once that policy has been adopted, it's the role of the manager and his staff to see that the commission's wishes are brought to fruition.

He feels that the commission is effectively addressing long term projects such as roads, water, and developer agreements. He knows that there is currently a deficiency in the availability of commercial land that is essential in attracting companies that will provide an equitable salary for those wishing to reside in North Port.

With his previous experience and success in Colorado, I'm confident that he will find a suitable solution to this emerging and growing concern.

The question: "What would you like North Port residents to know about the job you're doing?" was quite telling.

Crowell said hiring a new city manager is not an easy decision for any commission to make. It takes time for the commission to observe how he identifies and solves problems. He also indicated that the city must do a better job communicating with the residents. There are many examples of inferior communication causing difficulties which take away from the productivity of the organization.

North Port, be assured we have a very qualified city manager who has just begun to fight the fight. His success is our success. I can't wait to see what happens next.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
August 18, 2005

North Port proposed budget up 38% but property tax rate won't rise
Author: *LIZ BABIARZ liz.babiarz@heraldtribune.com*

Trying to keep pace with massive growth, North Port is proposing a $114 million budget for next year, a 38 percent increase.

A substantial part of the money could go toward hiring 92 employees, improving the city's main thoroughfares and building waste- water treatment plants.

But the proposed budget does not call for raising the property tax rate, which is a "major accomplishment," said City Manager **Steven Crowell**.

North Port's tax rate is already the highest in Sarasota County.

The budget does call for millions of more dollars in spending, generated by a whopping 65 percent increase in the city's assessed valuation.

The budget was the first major challenge for **Crowell**, who came on board just two months ago. He said he made his spending decisions based on what he saw as the city's biggest issues.

"This is a real budget based on the things that are needed in North Port," **Crowell** said. "The emphasis is on public safety and road and drainage."

But questions remain whether the budget will cover spending. This year, for example, North Port has amended its budget more than 15 times, increasing spending by $15 million over what it approved last September.

Another question is whether the budget will meet all the needs in a city expected to grow by thousands of residents this year. For example, the budget includes no new employees for trash service, even though the city could have 3,000 more homes.

The City Commission will review the budget at four workshops next week and make its final decision on the proposal in late September.

Soaring real estate values and thousands of new home gave the city enough revenue for the general fund, eliminating the need for a tax rate higher than 4.9 mills.

One mill amounts to a $1 tax on every $1,000 of a home's assessed value.

Though the tax rate is not going up, residents can expect to pay more in property taxes next year. For example, the owner of a home valued at $200,000 in 2004, with the Save Our Homes exemption, would see the house valued at $206,000 this year, an increase that is limited to 3 percent by Save Our Homes. Figuring in the $25,000 homestead exemp- tion, the house's owner would owe $886.90 in taxes this year, about $30 more than in 2004. Those without the Save Our Homes protection face increases larger than 3 percent.

All told, the city expects to take in about $5 million more in property taxes than last year, part of the reason **Crowell** was able to fund most requests from department heads.

The police department fared well in the budget process. It is slated to receive 26 percent more next year, about $9.8 million for 21 new police officers.

The city's park department, however, was not a winner. Bill Ward, the director, requested more than $1 million to care for city parks, but was given $896,000, largely because North Port is asking Sarasota County to take over the maintenance of its parks. With this funding, if the county does not agree to this maintenance, North Port would only be able to run its current programs for part of the year.

While residents won't be paying much more in property taxes next year, they will be charged higher assessments fees for all three of North Port's special districts: Road and Drainage, Fire Rescue and Solid Waste.

Residents will likely be charged $78, instead of $75, for fire services next year. Residents will also be charged 5 cents a square foot for homes larger than 1,500 square feet. Revenue from that fee will help hire 12 new firefighters. The trash collection fee could also jump from $171 to $209 per house.

Road and Drainage District fees could be higher than the other districts. But the fee probably won't be increased by 340 percent, as the commission has discussed.

Crowell's proposal ear- marks only $12.4 million coming into the Road and Drainage District from the assessments, rather than the estimated $18 million that would have come with the 340 percent hike.

As it stands now, the Road and Drainage District would get $3 million next year for road repaving, an amount that would fix about 40 miles. At that rate, it would take 20 years to repave all the roads in the city.

"I would like to have the roads repaved as soon as possible," James Bursick, the public works director, said. "But if that's not financially possible, we will have to work within those limits." Along with the road repaving effort, the city is spending $8.7 million of its transportation impact fees to upgrade the city's intersec- tions along roads like Price, Toledo Blade and Sumter boulevards.

North Port's Utilities Department is also spending close to $13 million -- from water and sewer impact fees as well as the department's fund balance -- on projects. The money will help design a new waste-water treatment plant on the Panacea property and expand the city's existing plant on Pan American Boulevard. It could also help build a water interconnect between the city's water system and Sarasota county's system and extend water and sewer lines to the residential lots. Interested?

The North Port City Com- mission will hold four meetings next week to discuss its $114 million budget for next year.

* Monday
What: Public workshop on the proposed Road and Drainage District fee increase
When: 6 p.m.
Where: Performing Arts Center at North Port High School

* Tuesday
What: Workshop on the Fire Rescue and Solid Waste District fee increases
When: 6 p.m.
Where: Performing Arts Center at North Port High School

* Wednesday
What: Public workshop on funding for the utilities, engineering and support services departments
When: 6 p.m.
Where: City Hall, 5650 North Port Blvd.

* Aug. 25
What: Public workshop on funding for the park and recreation, building, fire rescue and police departments
When: 6 p.m.
Where: City Hall, 5650 North Port Blvd.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
July 6, 2005

Taking the reins in North Port
On his first day, the new city manager takes stock of his challenges
Author: *LIZ BABIARZ liz.babiarz@heraldtribune.com*

The first day on the job is hard for any new city manager; it's particularly so when the city is one of the fastest growing in Florida.

Steven Crowell, who started as North Port's top administrator Tuesday, said he plans to work overtime to get a handle on the city's issues.

That includes meeting with as many staff as possible to learn about decisions made in the past and where to go in the future.

"Growth, water, sewer, roads and traffic are the issues," the 50-year-old Alabama native said during a short interview squeezed into his schedule Tuesday afternoon. "How we deal with them and what's the long-term solution are the discussions we will be having."

Crowell comes to North Port at a busy time: Close to 4,000 building permits are expected to be issued this year. Several huge developments, like 15,000 homes on Thomas Ranch, are working through the approval process.

The City Commission is grappling with how to provide adequate services -- roads, bus transportation, parks, water -- to support the growth.

City officials are also about to begin budget discussions for next year, and there's a search for a new police chief under way.

"What a challenge he faces. It's a challenge with a capital C," City Clerk Helen Raimbeau said. Because it was his first day, **Crowell** declined to get into the specifics on how he plans to tackle that challenge. He said he needs to get up to speed.

"I will ask 'why' a lot," **Crowell** said. " ... I will look for innovative solutions, efficient solutions. Are we doing it as smart as we could be?"

Dressed in a tailored suit that accentuated his tall frame, **Crowell** spoke about the importance of open communication and teamwork among the city staff. He describes his management style as "outcome-based."

"I focus on what we are trying to achieve and how to solve the problem," he said.

Crowell accepted the job in North Port in late May, ending a 10-month vacancy created by the departure of former City Manager Mark Roath. Assistant City Manager Henry Jenkins filled the position in the interim.

City commissioners seemed pleased to have **Crowell**, a former city manager from Greenwood Village, Colo., on board.

"Thank God he's here," Commission Chair Richard Lockhart said. " ... Most of the directors who are in charge of the departments are good people, and what they need is a leader."
Crowell will make $135,000 a year, $13,000 more than he was making at his last job. He will also receive two weeks' vacation within his first year, a $400 travel account, moving expenses and a retirement package.

Being city manager of North Port will be a change for him.

In Greenwood Village, **Crowell** oversaw 248 employees and a $31 million budget. North Port has 410 employees and currently has an $82.2 million budget.

About 15,000 people live in Greenwood Village, which is eight square miles. North Port has about 40,000 residents and 103 square miles, according to city estimates.

City leaders say **Crowell**'s extensive background has prepared him for the challenge of managing North Port.

He has more than 20 years' experience in city management. He also has bachelor's degrees in economics and business administration and a master's degree in public administration, all from West Virginia University.

When he isn't managing cities, **Crowell** says he enjoys sailing, running and spending time with his three daughters and wife, Bridget.

His family is still in Colorado with their home on the market. **Crowell** is looking for a home in North Port, and is staying at a hotel in the interim.

Crowell was the City Commission's second choice for the job. Steven Thompson, a former assistant city manager and chief financial officer in Virginia Beach, Va., was the board's first pick.

Thompson declined the city's offer May 19, saying North Port wasn't the right fit for him.

North Port Sun (FL)
May 24, 2005

City manager candidate encourages smart growth
Author: *ELAINE ALLEN-EMRICH*

NORTH PORT -- While North Porters patiently wait to hear if **Steven Crowell** Jr. is going to take the city manager's job, many haven't heard much about him.

Crowell, 50, was the last of six city manager candidates interviewed on May 11 by North Port City Commissioners. Between the one-on-one interviews (with commissioners) that morning and the afternoon group interview with commissioners, **Crowell** repeated his philosophies on "smart growth," customer service, strategic planning, employee relations and quality of life issues numerous times that day.

At the end of that day, **Crowell** struck a positive cord with most city commissioners topping their finalist list. He was their number two choice.

Last week, after commissioners were told Steven Thompson, their first choice, declined the city's job offer, City Commission Chair Dick Lockhart immediately called **Crowell**. In a phone interview last week, **Crowell** told Lockhart he would come here Friday to negotiate and he would bring his wife, Bridget, before formally accepting the position. However, he said he was excited and couldn't wait to start working in North Port. **Crowell**, who makes $122,000 as the city manager of Greenwood Village, Colo., also has three daughters, Christina, 15, Lauren, 14, and Morgan, 11.

At Greenwood Village, **Crowell** was responsible for an approximate budget of $31 million. With upcoming budget hearings, the city of North Port has an estimated $68 million budget. The new city budget included most departments moving into the new city hall, off Sumter Boulevard.

In Colorado, **Crowell** was responsible for overseeing 248 full-time employees. North Port has more than 400 employees. If he comes to North Port, **Crowell** will likely be in charge of hiring a new police chief.

Commissioners said they liked **Crowell**'s community and media focus approach. His community outreach efforts included television shows, citizen surveys and newsletters for residents. He said he likes to be up front with the media to help alert residents of the issues.

As the Greenwood Village city manager in Colorado, **Crowell** used information from community surveys to help with quality of life issues such as "smart growth," youth opportunities, environmental issues, water quality, a local bus system and traffic calming."

"To me, smart growth is anticipating what the demand is in the city," he said. "Understanding growth issues includes knowing the need for police services, fixing roads and having bus service. We identified areas that lacked in services through community input. We worked on traffic calming efforts because that's what the residents wanted as part of their quality of life issues."

In the city, many residents are struggling with quality of life issues such as an enormous amount of large, dangerous potholes, some leading to their homes; not having sidewalks leading to schools or bike paths, not having enough ball fields and drugs in neighborhoods.

Crowell also spoke of improving employee morale and employee training in Colorado. The city of North Port lacks employee training in areas such as the Road and Drainage and Solid Waste districts.

Similar to North Port departments, in Colorado, **Crowell**'s responsibilities included overseeing the police; Public Works; Community Development; parks, trails, and recreation; finance; Human Resources, City Clerk, Municipal Court and Information and Technology; and Community Outreach as part of the City Manager's Office.

Crowell described the area of Greenwood Village, as a fast-growing, suburban Denver community with a permanent population of about 15,000. However, the daytime population is approximately 53,000 due to the large number of commercial employers within the village. In North Port, it's the opposite as many residents leave town to work in Sarasota and Fort Myers and return home in the evenings.

With North Port's exploding population, (4,000 new homes this year) **Crowell** said he was experienced and "excited about the challenges associated with growth."

"Although North Port is little bit larger than where I am now (Greenwood Village, Colo.), it's a logical professional step for me," he said.

Lockhart said he would like to take **Crowell** on an aerial tour of the city, to look at the 103 square-miles.

On his resume, **Crowell** listed several accomplishments, which included developing, implementing, and maintaining significant quality of life improvements, including implementation of the outcome management philosophy.

Lockhart is confident he'll be able to negotiate a deal **Crowell** can agree upon. The position pays up to $137,000 with benefits.

Rocky Mountain News (CO)
March 31, 1994

RETIRED OFFICIAL BACK IN GROOVE COMMERCE CITY HIRES FORMER FINANCE CHIEF AS INTERIM CITY MANAGER
Author: *MIKE PATTY*

Retired Commerce City assistant city manager and finance director Don Wilson has been named interim city manager.

Wilson, who retired last July after more than 20 years of service to the city, will replace **Steve Crowell**, who resigned to become city manager of Greenwood Village.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity of coming back and serving the city until a permanent city manager is found," Wilson said.

Mayor David Busby said Wilson's appointment will assure a smooth transition while the City Council conducts its search for a city manager.

"Don has a tremendous amount of experience with city operations," Busby said. "In his past 20 years of service, he's functioned as the city manager on several occasions. He's a highly capable administrator and will serve the city well."

Busby also had high praise for **Crowell**, saying he worked on numerous tough issues and represented Commerce City well, especially in his role with Community Health Services, the Northeast Emergency Assistance Center and the Rotary Club.

"**Steve Crowell** has brought Commerce City a long way in his 4 1/2 years as city manager," Busby said.

"We really hate to lose him, but we do wish him the best."

Rocky Mountain News (CO)
September 15, 1991

COMMERCE CITY AIMS TO LIMIT ADULT ENTERTAINMENT SHOPS
Author: *TILLIE FONG*
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS STAFF WRITER

City officials are scrambling to pass an ordinance severely restricting adult entertainment after two adult book and video stores applied for licenses.

"We don't want to make it sound like we're out to regulate them out of the city. There has to be a place for them, but they should be in more appropriate places," said City Manager **Steve Crowell**.

There are two versions of the proposed ordinance.

Under one proposal, adult entertainment businesses would not be allowed within 1,000 feet of any school, church, park, day-care center, recreation center or residential areas.

A stricter proposal would restrict them from locating within 1,500 feet of the same facilities, plus hotels and restaurants.

Both proposals would force existing businesses to comply with the ordinance after 10 years. City Attorney Bob Gehler said he used an ordinance employed by Seattle as the basis for the less restrictive version.

But he said the stricter proposal may prove too constraining.

"You have to reasonably allow for it," Gehler said. "If you try to zone it out totally, it would be invalid."

If the stricter ordinance is adopted, **Crowell** said, neither of the two new applicants would comply. The other version would allow one of them.

Jim Chamberlain, owner of Pleasures, which has been in the city for 3 1/2 years, said the proposed ordinances should be changed.

"They let us in in the first place," he said. "We should be grandfathered in completely or make it (the grandfather period) longer than 10 years."

He also said it would force him to either change his business or move after 10 years because his business is close to a mobile home park and a restaurant.

Michael Grimm, owner of The Landing Strip, which has been in business for six years, said he supported the ordinance.

"I'm for it. I don't think it's a good idea to have them around schools or residential areas, where they're around children," he said.

Neither version of the proposed ordinances would affect him.

Jack Ackers, who will ask the city next month to allow King Management to open Show Girls, an adult video arcade and bookstore at 6680 Highway 2, said it was odd that the city would introduce the ordinances now.

"I think it's a remarkable coincidence that it wasn't considered until we made our application," he said.

Resume

DAVID W. FRASHER

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dfrasher@grantspassoregon.gov

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

City of Grants Pass, Oregon **2005 - present**

City Manager: Grants Pass (population 34,237) is a growing, thriving community located in southern Oregon and serves as the major commercial and employment center for a county population of more than 80,000. Grants Pass is a full service city with 231 FTE's and an annual budget of nearly $100 million. The City Manager serves at the pleasure of the City Council and is responsible for daily operations of all municipal departments including Administration, Finance, Police/Fire, Public Works, Community Development, Human Resources, and Parks & Community Services. The Manager also serves as the city's Budget Officer and manages the Grants Pass Redevelopment Agency, including the Agency budget of approximately 2.5 million annually.

Notable achievements:

- Dramatically improved relationships with employee labor groups (Police, Fire, Teamsters), avoiding costly arbitration while successfully negotiating new contracts with significant savings for the municipality.
- Worked with Council and staff to win voter approval of a $9.8 million capitol levy for the construction of new police and fire facilities.
- Led community efforts to employ boulevard concepts and business-friendly roadway design in cooperation with Oregon Department of Transportation on estimated $35 million project.
- Worked cooperatively with employee groups to revise costly overtime, post-retirement, and early retirement benefit programs.
- Developed, implemented or updated several new growth management policies aimed at increasing sustainability, including new system development charges, transportation safety policies, and local improvement district policies.

City of Ashland, Wisconsin **2001 - 2005**

City Administrator: Ashland is a historic coastal city and home to nationally renowned Northland College. The city is located on the south shore of Lake Superior, surrounded by National Forest, park lands, and plentiful natural resources. Ashland is a full service city with 103 full-time employees, a $19 million annual budget, and a population of approximately 9,000 residents. The City Administrator reports to an eleven member City Council and works closely with a part-time Mayor. The Administrator is responsible for budgeting, strategic planning, policy development, media relations, union negotiations and daily operations of all City Departments including Police, Fire/EMS, Municipal Marina, Community Development, Public Works, Utilities, Finance, Airport, Leisure Services, Library, Human Resources, City Clerk, and Technology Services.

Notable Achievements:

- Managed adoption of a new "Smart Growth" Comprehensive Plan that was chosen as the best in the State of Wisconsin by the American Planning Association.
- Obtained more than thirteen million dollars in state and federal grants within a four-year period.
- Developed efficiency plans affecting five City Departments, allowing staff reductions and improved customer service.
- Collaborated with Wisconsin DOT Design Team on a $10 million major reconstruction of U.S. Highway 2 through city limits.

- Led the community to designation as nation's second "eco-municipality" in partnership with international representatives of the Sustainable Sweden Program.

City of Oak Grove, Missouri **1999 - 2001**

City Administrator: Oak Grove, a Kansas City suburb of 6,000 residents was undergoing tremendous growth during my time of service. Annual budget of $5 million with 37 full-time employees. Administrator responsible for all aspects of managing and operating the municipality under the supervision of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. Responsibilities included finance & budgeting, coordinating departments, leading & managing personnel, strategic planning, public utilities, police, parks, public works, codes enforcement, coordinating external consultants, relating to boards and committees, attracting and accommodating businesses, as well as general problem solving, and media relations.

Notable Achievements:

- Received city's first ever Government Finance Officer's Association Budget Award for excellence in budget presentation.
- Implemented customer service training certification program for all staff.
- Implemented an Internet bidding policy to improve efficiency and competitiveness in municipal purchasing.
- Developed and adopted new water and wastewater master plans.

The Law Office of David W. Frasher **1994 – 1999**

Attorney: Private law practice providing general civil, criminal and business litigation, contracts, and personal injury work for various clients. Managed all phases of law practice including budgeting, business organization, advertising, personnel, contract employees, licensing and taxation.

Notable Achievements:

- American Jurisprudence Award for trial practice and procedure.

Alaska Court of Appeals **1993 – 1994**

Law Clerk for Judge Robert G. Coats: Researched and drafted memoranda and opinions of the court addressing state appellate issues. Also conducted training and supervision of incoming law clerks. (Law Clerks appointed for one year only)

Notable Achievements:

- Several of my written memoranda were selected for publication as official opinions of the Court.
- Appointed from among my peers to conduct training and supervision of incoming law clerks.

City of Independence, Missouri **1982 – 1990**

Independence is a City of approximately 150,000 residents located adjacent to Kansas City, Missouri. The City's Police Department has more than 200 sworn personnel with multiple divisions and specialized units characteristic of a major metropolitan law enforcement agency.

Detective/Major Case Investigator: Conducted independent criminal investigations into a wide variety of assigned cases. Developed witnesses, evidence, suspect information, and testimony leading to the arrest and prosecution of offenders. Major Case Investigator assigned to special multi-jurisdictional detective squad investigating homicides throughout a seven county region. (Left position to attend law school)

Crime Scene Investigator: Responsible for crime scene processing, evidence collection and preservation, laboratory analysis of evidence, report preparation and courtroom testimony for assigned cases.

Police Officer:
Performed the duties of a uniformed patrol officer assigned to district patrol.
Notable Achievements:

- Promoted to Detective with less than four years of department seniority.
- Numerous commendations for superior performance and distinctive service.

EDUCATION

Washington University School of Law, Saint Louis, Missouri, **J.D.,** 1993.
Mac Murray College, Jacksonville, Illinois, **B.S.** Administration of Justice,1981, *Cum Laude.*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & AFFILIATIONS

- ICMA (International City/County Management Association) Credentialed Manager.
- Oregon City/County Management Association, member.
- University of Kansas, Department of Public Administration, Lawrence, Kansas. *Leadership Academy for Local Government Executives.* Intensive 80 hour curriculum to aid senior government executives in community building, modernizing government services, and enhancing leadership capacity.
- ICMA National Conferences, consecutive annual attendance since 1999.
- Published Author, *San Diego Justice Journal / Law Review*, 1993.
- Grants Pass Rotary Club, member.

ADDENDUM

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT THE CITY OF GRANTS PASS, OREGON

- Dramatically improved City's relationships with Chamber of Commerce, Town Center Association, and local radio, television and print media.
- Initiated succession planning to ease the impact of retirements of key city employees.
- Created a new multiple award-winning city website to enhance customer service and image of community.
- Developed outstanding intergovernmental relationships with District 7 School District, county government and chamber of commerce.
- Obtained City's first AA bond rating, saving citizens more that 1/2 million dollars in debt issuance costs for capitol improvement projects.
- Successfully recruited nearly one-half dozen new department directors following retirement of several senior staff.
- Constructed or enhanced dozens of traffic signals, walkways, bikeways, trails and park facilities.
- Funded a new Childhood Development Center through a major grant program in cooperation with Rogue Community College and local Headstart Program.
- Initiated a new compensation and classification study to improve recruitment and retention of quality public employees.
- Enhanced city's urban forestry program with goal of vastly improving the urban forest canopy.
- Developed and implemented new ordinance to accommodate sidewalk cafes in the city's downtown.
- Maintained excellent relationships with local television, radio and print media.
- Implemented new policies and training to create a highly ethical culture within city government.
- Managed CALEA (Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies) certification of city's Police Department and Regional Dispatch Center.
- Completed installation of a major new, and environmentally friendly, intake structure at the city's water treatment plant.
- Improved sustainability efforts by increased use of hybrid and electric vehicles, green building techniques, enhanced recycling programs, and numerous other measures.
- Obtained continuous GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) annual awards for budget presentation and financial reporting and audit.
- Reorganized various departments to accommodate increased service demands due to community growth.
- Managed development of new stormwater master plan and stormwater utility system.
- Initiated planning project to expand city's urban growth boundary.

David W. Frasher

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT THE CITY OF ASHLAND, WISCONSIN

- Developed and implemented a new Waterfront Development Plan including grant acquisition and permanent funding sources to achieve plan objectives.
- Completed customer service upgrades and training for the city staff.
- Collaborated with chamber of commerce and other groups to increase tourism by nearly 100% in just four years.
- Developed a new Urban Forestry Management Plan in collaboration with Northland College.
- Created a bi-annual, full-color city magazine published in hard copy and on the Web, greatly improving customer service and communication with citizens.
- Organized bi-annual City Council retreats to improve planning, budgeting, and relationships between elected officials and department directors.
- Facilitated investigation and clean-up efforts at a major $100 million environmental "Superfund" site on Lake Superior.
- Stabilized city budget and service delivery throughout severe state financial crisis.
- Obtained large grant and created citywide energy program saving city and its residents hundreds of thousands in energy costs.
- Supervised design and construction of a new central park complex near downtown.
- Initiated development of a Downtown Economic Development Plan.
- Strengthened property maintenance enforcement procedures.
- Developed new ordinance governing construction design standards for commercial construction.
- Created and implemented a multi-year sidewalk improvement program.
- Designed and implemented a new sign code governing commercial signs and billboards.
- Managed development and funding of a 2.5 million dollar long-term sidewalk and trail improvement program.
- Helped implement municipal airport improvements, including new hangers, taxiways, navigation systems and construction of security infrastructure.
- Worked with staff, developers, and the Planning Commission to streamline and improve the development review process.
- Managed redevelopment of environmentally sensitive commercial properties through use of "brownfields" grant programs.

David W. Frasher

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT THE CITY OF OAK GROVE, MISSOURI

- Implemented a new proactive investment policy increasing investment returns on city cash reserve assets by 100%.
- Established job-costing program to track performance of service functions, enhancing expenditure controls and cost recovery.
- Completed Comprehensive Development Plan to accommodate next 20 years of growth.
- Helped develop new Unified Development Code with the city's Planning Commission.
- Drafted and implemented new annexation policy and procedure for unincorporated areas.
- Established the city's first Finance Department and completely reorganized the city's law enforcement services.
- Improved economic development and revenue collection allowing city to more than double its revenue budget in just 28 months while simultaneously lowering sales taxes by one-half cent.
- Discovered and collected more than $200,000 in misappropriated sales tax monies due the city.
- Established city's first internet website and magazine to keep residents better informed.
- Established radio-read water meter system to enhance billing accuracy and reduce labor costs.
- Obtained more than $500,000 in grant monies to improve city services over a three-year period.
- Developed new impact fees to help finance infrastructure and utility improvements.
- Negotiated the expansion of main thoroughfare improvements by the Missouri Department of Transportation from $2.2 million to $6.0 million by use of internal traffic studies and engineering analysis.
- Developed new Personnel Manual with Compensation and Performance Appraisal Plan.
- Implemented new "Critical Incident Response Team" at Police Department to provide enhanced safety in schools and community at large.
- Completed codification and development of city's new Criminal Code.
- Enhanced code enforcement and nuisance abatement through additional staff position, training, and communication with City Prosecutor and Municipal Judge.
- Initiated "Tree City USA" Program through the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- Successfully recruited a Police Chief, Public Works Director, Finance Director, City Attorney, and Municipal Judge.

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December 10, 2008

Mr. Colin Baenziger
Colin Baenziger & Associates
12970 Dartford Trail, Suite 8
Wellington, FL 33414

Dear Colin:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about the Coral Gables City Manager's position. I believe that I am an excellent candidate for this position and am enclosing my resume for consideration.

I am an achievement-oriented leader with more than twenty years of progressively responsible experience in both large and small units of government and the private sector. My management style encourages teamwork and innovation while empowering individual employees to think for themselves, make decisions appropriate to their work, and act within the parameters set by the manager and governing body. I place strong emphasis on building a high performance, citizen friendly organization, sensitive to the goals and values of the community and its elected officials.

In addition to this managerial philosophy, I am able to solve problems rapidly should they occur, to foresee potential problems, and implement strategies to avoid them. My specialized education and background have helped me become extremely effective as a communicator, negotiator, and consensus-builder. I interact well with people from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds, work effectively with the media, and am successful in developing positive inter-governmental relationships.

Lastly, I am committed to the ethical standards of the International City Management Association and believe those standards encourage the best possible local government on behalf of those we serve. This commitment, together with my education, experience, and individual talents ensure my outstanding contribution to the City of Coral Gables. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

David W. Frasher

CB & A Interviews

David Frasher

Education

Jurist Doctorate, Washington University School of Law, St. Louis, Missouri
Bachelor of Science, Administration of Justice, Mac Murray College, Jacksonville, Illinois

Experience

City Manager, Grants Pass, Oregon	2005 – Present
City Administrator, Ashland, Wisconsin	2001 – 2005
City Administrator, Oak Grove, Missouri	1999 – 2001
Attorney, The Law Office of David W. Frasher	1994 – 1999

Background

Grants Pass, Oregon has a population of 34,000. The city has 231 employees, seven of whom report directly to Mr. Frasher. The city's general fund budget is $28 million and its total budget is $92 million.

According to Mr. Frasher, the three most important issues facing Grants Pass are:

- Urban Growth Boundaries. Oregon has a very complicated comprehensive planning process. Currently the city does not meet the requirement that it have a 20 year supply of the land within its urban growth boundary that can be developed for residual housing. Hence, it must expand the boundaries and is developing a new plan that will do that. The complication is that the land must meet many other criteria as well.
- Funding Public Safety Services. In Oregon these services have to be funded through temporary levees. The one in existence expires July 1, 2009. The Council and Mr. Frasher are working to determine the amount necessary so it can be put on the ballot. It is currently at $1.49 per 1,000 but it will probably need to be about $1.89 per 1,000.
- New Mayor and Council. The City Council has nine members including the Mayor. In January five new members (a new mayor and four new council members) were elected and the majority will likely shift. Further, several of the new members do not understand the governing law. Mr. Frasher is faced with getting the new Council and Mayor to work cohesively and within the law.

Interview Comments

Mr. Frasher is interested in the Coral Gables City Manager position because he has experience with very similar issues. In the past he has applied to cities which needed to be upgraded. Coral

Gables, on the other hand, already has a high quality of life and the high standards, standards which coincide with his. In addition he has family members who are relocating to Florida.
Mr. Frasher describes his management style as participatory. As a young police officer he studied the City Managers who oversaw the governments he worked for and developed a theory concerning the management style he feels would be the most effective. The governing principle was that he thought a City Manager should treat him and other employees the way he felt he should be treated. Based on these observations, he established guidelines for himself as a manager and strives hard to meet them. He believes in teamwork and that the people who will be affected by a decision should be included in making that decision. Further, he listens to his staff and encourages mutual respect. Aside from improved morale and the government becoming a better functioning team, this approach has reduced the number of employee lawsuits and grievances.

The staff in Grants Pass would say that Mr. Frasher empowers them, takes their recommendations seriously, gives them latitude and works with them as a team. They would also say he is innovative, professional, thoughtful, and progressive. He supports them when they make mistakes and works with them to fix any problems. Of course, if someone makes too many mistakes, that is another story.

Elected officials for whom Mr. Frasher has worked would say they have enjoyed working with him. They would cite his strengths as being professional, creative, ethical, and responsive. They would also add that he has been very effective in carrying out their policies and in implementing their directives.

Mr. Frasher believes his greatest strength is leadership. Once he is given the elected official's priorities, programs and direction, he can take the staff and move them forward. Projects get done in a timely manner and done correctly. Part of what makes him a good leader is making sound judgments and good decisions. No one will follow someone very long if the individual is making bad decisions. Another part of leadership is being a good communicator and he is that, both orally and in written communications. Political awareness is another strength. He does not get involved in politics but he understands the role they play in government and because of that awareness, is more effective in his job. Finally he would agree with others that he is professional and ethical and develops an atmosphere where teams flourish.

When asked about his weaknesses, Mr. Frasher commented that he has overcome his most notable weaknesses. He still, however, has a hard time not being a perfectionist. He expects a great deal and no one can meet all of his high standards, including himself. While he has been able to temper it with his staff, he has been less successful in being less demanding upon himself.

When asked about his accomplishments. Mr. Frasher has had many in his career. The most important, and the one he is most proud of, has been being able to make a positive difference in the organizations and communities that he has worked for and in. He represents his profession well and asserts himself with honesty and fairness. One specific example of making a positive difference is getting Grants Pass an AA bond rating. The City has not had a bond rating since

the early 1980's. He and the Finance Director worked closely together and worked hard at it. The result was an AA bond rating and that rating reduced the amount the city was paying in interest by $600,000 per year. Mr. Frasher is also proud of the fact that the Grants Pass website has won several national awards for a city its size. Finally, he was also successful in convincing voters to pass a $10 million levy to build two new Fire and Police facilities.

The biggest mistake of Mr. Frasher's career was in not recognizing the importance of people's perceptions when he was the City Administrator for Oak Grove, Missouri. He had been seen spending more time with people from one group than people from another and was marked as taking sides. Although he felt he was neutral and did not intentionally give more attention to one side over the other, the appearance of doing so was enough to cause him problems. Since then he has made certain that his neutrality is evident to everyone.

Mr. Frasher feels lucky to have had to fire only five people in his career. Before terminating employment, he tries counseling, reassigning and retraining them. He follows the personnel policies and, even though he does not like to fire employees, he understands the necessity and is not afraid to do so. He is not running a social welfare program but a city where all the employees need to do their jobs and do them well.

Among the challenges facing the next City Manager of Coral Gables, Mr. Frasher feels the most significant are:

- Establishing a working relationship with the existing staff and Council;
- Negotiating with the unions;
- Improving relationships with the local newspaper;
- Public relations and ever striving to improve the image of government in the community; and
- Preservation of historic sites.

If Mr. Frasher were chosen as the next City Manager, in the first six months on the job he would:

- Focus on building relationships, in particular with the City Council, staff and community;
- Develop good rapport with the University of Miami and the school district;
- Avoid making any drastic changes unless a crisis presented itself – it is best to spend time really getting to know the organization before making any snap judgments; and
- Learn the culture and values of a community before implementing any changes.

Mr. Frasher has always had a good relationship with the media. He is open and accessible to reporters.

In his leisure time, Mr. Frasher enjoys fishing, hiking, wine tasting, cultural events, playing the guitar, and spending time with family and friends.

David Frasher

Reason for Wanting to Leave Current Position:

Mr. Frasher is very happy in Grants Pass. Coral Gables is, however, a once in a lifetime opportunity and one he felt he had to at least try for. He is also concerned about his new Council and Mayor. Any time the elected officials change, the priorities and focus also changes. He is concerned that quality and high standards may not be as important to them as it was to the previous Council.

Six Adjectives or Phrases Mr. Frasher Used to Describe Himself:

- Honest,
- Compassionate,
- Creative,
- Fair,
- Trustworthy, and
- Optimistic.

Current Salary:

$154,000 (total compensation)

Interviewers Impression's:

Extremely articulate, friendly, open and knowledgeable. Fair and very competent. Does his homework and had clearly spent time studying Coral Gables and its issues before he applied.

Interviewed by:

Emilee Anderson
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

David Frasher
Reference Notes

Mike Murphy, Mayor, Grants Pass, Oregon 541-326-1607

Mayor Murphy was sworn in as Mayor in January 2009, but has worked with Mr. Frasher since 2004 as a resident. Mayor Murphy was also on the City Council for eleven years prior to Mr. Frasher being hired; so he knows what to look for in a City Manager. In his estimation Mr. Frasher has done an extremely good job in his position and understands his role.

Mr. Frasher is professional and does not push his opinions on the Council. He keeps the Mayor informed through emails and written reports. In addition to the Mayor, four new Council Members were elected in November and they have requested an overwhelming amount of information from Mr. Frasher. Despite his busy schedule he has responded quickly to their requests.

Mr. Frasher understands the importance of being customer service oriented and conveys that message to his staff. The Grants Pass city staff is top notch, and Mr. Frasher was able to keep them intact despite a controversial dismissal of the former City Manager. The community had been critical of this previous City Manager because its members perceived him as giving preferential treatment to some. Mr. Frasher does not have an agenda and the criticism of the municipal administration has ceased.

Mayor Murphy thinks Mr. Frasher is a very good City Manager and it will be very difficult to replace him.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Good sense of humor,
- Team leader,
- Gregarious,
- Energetic,
- Liked by the community, and
- Remains calm.

Strengths: He responds to the Council's requests and direction, and he is a good leader of his executive team.

Weakness: He is very smart and sometimes expects everyone else to have the same level of intelligence.

Laurel Samson, Assistant City Manager, Grants Pass, Oregon 541-787-9433

Ms. Samson has been the Assistant City Manager since 1996 and has known Mr. Frasher since 2005. He is a great City Manager.

Mr. Frasher is attentive to the Council and gets along with them. Ms. Samson enjoys working for him because he involves her and mentors her growth. The staff feels supported. He has pushed them to raise the bar and not simply do their job, but do it exceptionally well. The staff has responded very positively.

One example of Mr. Frasher's capabilities is that the City developed architectural standards and implemented them. Many of the employees thought would never happen. When the pressure from the community got too intense, some of the employees wanted to back down by either halting the changes or putting them in place more gradually. Mr. Frasher stepped in and pushed them through. Another example is the building of two fire stations. Instead of doing everything as cheaply as possible, he has emphasized the need to be leaders in the building community. The city's buildings need to model good construction and green practices. He wants the residents to be proud of their city.

Mr. Frasher has experience dealing with the public and goes on a radio talk show once a month to answer caller's questions. He meets with the media after Council meetings to ensure they understood all of the information given. Customer service is a high priority for Mr. Frasher. Not every resident who comes into his office gets what they want, because he is firm on the laws and codes of the city, but he gives them the information clearly and fairly.

When the previous City Manager was fired, the staff, Council, and community were split. Mr. Frasher has rebuilt the city's credibility because of he is accessible and ethical.

Mr. Frasher has been good for their community, and he would make a great City Manager anywhere he goes.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Easy to talk to,
- Inspiration to staff,
- Open to the media,
- Excited about community,
- Interesting, and
- People like being around him.

Strengths: He has great vision and is a leader.

Weaknesses: He is not a hands-on manager, which was good for Grants Pass, but may not be what every community needs.

Chris Woodburn, Attorney, Grants Pass, Oregon City 541-659-0738

David Frasher
Reference Notes

Mr. Woodburn was on the Council that hired Mr. Frasher in 2005. Mr. Frasher later hired him as the city attorney in September 2006. Mr. Frasher is a great City Manager.

Mr. Frasher tells the Council members what they need to know, gives them honest answers to their questions and then accomplishes the tasks they want him to do. He keeps staff and Council well informed. As a manager he does not micromanage. He gives the staff freedom to make decisions and lets them do their jobs. He regularly has coffee and chat sessions with employees at different levels to stay informed and t give them an ear.

During Mr. Frasher's tenure, a citywide compensation study had been done. Many employees were disappointed and thought the study was skewed. Pay scales were changed or frozen, creating a tense situation. However, Mr. Frasher was open and honest with the employees, and they ultimately accepted the new scales.

Mr. Frasher gets along well with the public and is a good speaker. When making presentations he has the ability to mix in some humor.

An example of his capabilities occurred when Home Depot wanted to open a store in Grants Pass. One of the larger local businesses was against it. Mr. Frasher backed the Council's decision to allow it and worked with the local business to mitigate the negative feelings.

When the Council hired Mr. Frasher in 2005, they knew they were lucky to get him, and he might someday be lured away by another organization. Mr. Woodburn highly recommends Mr. Frasher as a City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Values staff opinions,
- Team leader,
- Likeable,
- Reasonable,
- Professional, and
- Fair.

Strengths: He is an eloquent speaker and can deal with difficult situations and people.

Weaknesses: To a fault he is loyal to his staff. If one of them makes a mistake he will probably take responsibility for it himself.

Jerry Lomas, Architect, Member of the Grants Pass Historic Building and Site Commission, Grants Pass, Oregon, 541-218-7606

Mr. Lomas has known Mr. Frasher since 2004. He is an incredible City Manager and very supportive of the preservation of historic sites.

Mr. Frasher has a good grasp on the issues in the community. He is customer service oriented, possibly to his own detriment, because he puts so much personal energy into making sure all parties have been given the information they need. The new Council has overwhelmed him with requests for information, and he always complies.

Mr. Frasher works well with elected officials. The former Mayor was anti-growth and in the minority on the Council, but Mr. Frasher was still able to have a professional and positive relationship with him. His law background has proven useful in helping him work with Council members to moderate their demands.

Mr. Frasher has hired high quality employees, and this attribute has resulted in an improvement in the performance of the city. Prior to his arrival, the city was run on a "good ol' boy" system. Depending on the resident, laws and regulations were not always enforced. Mr. Frasher told the Building Officials to start enforcing all of the codes fairly. Many people in the community were unhappy, but they have come to understand the need for compliance.

Mr. Lomas would hate to see Mr. Frasher leave but highly recommends him for a City Manager position. He is simply an incredible city manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Highest ethical standards,
- Smart,
- Positive attitude,
- Proactive,
- Ultimate professional, and
- Reasonable.

Strengths: He brings people together, hires good employees, and understands the financial side of the city.

Weaknesses: He spends too much time trying to please Councilors who are in the minority.

Del Renfro, Council Member, Grants Pass, Oregon 541-955-7324

Mr. Renfro has worked with Mr. Frasher since 2006. He is an exceptional City Manager.

Most elected officials get along with Mr. Frasher. He keeps the Council well informed and has accomplished all requested tasks in a timely manner. He has a range of experience in other forms of government and in different positions (from being a police officer to a lawyer). At a

result, so he understands the importance of customer service at all levels. He has hired many high quality employees, including the Finance Officer, City Attorney and Public Works Director.

Mr. Frasher can also be quite tenacious. At one point, the Oregon Department of Transportation wanted to put a high speed thoroughfare through the City. The City, however, wanted to stay a small town. The Council and Mr. Frasher fought the DOT and won.

The Rogue River runs through the City and a group wanted to put trails next to the river, including in some people's backyards. The residents were upset at the possibility, and Mr. Frasher worked with both sides of the issue to find solutions. Ultimately trails were not built in anyone's backyard.

Mr. Frasher has not been involved in anything controversial. Mr. Renfro thinks Mr. Frasher will be an exceptional City Manager wherever he goes.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Personable,
- Respected by staff and Council,
- Responsive,
- Intelligent, and
- Problem solver.

Strengths: He has a sound knowledge of budgeting, knows what funding is available and how to apply it.

Weaknesses: None.

Tim Cummings, Council President, Grants Pass, Oregon 541-659-5033

Mr. Cummings has worked with Mr. Frasher for four years. Mr. Cummings has been very impressed by him with him.

Mr. Frasher knows who he works for, remains neutral, and gives the Council excellent information. He is customer service oriented and has been successful in completing tasks on time. The staff respects him because he delegates appropriately and follows through. He is a does. He has also successfully gotten the citizens to pass two public safety levies with good bond ratings and indexed fees to keep up with rising costs.

Mr. Frasher has initiated ICMA ethics training and brought a sense of integrity to the local government. The County and school district were critical of the city because it did not live up to several previous agreements. Mr. Frasher has developed trust by doing what he says he is going to do.

As mentioned previously, four new Council Members were elected on an anti-growth agenda. The prior Council had a pro-growth majority. Unfortunately, the new majority appears to want to disrupt the progress of the community. Mr. Frasher can handle this situation, but to Mr. Cummings, it would be a waste of talent. Mr. Frasher is a very high caliber employee and should be somewhere where his talents will be utilized rather than repressed. As a result, Mr. Cummings recommended that Mr. Frasher start putting out his resume.

Mr. Cummings highly recommends Mr. Frasher for a City Manager position.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Sharp on his feet,
- Bright,
- Gets things done,
- Has a good staff,
- Visionary, and
- Respected.

Strengths: He is well spoken, is good at union relations, and is a visionary. He also has a good sense of how to save money.

Weaknesses: The previous City Manager involved himself in everything. So some people in the community do not like how Mr. Frasher delegates to his staff.

Donna Jean Wendle, Former Council Member, Grants Pass, Oregon 541-660-4383

Ms. Wendle worked with Mr. Frasher from 2005-2008. In her estimation, Mr. Frasher is the best City Manager she has ever seen and always gave him high marks on his annual evaluations.

Mr. Frasher makes every effort to ensure each Council Member feels heard. He provides information without bias and then allows the Council to make the best decision. When he first got to the City, he hired facilitators to attend the Council's annual retreat. Council members were taught how to work together and how to convey their message succinctly. They were taught their overall role in the government. Mr. Frasher stresses ethics and has provided several presentations to reinforce what is ethical and is not.

During the interview process for the Grants Pass City Manager position, candidates were asked to give a brief presentation. Several community leaders were chosen to participate in the interviews. Everyone was thoroughly impressed by Mr. Frasher. His presentation was clear and it was obvious that he had done a great deal of research on the City. He definitely knew where he thought it was headed in the future.

Mr. Frasher is sensitive to the needs of the residents and wants to know if people are not getting the services they deserve. As a result, he has revamped some areas to make for better customer service. The previous regime followed the mentality that the residents should not ask questions but simply take their word for it. Mr. Frasher allows both the staff and the community to have a voice, making the government more open and transparent. He works well with the media and provides them with information - good or bad - before they hear it from a different source.

Mr. Frasher empowers staff and has encouraged them to go back to school so they can improve their opportunities for career advancement. He is innovative and tries to lighten the mood whenever possible. At one point, he asked local musicians to play for a few minutes before each Council meeting. This new feature was designed to showcase local talent but also to start the meetings positively.

Mr. Frasher has had a tremendous impact on Grants Pass and she would hate to see him go. He would make a great City Manager anywhere.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Capable,
- Not threatened by others,
- Friendly,
- Team player,
- Good sense of humor, and
- Has many contacts.

Strengths: He is responsive, a good delegator, honors people, and allows the Council to make its own decisions.

Weaknesses: None.

Jeff Hyde, Former Council Member, Grants Pass, Oregon 541-479-3351

Mr. Hyde was on the Council that hired Mr. Frasher in 2005, and left the Council before returning in 2008. Mr. Frasher is an excellent City Manager. In October 2008, in his annual review he received all 4's and 5's from Mr. Hyde and Mr. Hyde is not an easy grader.

In 2006 four new Council Members were voted in, and they did not like the direction the City has been taking. Despite this change, Mr. Frasher got along well with all of the elected officials. He keeps the Council informed via weekly memorandums.

Mr. Frasher is an excellent speaker, is able to make tough decisions, and is always looking for ways to do things better. The staff enjoys working for him and he is loyal to them. He has hired employees who are a step up from those hired by the previous City Manager. Until 2005 the

Finance Director had also acted as the Human Resources Director. Mr. Frasher felt this dual role put too much responsibility on one person. Consequently, he split the duties, and hired a new Finance Director. The new division of duties has had a significant impact on the way the City does business.

Mr. Frasher is customer service oriented and has learned to separate those residents who are never happy with anything the City does from those who have legitimate complaints or concerns. He knows credibility requires more than just words. When he arrived, the school district did not trust the City due to the City's lack of follow through in the past. Mr. Frasher created a different tone for the organization, collaborated more with the school district, and developed an overall more positive rapport with them. One of the other things he has brought to Grants Pass is modernization. That included bringing budgeting practices up to date and created processes which ensure proper accountability.

Mr. Hyde strongly recommends Mr. Frasher for any City Manager position.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Professional,
- Hardworking,
- Team player,
- Nice,
- Shows great restraint, and
- Never embarrasses the Council.

Strengths: He is smart, has a lot of experience, is a good delegator, and is organized.

Weaknesses: He is overly loyal to his staff although this attribute has not caused any problems with his performance to date.

Martin Seybold, Director of Parks and Community Services, Grants Pass, Oregon
541-474-6354

Mr. Seybold was the Director of Field Operations in 2005 when Mr. Frasher first started. Mr. Frasher then hired Mr. Seybold into his current position. He is a good City Manager.

Grants Pass has an eight member City Council and, despite differing views, Mr. Frasher gets along with all of them. He has built good relationships with the small business owners in the community and hired competent people he could trust. He is supportive of his staff and does not micromanage.

The biggest positive change Mr. Frasher has brought to Grants Pass is a focus on quality. The City was doing jobs to just get by, but he emphasizes the need to make things exceptional. He

wants residents will be proud to live there and the staff proud to work there. Recently, a statistically valid survey was performed and found that around 87% of the citizens liked living in Grants Pass. Mr. Seybold thinks he may even be too quality driven for the type of community he serves.

Due to Mr. Frasher's background as a police officer and lawyer he also brought an ability to remain calm and stand up to criticism without getting emotional. He emphasizes ethics and has put in place a set of questions to ask potential candidates to ensure their ethics correspond with those of the City.

Mr. Frasher is customer service oriented. He received some criticism after he sent a letter to one resident to inform him that the city employees were told not to give this person any more of their time, unless he had a formal, public information request. This resident had been abusing the staff's open door policy and taking time away from more important matters. Mr. Frasher understood that he and the staff are there to serve the public as a whole and not any individual resident to the detriment of the larger community.

Mr. Seybold thinks Mr. Frasher will make a good City Manager anywhere he goes.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Personable,
- Remains calm in tense situations,
- Professional,
- Well prepared,
- Dresses well, and
- Does research into the community.

Strengths: He is dedicated and has confidence in his staff.

Weaknesses: He can be a little impatient and can get frustrated when assignments are not completed in a timely manner.

Michael Dyal, City Manager, Medford, Oregon 541-774-2000

Mr. Dyal has known Mr. Frasher since 2004 and knows him to be an excellent City Manager.

Because of Mr. Frasher's previous experience as a police officer and an attorney, he knows the work force from the ground up, rather than top down like most City Managers. This experience gave him the ability to be welcomed and accepted by all employees, even those who are unionized. As a result, he has been successful in resolving issues with unions that would normally have been very tense.

Mr. Dyal thinks highly of Mr. Frasher and recommends him for any City Manager position.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Doer,
- Results oriented,
- Likeable,
- Energetic, and
- Has a positive presence.

Strengths: He knows how to make things happen either by doing it himself or utilizing the Council and staff. He is very professional.

Weaknesses: None.

Richard Riggs, Retired Judge, Oregon Supreme Court 503-789-0344

Judge Riggs has known Mr. Frasher for four years. In 2006 Mr. Frasher hired Judge Riggs to conduct an investigation into some allegations of Council Members acting unethically. During his time in Grants Pass Judge Riggs got enough insight into the City to know that Mr. Frasher is a very good City Manager. He has a firm grasp on what the issues are and is able to remain neutral in a difficult political atmosphere.

Hiring Judge Riggs to do the investigation it brought credibility to the findings and Mr. Frasher was smart enough to know that was needed. Ultimately, it was found that some of the accusations were true and some were false.

Judge Riggs is impressed by Mr. Frasher and recommends him very highly as a City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Frasher:

- Hardworking,
- Likeable,
- Easy going in a social atmosphere,
- Serious when in a work setting, and
- Affable.

Strengths: He is a leader, understands issues with the law quickly, and remains apolitical.

Weaknesses: None.

Prepared by: Emilee Anderson - Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for DAVID W. FRASHER

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Josephine County, OR	No Records Found
Ashland County, WI	No Records Found
Jackson County, MO	No Records Found
Lafayette County, MO	No Records Found
State	
Oregon	No Records Found
Wisconsin	No Records Found
Missouri	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Josephine County, OR	Dissolution of Marriage, Filed 11/06/2007, Decree issued 11/09/2007
Ashland County, WI	No Records Found
Jackson County, MO	Case #00CV215194 - Other Tort Filed 06/26/2000 Royer v. Oak Grove, Frasher, et. al Disposition: Moved to Federal Court - 07/27/2000 Case #4:00-cv-00761-FJG – Civil Rights, Filed 07/278/2000 Royer v. Oak Grove et. al. Disposition: Summary Judgment for the Defendants on 02/28/2003 which was affirmed on appeal. Case # 4.02-cv-257-ODS Civil Rights Grey v. Oak Grove, Frasher, et. al. Filed 03/19/2003 Disposition: Summary Judgment for the Defendants on 09/24/2003 which was affirmed on appeal. Case #02CV208657 – Breach of Contract, Frasher v. Neal Filed on 03/27/2003

*See Candidate Explanation for Records Found on Page 2

	Disposition: Verdict for the Defendants on 06/24/2003
	Case #16CV190-15721 - Replevin Filed 06/18/1990 Chase Mahatten v. Frasher, et. al. Disposition: Dismissed on 10/21/1991
Lafayette County, MO	No Records Found
Federal	
Oregon	No Records Found
Wisconsin	No Records Found
Missouri	Results Pending
Motor Vehicle	
Oregon	No Records Found
Credit	Very Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

*See Candidate Explanation for Records Found on Page 2

From: David Frasher [mailto:dfrasher@grantspassoregon.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2009 2:26 PM
To: kknutson
Subject: Re: Coral Gables Background Report Findings that Require an Explanation

Kathryn: Thanks for the telephone visit this morning. Here are my responses to the cases we discussed. Please let me know if you need anything further:

1. Frasher v Frasher-Sanchez in Josephine County Oregon was a divorce. My ex-wife and I had no children and had been married only a couple of years so it was a fairly streamlined process. We handled the dissolution ourselves without attorneys and mutually agreed on settlement and property distribution issues. The divorce was amicable and there were no public accusations or anything of that nature.

2. Royer v City of Oak Grove in Jackson County Missouri was a civil case in which Mr. Royer sued the City, naming as defendants the Mayor, most of the Council and me as the Administrator. Mr. Royer alleged that the City and it's officials had violated his rights by removing him from the Board of Directors at the City's Senior Center after an employee complained that Mr. Royer had sexually harassed her. Mr. Royer's case was dismissed at the trial court level without ever addressing the merits he had claimed. Mr. Royer appealed. The City's insurance carrier handled all the litigation, which went on for years, well after I had moved on to another job. All of the claims against individual defendants were dismissed along the way. Royer's final appeal was judged in favor of the City and all defendants.

3. Grey v City of Oak Grove in Jackson County Missouri was a wrongful discharge claim by a city employee who had been dismissed by the Chief of Police. The employee filed a grievance which I reviewed as the City Administrator. I determined the Chief had acted appropriately in the dismissal and Mr. Grey appealed to the Council. The Council agreed with my conclusion and Mr. Grey filed suit and lost his case on summary judgment in favor of the City.

4. Frasher v Neal in Jackson County Missouri was a civil case involving a parcel of investment real estate that I owned with a partner. We contracted with the Neals for the sale of the property. Near the closing date the Neals backed out of the sale and my partner and I sought to enforce the contract in court. We did not prevail on our court claim but eventually sold the property to another party.

5. Chase Manhattan v Frasher in Jackson County Missouri is somewhat difficult to recall as it was nearly 20 years ago. The matter stemmed from my purchase of a new car that had defective paint and the dealer would not resolve the matter. Once a claim was filed in court I was able to reach a settlement with the dealer whereby I returned the car for a refund.

Internet Research

Bulletin, The (Bend, OR)
May 25, 2008
By Lily Raff • The Bulletin

Grants Pass voters pass on tax

Still, not every community is ready to get behind a sales tax. Grants Pass is a Southern Oregon city of about 31,000. The Rogue River flows through the city, attracting rafters and anglers from all over the country.

Grants Pass residents in 2006 voted down a proposed 4.85 percent tax on food and beverages. The tax would have funded two public safety stations, parks, a community recreation center and an after-school program for children.

Proponents of the tax estimated that it would net the city $3 million a year.

But 77 percent of voters cast ballots against the tax, compared to 23 percent who favored it.

David Frasher, the city manager, said residents didn't like that restaurants were being singled out as the single sales tax source. **Frasher** said he believes that having some sales tax would have helped the city fare better during economic slowdowns like the one the whole country faces now.

"I believe the soundest thing for local governments is a balanced revenue stream, so the cost is distributed ? among property tax and sales tax," he said.

If a city is funded exclusively by sales tax, **Frasher** said, it struggles to provide services during lean times, when residents cut back on spending.

But high property taxes can hurt long-term residents on fixed incomes because they have little control over how much tax they must pay, he added.

"If I were governor, I would try to move the state toward some formula so that we could actually lower property tax for some people and have at least a modest sales tax," **Frasher** said. "That's the healthiest thing."

http://kuws.fm/newsarchive_0.html
June 22, 2005

Ashland to develop small business center

Ashland is putting money into business in hopes of future payoffs. Melissa Spero reports on the Ashland Business Park.

The Ashland Area Development Corporation will use a $19,000 community block grant to get small businesses out of the current business incubator and into their own building.

Ashland City Manager **David Frasher** says the grant allows people to open their own business. "I think it matters to anyone in the community who wants to see the local economy strengthened and developed. It certainly matters to any person in the community who wants to start a business. This creates an opportunity for them to do that with a less risk than they would have other wise." **Frasher** says the grant provides a location for start-up businesses, access to business plans, loan funds at discounted interest rates, and money for start up costs. He says the goal of the Ashland Area Corporation is to encourage people to take those initial risks for so they can achieve financial and personal success.

"The philosophy here is that this will help the business person minimize their risk at the outset. And then if the corporation or the company the enterprise is successful and they want to expand. Eventually the idea here is to get them to develop their business where it's strong enough that it can move out of the incubator to another site." **Frasher** says the incubator is more than half full with more people showing interest.

The Daily Telegram
February 24, 2005.

Delegates: Shared revenue can't keep up with costs
Kevin Murphy

The 150-member Superior Days delegation commandeered a committee hearing room in the State Capitol Tuesday where they pitched legislative requests to officials from state commerce, transportation and administration departments.

During the daylong event, community leaders from seven northwest Wisconsin counties told the agency heads about area plans for economic development, sought highway funding and curbs on payday lending.
The inability of state shared revenue to keep pace with inflation is causing the city of Superior to take "drastic measures" to absorb further reductions in state aid, Superior City Councilor Kevin Norbie told Department of Administration Deputy Secretary Gina Frank-Reece.

Shared revenue contributes one-third of the city's budget, but while the city budget has grown by less than 1 percent in the past three years, shared revenue has decreased by 1.42 percent and that is before inflation, Norbie said. "We've already cut 24 positions, which is 10 percent of our work force, and all 66 seasonal positions. There's nowhere else to turn. We can't just cut individual positions anymore, we're forced to cut programs ... We're left with deciding do we want to continue to collect the garbage?" Norbie said.

Ashland City Administrator **David Frasher** joined Norbie is asking Frank-Reece to support a state commitment to funding shared revenue at the pace of inflation. Ashland will have to consider reducing the number of hours the library or parks are open, or take 48 hours to remove snow instead of a 24-hour schedule, unless funding formulas are changed.

Shared revenue contributes more than 40 percent of Ashland's budget, and although the budget as grown at an annual rate of 2.2 percent during the past decade, state aid needs to grow at the rate of inflation or the city falls behind, he said.

Shared revenue was changed statewide in the 1970s to narrow the tax burden on rich and poor communities. Shared revenue's failure to keep up with inflation over several years widens the gap between communities that are well off and those in need, **Frasher** said.

State Budget Director David Schmiedicke cautioned Norbie and **Frasher** to "be careful what you wish for," as past changes in shared revenue funding formulas have hurt rather than helped northern Wisconsin counties. **Frasher's** offer to help redraft the funding formula got a laugh from the Superior Days delegation, but they quieted when Schmiedicke replied, "northwest Wisconsin isn't driving that formula."

After the meeting, **Frasher** said past funding formula changes have favored southern Wisconsin and he commended Doyle's administration for halting that, but northwest Wisconsin will need more

state aid to enable municipalities to continue to provide core services. "I think you'll see this issue on the Superior Days agenda for sometime, until they start funding this at a proper rate or we run out of employees to cut," he said.

After an appeal for Department of Natural Resources funding to combat the spread of invasive plant and animal species in Lake Superior, Catholic Charities Bureau Director Gary Valley referred to payday lenders as an "invasive species." "In Superior there's been a proliferation of payday lenders who use predatory practices on the public," he said.

Valley called for legislation that would eliminate some of the industry's more abusive practices, including charging monthly interest rates of up to 500 percent. That would prevent "outrageous" examples such as a 90-day loan of $450 that had an interest charge of more than $300, Valley said. Saving the remaining 24 state grain inspector jobs in Superior was urged by Mike Grandlund, grain operations manager. Wisconsin shouldn't follow Minnesota's lead, which will eliminate their grain inspectors in June. Instead, Wisconsin should take over grain inspection at the Twin Ports as the program's costs are largely self-supporting and borne by industry fees.

Schmiedicke said the inspection program has been run at a deficit recently and the U.S. Department of Agriculture could take over the duties the state has done for 100 years.

Sen. Robert Jauch, D-Poplar, said the deficit is expected to disappear shortly and it's expected that a to-be-completed consultant's report will consider taking a broader view of the value of employing state inspectors in Superior. "The state grain stamp means something to the industry ... and without it do you begin to lose more ships as they go elsewhere? Calculate that into (the decision)," Jauch said.

The Daily Press
October 13, 2004.

Dedication ceremony held for Bay Area Skatepark
By RICK OLIVO

Skateboarder Josh Fangman, 17, had the honor of the first official jump at the Ashland Skatepark pad following dedication of the park's concrete pad Tuesday. Park organizers still need to raise up to $100,000 to match the $60,000 they anticipate remaining on hand, following construction of the pad for equipment needed to finish out the park for skateboarders, in-line skaters and BMX bikes.

Folk wisdom holds that any project is only as sound as the foundation upon which it is built.
If that's the case, the Ashland Skatepark seems destined for a great future both literally and figuratively. Supporters of the project came to the Central Railyard Park area behind the Bretting Community Center for dedication ceremonies for the Skatepark pad, an event that was as much to reenergize supporters as it was to mark the progress on the facility made to date.

Skatepark Board of Directors member Phil Clark said the dedication marked the conclusion of just the first phase of the park's construction process. "We're not there yet," he said Clark noted the first good foundation was the physical construction of the unique floating pad special designed to endure the harsh weather extremes found in the Bay area and to handle the heavy equipment that would be placed upon it. He congratulated the Ashland Public Works Department for their efforts to provide a sound grading job for the concrete, as well as Chicago Iron, Ed Hopkins Construction and Roffers Construction for the material and construction expertise used in creating the 40-by-100-foot slab.

Ashland Mayor Fred Schnook praised City Administrator **David Frasher** and the Public Works Department for their efforts on behalf of the project. He noted that finding a home for the park had been a "tough decision." Schnook also praised area youths who have been involved in the project from the beginning. "The kids have been out there working like crazy; watching them work has been motivational," he said.

Schnook said the purpose of the Skatepark was to get kids out of the streets and other hazardous locations and into a setting where they can practice their thrilling skateboarding, in-line skating and bike gymnastics safely. "Railyard Park will be the gem of the city's parks," he said. Clark said the closest skate park was located nearly 70 miles away in Superior. He predicted that once complete, the park would be a "tremendous economic benefit" to the community. "Now that we have the pad, we have the challenge of getting the equipment," he said.

Clark said the cost of that equipment would be high, some $60 to $100,000 dollars, depending on what layout was eventually chosen for the park. "It is important that everybody backs efforts to raise additional funds," he said.

City Administrator **David Frasher** said in the normal course of events, the city is presented with "an almost infinite number of requests for funds." He said the city unfortunately had but a finite

amount of space and capacity for projects like the Skatepark. "Without the support of the mayor and the council, this project wouldn't have happened," he said. He said he was "surprised and impressed" by the funds raised by Skatepark proponents and their "ongoing commitment" for the project. "I hope that commitment will continue," he said.

Frasher said the city would investigate opportunities to finance the rest of the project, and State Assembly Member Gary Sherman, who attended the event, said he would investigate to see if any state money could be found to aid the rest of the project.

Blade, The (Toledo, OH)
June 4, 2004

3 candidates seek to fill job vacant since December
Author: GEORGE J. TANBER BLADE STAFF WRITER

MONROE - The three finalists for Monroe's vacant city manager position will have their final interviews with City Council tomorrow afternoon, city officials said.

The candidates include **David Frasher**, city administrator of Ashland, Wis.; Debbie Manns, former city administrator of Southgate, Mich.; and William Craig, planning and development director of Springfield, Ohio.

"I think they are very good candidates," said Joe Lybik, Monroe's human resources director.

City officials screened 22 applicants for the job, paring the list to five. Three of those candidates dropped out - two of them because they found other jobs. Two more names were added, but one of those dropped out, bringing the number to three. Mr. **Frasher** and Ms. Manns were two of the original finalists and Mr. Craig was added later, Mr. Lybik said.

Ms. Manns, 41, said she sees a lot of potential in the Monroe job.

"There are many economic development opportunities there with the port of Monroe, Custer Airport, and the historical attributes of the city. Also, there are many assets that exist in downtown, such as the river frontage," she said.

Ms. Manns was dismissed from her job in Southgate in November after a new mayor was elected.

"I worked hard. I have nothing to be ashamed of. [But] I did experience a termination, [so] I'm being very selective about the community I choose," she said.

Previously, Ms. Manns served as development director for Wayne, Mich., from 1991 to 2000.

Mr. Craig, 58, said of Monroe, "It's a good community and has a good reputation."

He has been in his current job in Springfield for seven years.

"I was hired to do a number of specific things. We have accomplished those things, [so] it's time to move on," he said.

Previously, Mr. Craig, a Chicago native, served as city manager in Newton Falls, Ohio; Hopkins, Minn.; and West St. Paul, Minn.

Mr. **Frasher**, a former attorney who has been Ashland's administrator since 2001, could not be

reached for comment yesterday But Ashland Mayor Fred Schnook said he is an exemplary employee.

"He brought a breath of fresh air to the [office]," he said. "His customer service skills are outstanding, and he has great communications skills."

Under Mr. **Frasher**'s direction, he moved his office to the city administration building's first floor to be more accessible to the public and published a bi-annual magazine.

"It would be a serious blow to our community [if he left], but David has made it very clear he is career-oriented and career-minded," Mr. Schnook said.

Before working in Ashland, Mr. **Frasher** served as city administrator in Oak Grove, Mo.

The candidates will meet with city department heads today, join a reception from 4 to 5 p.m. at city hall that is open to the public, and have dinner with the mayor and City Council this evening.

Tomorrow, they will tour the community before meeting individually with City Council at 2 p.m. for their final interviews, which are open to the public.

Mr. Lybik said no date has been set for a decision.

"It will be a short period of time," he said.

The vacancy occurred in December when Robert Hamilton retired. Mike O'Connell, director of finance, has been serving as interim city manager. City Council will determine the new city manager's salary. Mr. Hamilton, who served 8 1/2 years, made $100,000 annually.

http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org

Cleaning up an old mess
by Stephanie Hemphill, Minnesota Public Radio
July 15, 2003

Signs warn people not to swim or boat in part of Chequamegon Bay. (MPR photo/Stephanie Hemphill)

People in Ashland, Wisconsin are frustrated about how long it's taking to clean up pollution on their Lake Superior waterfront. The city wants to expand a marina and try to draw more tourists to town. But the shoreline is full of dangerous wastes from an old gas plant. The latest developments in the Superfund process are discouraging Ashland's leaders.

Ashland, Wisc. — The waves lapping gently on the beach at Kreher Park carry a thin film of oily scum. Bright yellow signs warn people not to wade in the water or run their boats in the bay.

It's not the kind of place that's likely to attract tourists. But that's exactly what Ashland's leaders, like city administrator **David Frasher** want to do. "We want to redevelop this site in a way that enhances the public's use and accessibility of the area," **Frasher** says. "And we want it to be pristine because we think that's the reason people come to Chequamegon Bay."

Ashland is about 60 miles east of Duluth. Its natural harbor was once busy with lumber mills, shipping, and a manufactured gas plant. For seventy years, until 1949, a company made gas to heat and light Ashland's homes.

Most cities had gas plants like this. The raw material was coal or petroleum. By-products were tars and oils in various thicknesses. Some of the waste was as solid as roofing tar, some was as runny as used engine oil. The gas company sold some of the by-products to other industries. It dumped the rest through a pipe into Chequamegon Bay.

"So we have the legacy of history," says Jerry Winslow, an engineer with Xcel Energy, formerly called NSP. NSP bought the manufactured gas plant in 1976. Now it's used as a place to repair equipment. Winslow says other industries along the bay, including a city landfill, added their own pollution over the years.

"Manufactured gas plant being one issue. Wood treating being another issue with the same kind of coal tar products. Landfill, which gets a little bit of everything."

Eight years ago the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources began studying the pollution problems here. The tars and oils can cause cancer, and can damage reproductive and other organs.

Xcel and the DNR worked together to cover places on land where the pollutants were bubbling to the surface. And Xcel is slowly pumping the tars out of the deep aquifer that runs under the old plant and into the bay.

The problem right now is the bay itself. The pollutants have settled on the bottom, and whenever there's a northeast wind, they get churned up and rise to the surface.

This area of Chequamegon Bay was listed as a Superfund site in 2002. So federal money was paying for the investigation. Now the Superfund program is nearly broke. So the EPA says Xcel should pay for the studies. Ashland's city manager, **David Frasher**, doesn't like that idea. "From our view, the data's been collected and re-collected and collected again, mostly by Wisconsin DNR," **Frasher** says. "And now we're going to go back and spend a few more years collecting more data. And naturally we're suspicious when the fox is guarding the henhouse. We just want to make sure that somebody's watching the fox."

"Well, we've all been watching each other for years," replies Xcel's Jerry Winslow. He says the rules on Superfund sites include plenty of oversight by both the federal EPA and the Wisconsin DNR. "We're not going to get to the end without all of us working together on this," he says.

People in Ashland are wondering if they'll ever get to the end. **David Frasher** says he wouldn't be surprised if Xcel were purposely dragging its feet. "I mean Xcel Energy's executives have told me themselves this site is they believe at least $50 million to clean up," he says. "Now with that figure in mind, you can see the value in deferring that payment."

But pollution cleanups only get more expensive as time goes by. Jerry Winslow has helped clean up several other manufactured gas sites. There are about 50 former plants in Wisconsin, and 30 in Minnesota. But most aren't so complicated to clean up because they weren't located on a lake or river. "You don't have to worry about the fish," Winslow says. "The terns, the birds, the whole ecosystem, the worms, etc. etc. here we need to worry about that."

The EPA plans to decide by September whether Xcel should take over the investigation. Xcel says it'll be at least two more years before it comes up with options for clean-up.

Saginaw News (MI)
December 11, 2001

Top choice for manager rejects Buena Vista's offer
Author: FRED KELLY; THE SAGINAW NEWS

Snubbed by their first pick, Buena Vista Township officials are once again looking for a township manager. Supervisor Dwayne A. Parker announced during a Board of Trustees meeting Monday that Alexander Little turned down a job offer. Trustees chose him over 37 candidates to replace William F. Allen, who resigned effective Dec. 31.

The board now will try to hire runner-up candidate **David Frasher**, former manager of Oak Grove, Mo.

Little wrote a letter to Buena Vista officials, but did not indicate why he did not want the job, Parker said. The former manager of Benton Harbor took his name from consideration just as a private company was to begin a background check.

Parker said he did not know whether the background check impacted Little's decision.

The Benton Harbor City Commission fired Little this year. Officials did not give a reason in public, but he apparently did not have support from a five-bloc majority on the nine-person panel.

Little had asked Buena Vista for a base salary of $85,000 a year with annual raises of 3 to 5 percent, $8,000 yearly deferred compensation and a $395 monthly car allowance. He also wanted taxpayers to cover his rent for up to six months.

Township officials refused to provide a housing stipend but did offer a $75,000 annual salary with 3 percent annual raises, $5,000 annually in deferred compensation and a $300 monthly car allowance.

Meanwhile, **Frasher** has asked for a compensation package similar to Little's request, Parker said. **Frasher**'s bosses also fired him this year.

All of the candidates with municipal experience who were out of work had "mutual separation agreements" from their former employers, Parker said.

Oak Grove is a predominately white suburb of Kansas City, Mo., that is slightly smaller than Buena Vista, which has 11,000 residents. Buena Vista is almost evenly split racially between whites and blacks and most of the township's employees are black.

Parker noted that **Frasher** has extensive experience as a municipal administrator, police detective and attorney.

The Examiner
August 8, 2001.

Frasher calls it quits
By David Tanner

David Frasher, city administrator for the city of Oak Grove, resigned unexpectedly Tuesday.

Mayor Jim Dent said **Frasher** brought forward his intentions to resign in a professional manner. "We're losing someone with good talents," Dent said. Written terms of the parting agreement are being met by both **Frasher** and the city, the mayor said.

Frasher has not been available for comment since the completion of Monday's Board of Aldermen meeting, when he left City Hall part-way through a portion of the meeting closed to the public.

Dent refused to comment on the reasons behind **Frasher**'s resignation, but said both the city and **Frasher** will have a chance to move forward. "I hope it's a positive move for him and ends up being positive for the city," Dent said. "These kinds of things are always difficult, but I think it will end up being positive for both parties."

The Board of Aldermen met in closed session Tuesday evening, providing only seven hours public notice, and voted 6-0 to accept the terms of the three-page parting agreement.

Frasher is accepting a sum of $36,000 for six months salary and a sum of $46,500 in unused compensatory time, vacation and sick leave. The severance, totaling slightly more than $82,500, does not include **Frasher's** health insurance, which will be paid by the city through February 2002.

Frasher leaves at a mixed time in Oak Grove history. The city is caught between growth and small town attitudes.

"The city is in the midst of tumultuous times," the mayor said. "We're growing rapidly ... I know the administration, I think the board, everyone really, has been faced with an endless stream of issues, and politically, morally and professionally I don't know if there are any of us that have conducted ourselves spotlessly." "I want to acknowledge the positive things Dave has done during his time as administrator," Dent continued. "When you grow there will always be some people who will be unhappy with the things you do, but I think the positives outweigh the negatives in this case."

Dent said **Frasher** was instrumental in moving the city's budget process forward by leaps and bounds. **Frasher** tackled issues and was a facilitator for Interstate 70 improvements, Broadway Street widening, sewer issues, parks improvements, court and police issues. "He tackled major issue after major issue, making positive ground," Dent said.

Frasher was offered the job as city administrator on Jan. 25, 1999, after the position was vacant for four months.

Prior to the vacancy, Mike Butler served as city administrator.

An Oak Grove native, **Frasher** graduated from MacMurry College in Jacksonville, Ill., in 1981.

In 1993 **Frasher** received a law degree from Washington University in St. Louis before moving north to work for the Alaska Court of Appeals and a private practice. **Frasher** officially took the city administrator's job on Feb. 1, 1999, and since then has helped the city accomplish several projects and policies.

Dent said he holds a positive outlook on the overall direction the city is headed. "This will be a chance for the city to stop fretting over who did what or who didn't do what," the mayor said. "I hope the citizens are patient with us during the transition," Dent said.

The mayor said the city will probably look toward the Missouri Municipal League for guidance in finding an interim administrator.

Dent will conduct staff meetings for the next few mornings to help out the city staff.

Linda Lucas, a citizen who often takes a vocal stand on many issues, said she was the last Oak Grove citizen **Frasher** spoke to before he left City Hall Tuesday.

"He told me to keep fighting for what I believed in," Lucas said.

"I'll respect him as a city administrator wherever he goes," Lucas said. "Some things happened lately ... As a whole **Dave Frasher** did some wonderful things for the city."

The Examiner
November 16, 2000

Oak Grove looks at options after bond issue fails
by David Tanner

The city of Oak Grove is back to square one on the sewer issue, said City Administrator **David Frasher**.

On election day, voters turned down an $8.775 million sewer bond that would have allowed the city to build a new treatment plant to replace the current lagoon system.

"We're back to the drawing board," **Frasher** said this week.

"I thought it would be a closer race," **Frasher** said about the election. "The opposition was very organized."

Opposition beat the supporters, 1,431 votes to 701.

Frasher said a new treatment plant was the recommended solution to the lagoon system.

The city used the engineering firm of Burns & McDonnell to flesh out the options, since the lagoon system is outdated. The firm recommended the new treatment plant and the issue was then put to the voters.

"That was our recommendation and the voters rejected it," **Frasher** said. "We have to respect that."

Water and sewer bills in Oak Grove would have jumped more than $20 per month for the average residential home, had the bond passed, from about $9 to $29.

The aftermath of the vote has left city officials and engineers looking for new solutions to the sewer problem.

The city keeps growing and the sewer system is at capacity, **Frasher** said.

"Everything's open to discussion," he said. "We'll be discussing the options at upcoming board meetings."

"We've got to go back and start over," said Mayor Jim Dent. "The engineers have gone through it and they gave us a recommendation," the mayor said. "Anything we do now is going to be a compromise to what they offered."

Burns & McDonnell is on stand-by to hear options the city wants to pursue.

"We've had some initial discussion," said Steve Yonker, the engineer who helped develop the treatment plant proposal. "We haven't been asked to look into anything specific. There will be more discussion later."

Over the past year, Yonker has attended several board of aldermen meetings to present recommendations to the board about the sewer bond.

Frasher said he thinks one reason people voted no on the bond was because they didn't see the situation as being critical.

"If the vast majority flips the switch or flushes the toilet, and it works, it is not critical yet," **Frasher** said. "They say, 'there is no issue.'"

Examiner, The (Independence - Blues Springs - Grain Valley, MO)
September 29, 2000

Alderman takes questions personally
Author: David Tanner; The Examiner

The difference between investigation and accusation is creating a stir among Oak Grove city officials and Alderman John Ray.

Ray said last week he has been accused of illegally fixing the bid process on a park improvement project the Board of Aldermen voted on Feb. 22.

He denies the accusation.

"These accusations are totally ridiculous," Ray said.

Mayor Jim Dent and City Administrator **David Frasher** have both said there is a difference between investigating an allegation and accusing someone of wrongdoing.

"I received some information and wanted to investigate it," Dent said. He did not pinpoint the source of the information, just that it was a tip that Ray gave insider information to a firm in Lee's Summit about a bid for a park improvement project.

Jean Maneke, attorney for the Missouri Press Association, said there is nothing that prohibits verbal discussion on a bid process being leaked to a bidder.

Ray is taking the investigation personally. So much so that he is calling it an accusation.

"You could sit and think for hours and not come up with a better story," Ray said. "These accusations are ridiculous. There is no way I could have price-fixed on a sealed bid."

"We are not accusing John of price-fixing," **Frasher** said. "If we were, it would be out of our hands and in the hands of someone else."

Maneke said price-fixing may not be the issue in this case. She said price-fixing is an anti-trust agreement that involves competitors collaborating on bids in order to make more money.

Dent said he did not hear about the alleged incident until someone came forward recently and said Ray tipped off a company from Lee's Summit on a bid for a park improvement project.

Minutes from two Board of Aldermen meetings provide some details about the incident.

On Dec. 20, 1999, Mike Bird, mayor at the time, said in open session that Burns & McDonnell had provided the city a bid of $8,072 on an improvement project at Webb Park.

Burns & McDonnell, an engineering firm, is under contract with the city to provide bids from time to time, and the city does not put every project out for open bids.

Ray moved that the project go out for rebid. The motion passed.

Ray was quoted during discussion about wanting more open bidding on projects and did not think one bid from Burns & McDonnell would always be the lowest.

"It was an attempt to save the city money," Ray said this week.

Ray said the project went out for rebid, and anyone could have gone to city hall and looked in the minutes to see the original $8,072 bid from Burns & McDonnell.

"That bid became public knowledge when it was mentioned in open session back in December," Ray said.

Ray admits to calling Lovelace & Associates, where his friend Aaron Thomas works, between Dec. 20 and February of this year, and telling them to bid on the project.

"I didn't tell them what to bid," Ray said. "It was going to be a sealed bid. Burns & McDonnell could have changed their bid in the meantime."

On Feb. 22 of this year, the Board of Aldermen prepared to vote on the bids for the park improvement. It is stated in the minutes that Ray abstained from voting because he knew someone at Lovelace & Associates, one of the bidders, and that would have been a conflict of interest.

The board approved the lowest bid submitted, $6,632 from Lovelace & Associates.

Frasher is quoted in the minutes of that meeting as stating the low bid was the obvious choice.

"If they had anything on me then, why didn't they bring it up then," Ray said.

The alderman added he thinks officials are investigating him right now to try to remove him from the Board of Aldermen.

"They don't like my political views," Ray said. "This is nothing but a feeble attempt to remove me from the Board of Aldermen."

Dent said he approached the situation with caution, and was not judging Ray based on a tip. The mayor also said he was not going to judge Ray for his political views.

"When I was elected mayor (in April), I gave every alderman a clean slate," Dent said. "I was not going to judge anyone for their past political views."

Both Dent and **Frasher** denied there was an attempt being made to remove John Ray from the board.

Aaron Thomas of Lovelace & Associates, a friend of Ray's, said this week he was called into City Hall Sept 8 and was asked by **Frasher** if price-fixing was going on last winter.

Thomas said **Frasher** implied wrong-doing involving Ray. He also said **Frasher** made a statement that Lovelace & Associates would not be prosecuted if Thomas could offer information that Ray was involved in price fixing.

"I couldn't offer any information because there was nothing going on anyway," Thomas said.

Frasher confirmed meeting with Thomas, but he denied pressuring Thomas.

"I was obligated to look into it," **Frasher** said, adding he was not trying to get Ray removed from the board.

"As a professional city manager, I'm obligated to provide non-political advice," **Frasher** said.

Examiner, The (Independence - Blues Springs - Grain Valley, MO)
February 23, 2000

Oak Grove audit continued
Author: Debbie Ingram Long; The Examiner

An attorney hired to audit the Oak Grove Development Foundation pitched for the continuation of the audit to the Oak Grove Board of Aldermen Tuesday night.

The board approved it in a 4-2 vote.

Mayor Mike Bird made his own presentation to the board and a packed crowd of local residents at the Oak Grove Civic Center, calling for an end to the audit.

"The information contained in both reports indicate a need for administrative changes on the way the foundation operates," said Bird. "In early April I won't be on the board and maybe others are not going to be here either. I'd suggest the new council replace the board of directors of the foundation."

City elections are April 4. Bird is not seeking re-election Three aldermen are up for re-election and two of them face opposition.

Bird further suggested that a certified public accountant be appointed to the board to help get accounting procedures established and do an annual audit.

After nearly two hours of discussion at a meeting attended by more than 200 residents, the board accepted Bird's recommendations, taking them several steps further.

Alderman Shirley Johnson made a lengthy motion to continue the audit, adding several stipulations. The board voted to continue it, with Aldermen John Ray and Kerry Lutjen voting against it.

The meeting was moved to the civic center to accommodate an expected large crowd. Citizens turned out to hear the first public presentation on the findings of Bill McCollum of McCollum & Parks.

McCollum was hired in August 1999 to audit the foundation and related entities, including the Davis Memorial Senior Center, which was constructed by bonds issued through the foundation. The foundation was created after Devone Davis left a $1.3 million endowment to the Masonic Lodge to construct a facility to be used by the community.

The board wanted an audit, primarily because since its creation in the early 1980s the foundation has never been audited. McCollum reported numerous troubles with the foundation, related primarily to poor money management. The foundation has kept no general ledgers and has never filed proper tax forms with the IRS.

He also charged that a "shadow government" of three individuals runs Davis Center and the foundation, managing millions of dollars with little to no public input.

Some of those attending the meeting carried home-made signs reading "Only the shadow knows," "Shut out shadow government," "Show me the money" and "Stop Mayor Bird from killing the audit."

"We do not have a finding on whether money was misspent," McCollum said. "We can't say where, we can't say whether the money was misspent. We know where the funds went. We don't know if the expenditures were warranted."

He said vendors should be contacted to see what was purchased and at what price.

The board's motion calls for:

* the immediate resignation of the foundation's board of directors.

* that the mayor-elect appoint a new board in April.

* that accounting procedures be put into place and tax returns submitted.

* that all records be located.

* that the audit be completed.

The motion was amended to take out a section designating City Administrator **David Frasher** as the interim manager, putting him in charge of the operation of the center.

A second motion made by Johnson called for **Frasher** to "immediately take over the management and operation of the Davis Memorial Center for maximum utilization of the facility by the citizens of Oak Grove."

That motion was defeated after Bird cast the tie-breaking vote against it. Aldermen Lutjen, Ray, and Tim Taylor voted against it.

Resume

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OVERVIEW

Work Experience

- City Manager of four cities, assistant county manager of two urban counties, and the Manager of Public Administration Services of a state agency.
- Managed local governments ranging in population from 15,000 to 250,000 residents, directly responsible for employees ranging from 100 to 1,100 in number, accountable for operating budgets ranging from $5 million to $500 million in today's dollars, and accountable for capital improvement plans ranging from $5 million to over a billion dollars in today's dollars.
- Managed consulting engagements with over 100 clients involving a broad range of needs for cities, counties, state agencies, and the private sector.
- Extensive experience in community and economic development and redevelopment.
- Local governments with which I have worked have won numerous National, Regional and State Awards of Excellence.
- Experience in the private sector has given me a passion for efficiency and effectiveness in the utilization of public resources.

Examples of Organizational Experiences

Winter Springs, Florida: City Management

In January I will begin my thirteenth year in the position of City Manger of Winter Springs, Florida. In 1996 I was recruited to the City to accomplish the vision of new leadership dedicated to making Winter Springs one of the premier municipal addresses in the State and the Nation. When we began the City was known for its poor services, incompetent management and staff, and indifference to its residents. Eight years later in 2004, the City was recognized by MSN Advisory Services Rating Criteria as the Best City in the Nation of cities in our population range in which to purchase a home. Three years later in 2007, Money Magazine recognized Winter Springs as the Second Best City in Florida and the 31st Best City in the Nation in which to live. Winter Springs has become known for excellence in all municipal services and fiscal conservancy as demonstrated by receipt of numerous National, Regional and State Awards of Excellence. The City's Fiscal Year 2007 Independent Audit Report acknowledged that based upon criteria established by the State Auditor General, that Winter Springs spent on average less money per capita than other cities in our population range in the State while maintaining higher than average reserves. The centerpiece of my tenure in Winter Springs has been the management of the development of a new down town development project with an estimated $800 million in development potential.

Collier County, Florida: County Management

In 1987 I was recruited to Collier County, Florida to fill the position of Assistant County Manager and given the directive to develop the organization's capacity to effectively manage unparalleled growth in what had become one of the premier international, residential, business, and resort communities in the world. This challenge involved a total reinvention of the way the County was structured and managed, including the successful integration of a Total Quality Management System in all city departments under the authority of the County Manager.

Biloxi, Mississippi: Consulting Engagement

In 1981 I was appointed Project Manager, responsible for the performance of a Management Audit of the City of Biloxi, Mississippi with the goal of changing the form of government,

restructuring city departments, upgrading the competency of city staff, building the organizations capacity to provide efficient and effective services, and rooting out corruption.

At that time the City was under the influence of national and regional level organized crime. Following the delivery of the management report my engagement with the City was expanded to bring me on site to help implement over 100 recommendations. Within three years the recommendations were either accomplished or in a state of substantial completion.

Tupelo, Mississippi: Consulting Engagement

In 1981 I was appointed Project Manager to perform a management audit of the City of Tupelo, Mississippi which resulted in updates and amendments of the City Charter, restructuring of city departments, and modernization of its budget and finance policies.

South Haven, Mississippi: Consulting engagement

In 1980 I was appointed Project Manager for the Incorporation of South Haven, Mississippi, an area experiencing rapid spillover growth from Memphis, Tennessee. This project involved assisting local attorney's in developing a charter and ordinances. It also involved development of an organizational structure and assisting elected officials and city staff in preparation of the City's first budget, and approximately two years of ongoing assistance.

Hanahan, South Carolina: City Management

In 1976 I was selected the City of Hanahan, South Carolina's first City Manager where I served two years expanding the City from a fire and water special district to a full service city.

Perception

From feedback received from elected officials, peers, and employees, it is my belief that I am perceived as highly competent, a strong leader with a passion for excellence and economy, character beyond reproach, firm but fair in dealing with employees, equally talented in strategic and tactical aspects of management, a highly analytical and disciplined decision maker, and effective consensus builder.

Personal Activities

I am an avid sportsman and extensive reader. I am a member of the Rotary Club of Winter Springs where I have been awarded a Paul Harris Fellow designation and awarded Rotarian of the Year in 1998. My wife and I are extensively involved in our church where I serve in the capacity of Chair of the Finance Committee, teach Sunday School, perform in the contemporary music group and choir, and lead worship in an area assisted living center supported by the church. My wife and I enjoy traveling extensively throughout the world.

Family

My wife Randye is a self employed owner of a Real Estate and Mortgage Company. She is the Worship Leader at our church and a Radio Talk Show Host on Christian Radio, heard throughout Central Florida.

We have three children as follows in alphabetical order to prevent any claims of prejudice: Chance, a Dentist in Gulf Shores, Alabama; Chelsea, an Industrial Designer in New York City; and Kari, a Professional Song Writer and Performer in Los Angeles who has written songs for numerous recording artists, movies, television and international corporate advertising.

RONALD W. McLEMORE

Winter Springs, Florida 32708

1620
Eagle Nest Circle

Home (407) 977-1727
Office (407) 327-5957

1996 - Present — **WINTER SPRINGS, FLORIDA** — **CITY MANAGER**

Manage a full service municipal corporation in the rapidly growing metropolitan Orlando area of Central Florida. Responsible to the Mayor and City Commission for the management of all municipal services other than the City Attorney and City Clerk.

1993-1996 — **MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA** — **ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Managed the day to day operations of a rapidly growing full service county government on Florida's East Coast as directed by the County Administrator. Directed and coordinated major programs and projects. Performed special studies. Chaired management committees. Served as liaison to outside agencies and organizations. Assumed full responsibility for the management of County government in the absence of the County Administrator.

1991-1993 — **REALITY VENTURE MANAGEMENT** — **DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT**

Assisted the company in all aspects of developing a large scale Planned Unit Development involving a major league baseball facility, light industry, and commercial land uses.

1987-1991 — **COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA** — **ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER**

Managed the day to day operations of the fastest growing full service county government in the nation located on Florida's southwest coast, as directed by the County Manager. Directed and coordinated major programs and projects. Performed special studies. Chaired management committees. Served as liaison to outside agencies and organizations. Assumed full responsibility for the management of county government in the absence of the County Manager.

1984-1987 — **CITY OF JESUP, GEORGIA** — **CITY MANAGER**

Managed a full-service municipal corporation. Responsible to the Mayor and Council for management of all municipal services other than the City Attorney.

1979-1984 — **MISSISSIPPI RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER** — **MANAGER, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BRANCH**

Managed a highly technical consulting and research organization. Responsible for providing technical assistance to city and county governments, state agencies, the Governor's office, the legislature and quasi-governmental organizations.

1976-1978 — **CITY OF HANAHAN, SOUTH CAROLINA** — **CITY MANAGER**

Managed a full-service municipal corporation. Responsible to Mayor and Council for the management of all municipal services other than the City Attorney.

1974-1976 — **CITY OF DUBLIN, GEORGIA** — **CITY MANAGER**

Managed a full-service municipal corporation. Responsible to Mayor and Council for the management of all municipal services.

AFFILIATIONS

International City Management Association
Florida City County Manager Association
Florida League of Cities
Rotary Club of Winter Springs

EDUCATION

University of Georgia,
Master of Public Administration
Georgia Southern College,
Bachelor of Arts Degree
Political Science

CB & A Interviews

Ronald W. McLemore

Education

Master of Public Administration - University of Georgia
BA, Political Science – Georgia Southern College

Experience

City Manager, Winter Springs, FL	1996 – Present
Assistant County Administrator, Martin County, FL	1993 – 1996
Development Consultant, Reality Venture Management	1991 – 1993
Assistant County Manager, Collier County, FL	1987 – 1991
City Manager, City of Jesup, GA	1984 – 1987
Manager, Public Administration, Mississippi Research and Development Center	1979 – 1984
City Manager, City of Hanahan, SC	1976 – 1978
City Manager, City of Dublin, GA	1974 – 1976

Background

Winter Springs is a nationally regarded city located near Orlando. In fact, in 2004, it was recognized by *MSN Advisory Services* as the best city in the nation to purchase a home for cities of its size, and in 2007 *Money Magazine* ranked it as the 31st best city in the nation to live.

Overall, the population of Winter Springs is 35,000. The city's general fund budget is $18 million and its total funds budget is $50 million. Of the city's 300 employees, seven report directly to Mr. McLemore. The three most important issues facing Winter Springs are:

- The downturn in the economy and the effect it will have on city revenues;
- The effect the decreases in property values will have on property tax revenues; and
- The impact these declines will have on the City's ability to implement new capital projects.

Interview Comments

Like Winter Springs, Coral Gables is known as a city of excellence and it would be the logical next step for Mr. McLemore, given his experience and achievements in Winter Springs. He and his wife also own property in South Florida and her family lives in the area. He has experience dealing with the pressing issues Coral Gables faces and would love to use his strong background to resolve them. Professionally, the nature of his Commission in Winter Springs changed in the last election and he feels the Commission's goals are no longer in harmony with his. Therefore, he has decided to leave for another position.

Mr. McLemore's management style is participatory and includes consensus building. He provides clear direction with anticipated outcomes and then works toward group decision-making. He demands excellence from others and strives for it in himself. He is a strong leader with high standards. He is informed, involved, strategic and directed. His staff would say he is fair and that he expects top performance. He is involved in developing strategies, has a high degree of confidence, and freely expresses his opinion.

Mr. McLemore's elected officials would say he is the glue that holds together the vision for the future of the City. They would add that he has been the reason for much success in the city. His character is beyond reproach. He is frugal and a strong leader.

Mr. McLemore believes his strengths are his broad knowledge base, his analytical skills, the methodical way he makes decisions, and the confidence he has in his abilities and judgment. Also, he is able to build consensus, is a good consultant to the elected officials and staff, and provides principled leadership. He knows his job and is sure of what he needs to do to be successful. His weakness is that he takes on too much. Also he does fewer public presentations than some city managers might because that is something the Mayor enjoys. The result is that he is not as practiced as he used to be.

Mr. McLemore is proud of his city and staff. He has taken the City from a government that thought like a small town government to a strong municipality known for excellence in every service. As noted in the introduction, Winter Springs has recently won recognition on a national scale and Mr. McLemore is very proud of this success. One of his most recent achievements was the creation of the Veteran's Memorial. It was done in partnership with the Rotary Club. He worked hard to develop a common understanding between the City and the Rotary Club and to raise donations for the memorial. The ceremony to dedicate the memorial was well attended and very moving. He was very proud that the City now has a place to recognize Veterans while also being very pleased with the reaction of citizens. The execution of the project was perfect.

Another success Mr. McLemore was the cleanup effort after Hurricane Charley. Winter Springs was hit hard by the hurricane and required extensive cleanup. He kept the staff and crews motivated and citizens well informed. The City's emergency plans were implemented efficiently and his efforts were acknowledged by the Commission. With a great plan and dedicated employees, Winter Springs made a quick and successful recovery.

Mr. McLemore is also proud of the development of a town center. The Commission had a strong vision of a town center, but it was not easy to develop. Tenacity, dedication and hard work were all required to overcome the many obstacles. After five years of effort and a great deal of adversity, the town center was completed. It is a great improvement and is a large part of the reason the City has the image it does.

When asked about his experience terminating employment, Mr. McLemore noted that he has had to remove a number of department heads. When it is necessary, he tries to make the separation as easy as possible for the employee as well as for the finances of the city. He notes, however,

that the best way to avoid having to fire staff though is to hire the right people in the first place and then mentor them to ensure their success. Doing that is something he believes he is very good at.

Mr. McLemore feels the challenges facing the next Coral Gables City Manager will include:

- Financial issues similar to those mentioned regarding Winter Springs;
- Gaining the confidence of the community;
- Redevelopment issues; and
- Building consensus within staff and among department heads.

If chosen as the City Manager, in the first six months, Mr. McLemore will:

- Attune himself with the Commission's goals and vision;
- Become knowledgeable of specific city issues;
- Establish a plan and a budget to address the Commission's vision;
- Ensure the management team working together and on the same path; and
- Review personnel and become familiar with their competencies.

When asked about the media, Mr. McLemore indicated has had both good and bad relationships with them. He tries to keep them well informed and make himself available. In some cases in the past in the Orlando area, it has been difficult to gain trust and confidence with the media. The area has some very tough (and not always fair) reporters. Still he does his best to work with them and help them get the story right.

When asked if any activists might make allegations concerning his performance, he mentioned a group in Winter Springs called "People for Good Government." They have a reputation for stirring up contention and attacking government employees.

In his spare time, Mr. McLemore enjoys music, reading, and sports. He also is very involved in his church and has a passion for travel.

Adjectives and Phrases used to describe himself are:

- Strong leader,
- Good example,
- Pursuit of excellence,
- Frugal,
- Compassionate,
- Enjoys a challenge,
- Consensus builder, and
- Strategic planner.

Reason for Wanting to Leave Current Job

In order for a city to be successful, Mr. McLemore believes the City Manager and the Commission need to share a mutual respect, cooperate with each other, and have a common a vision. He has had a positive experience in Winter Springs and enjoyed his 13 year tenure there. The composition of the Commission in Winter Springs changed in the last election and the new Commission's vision was no longer the same as his. Consequently, he felt is was time to step aside and did so in January. While he has accomplished a great deal, he is not ready to rest on his laurels. The thought of using his experience and skills in Coral Gables is particularly invigorating.

Current/Most Recent Salary

$144,000

Interviewer's Impressions

Very confident, able, insightful and secure. Articulate and a strong manager. Friendly with a pleasant sense of humor. Dedicated to his profession.

Prepared by:

Mary Greenwood
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Reference Notes
Ronald McLemore

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Professional,
- Ethical,
- Consistent,
- Competent,
- Good teacher, and
- Experienced

Strengths: Qualifications and background, builds consensus, strong vision, and skilled at managing projects to completion.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by:
Tiffany Gremmert
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Reference Notes
Ronald McLemore

Anthony Garganese – Attorney, City of Winter Springs, FL – (407) 425-9566

When Mr. Garganese became the attorney for Winter Springs in 1999, he met Mr. McLemore.

Mr. McLemore is the best city manager that Winter Springs has ever had. His greatest strengths are his ability to synthesize information into relevant reports, put ideas together into procedural formats, and make informed decisions. He is a well-rounded city manager who understands the various roles and responsibilities of his position.

Mr. McLemore is very methodical and level-headed when making decisions. He has had to deal with a number of crisis, disaster relief and financial stresses. He is able to handle all of these situations well due to his experience and strong work ethic. He has taken the City of Winter Springs to a different level of professionalism. The Police department is nationally and internationally accredited. The Parks and Recreation department is first class. The City was not well known before he took the position of city manager. Now, it is ranked 31st nationally in its category by Money Magazine among Best Places to Live. Only two Florida cities are ranked in the top 100. Along with these recognitions, Mr. McLemore has transformed the City from a bedroom community to Orlando into a city with a commercial base.

Mr. McLemore communicates very well. He is willing and able to speak his mind and express his opinions. He has a great respect for the public and demonstrates this with his customer service skills. After Hurricane Charley hit in 2004, the City experienced considerable damage and serious power outages. In one area 10 homes suffered from extensive sewer backup. Mr. McLemore handled this difficult situation very well. The amount of money the City could pay to compensate for these damages had been capped. Working with the insurance companies and the Commission, Mr. McLemore was able to negotiate a resolution that provided full compensation to citizens for the damages to their homes. The resolution was a great success.

Mr. Garganese recommends Mr. McLemore for this position without question.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Integrity,
- Hard working,
- Personable,
- Smart,
- Well Grounded, and
- Professional

Strengths: Experience; knowledge of position; communication skills; building a consensus

Weaknesses: None identified

Jim Burgess – Municipal Consultant and current Mayor, City of Snellville, GA - (770) 464-3366

Mr. Burgess has known Mr. McLemore since the 1970s. Mr. Burgess' specialty is municipal charters and they worked together in rewriting Winter Spring's charter.

Mr. McLemore is a great leader. He knew when to delegate and empowered his department heads. Also he was very detail oriented and had strong decision-making skills. Although he has a strong personality, he takes direction well from the Commission.

Mr. McLemore speaks well in public. He is very cordial, professional and friendly. He gives attention to those who need his time and is willing to help in any way he is able.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Strong leader,
- Personable,
- Kind,
- Gentle,
- Attentive,
- Friendly, and
- Good sense of humor.

Strengths: Detail oriented, leadership skills, delegation skills.

Weaknesses: None identified

Bob Guthrie – Senior Assistant County Attorney, Orlando, FL - (407) 836-7353

Mr. Guthrie has known Mr. McLemore since the mid-1990s. They worked together at Martin County where Mr. Guthrie was an Assistant County Attorney while Mr. McLemore was an Assistant County Administrator. Mr. Guthrie later served as the City Attorney for Winter Springs for a few years while Mr. McLemore was the manager.

Mr. Guthrie describes Mr. McLemore as strong-willed, devoted, and decisive. He has a great relationship with his Commission. Mr. McLemore thinks through a decision, considers what the Commission's goals are, and offers his best advice and support. He provides Commissioners with examples of potential consequences of their actions and decisions, and helps lead them to the best decisions to achieve their goals. To help keep the citizen's well informed of the Commission's goals and priorities and informed concerning other municipal issues, Mr. McLemore initiated a newsletter.

Mr. McLemore has a strong understanding of land use and development. He has been vital in the development of commercialism in Winter Springs. A town center has been developed in the

City and it has become a great asset. Even though commissioners came and went, Mr. McLemore was solidly committed to it and helped make it happen.

Mr. Guthrie and Mr. McLemore had a great relationship and good communication. Mr. Guthrie always felt well informed and was supported by Mr. McLemore whenever he had to make presentations to the Commission.

Mr. McLemore clearly understands his role as the manager. He always remained neutral and would not allow himself to be used by one Commissioner against another. He stayed committed to the community and carried out the will of the majority.

Mr. McLemore knows how to work through difficult situations. Often he becomes the point person for complaints because he always handles them professionally. One situation involved the implementation of a Fire Fee which resulted in many complaints. Recognizing that the fee was not a good solution for the city, he turned to other ideas to find the funds the Fire Department needed. The answer was to merge the department into the county's department. It may not have been felt to be ideal solution by some but it was the necessary one.

Mr. Guthrie feels Mr. McLemore would be a good fit for a City or County Manager position anywhere and has the expertise to handle the job.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Hard working,
- Dedicated to majority decision-making,
- Listens,
- Devoted,
- Rational, and
- Vision of future

Strengths: Expertise to handle the job, people skills, commitment.

Weaknesses: None identified

John Bush – Mayor, City of Winter Springs, FL - (407) 327-5956

Mr. Bush has known Mr. McLemore since 1996. He was a member of the team which hired Mr. McLemore.

Mr. McLemore is a great manager who understands his role and his duties well. He understands business and how to negotiate a contract. In Winter Springs, he has been the constant, the mainstay behind the long-term vision of the community. He has kept the City on the right path.

Due to Mr. McLemore's influence and leadership, the Winter Springs was named the 2nd best city in the state of Florida and 31st in the country as the best place to live by Money Magazine.

The City has a very low crime rate and Mayor Bush credits much of the reason to Mr. McLemore's decision to hire a new police chief. Besides chief, Mr. McLemore has hired other great department heads that have helped make the City what it is today.

Mr. McLemore is dedicated to making good choices and following the expectations and desires of the Commission. He is quick to respond to their requests. One of the biggest projects Mr. McLemore has worked on was the planning and development of a town center. Prior to it, Winter Springs had very little commercial development. Not only does it provide the commercial development the City was lacking but it is esthetically pleasing. Another of Mr. McLemore achievements was working hard to ensure the City remained attractive. Codes were written and enforced to achieve and maintain a high standard.

Mr. McLemore worked with the Rotary Club to develop a Veterans Memorial which was well received by the community. He works well with the public but maintains a low profile, leaving the spotlight for the Mayor.

Mr. McLemore responds quickly when addressing the needs of the Commission and the citizens. He delegates tasks to his staff and then empowers them to make implementing decisions on their own.

Mr. Bush has enjoyed working with Mr. McLemore and believes he is an excellent candidate for any City or County Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Professional,
- Good sense of humor,
- Strong manager,
- Confident,
- Expressive, and
- Gives great advice.

Strengths: Excellent manager; negotiation skills; knowledge of position; long-term vision for the community.

Weaknesses: None identified

Sally McGinnis – Commissioner, City of Winter Springs, FL - (407) 327-6807

Ms. McGinnis has known Mr. McLemore since 1996. At the time she was a member of the citizens' committee which participated in the hiring of the City Manager.

Mr. McLemore has been an excellent manager and definitely was the best person for the City. He has great vision and knows how to turn that vision into accomplishments. He has the ability

to find and retain good staff and department heads. He is a very professional city manager and has been the one constant, positive influence on the City in recent years.

Mr. McLemore fully understands his role as City Manager. Rather than play to the crowd, he protects the interests of the Commission and the citizens. He is able to foresee the consequences of decisions and advises the Commission and staff of those real possibilities. That way they can make better and more informed decisions.

Mr. McLemore encourages the Commission and staff to meet with him. In the beginning of her tenure as a Commissioner, Ms. McGinnis met with him often before Commission meetings to learn from him. She felt comfortable calling him on any issue and sensed that it was his first priority to respond to the Commissioners. It was important to him to protect the Commissioners and do all he could to ensure their success.

To illustrate Mr. McLemore's customer service skills, Ms. McGinnis related a situation in which many people had received unwarranted notices that their water was going to be turned off due to unpaid bills. The Finance Manager was approached by many of them about their problems. He stated that they had received two prior notifications and there was nothing else he could do. When notified by phone of this situation, Mr. McLemore reviewed the bills and discovered obvious discrepancies. The bills were corrected, no late fee incurred and no water was turned off. He demonstrated to the public that he was not afraid to apologize for mistakes and correct problems.

Ms. McGinnis recommends Mr. McLemore for any local government CEO position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Likable,
- Respectful,
- Sensitive,
- Good sense of humor,
- Kind, and
- Loyal

Strengths: Strong vision, consistency, experience, and leadership skills

Weaknesses: None identified

Donald Gilmore – Former Commissioner, City of Winter Springs, FL - (407) 699-0368

Mr. Gilmore has known Mr. McLemore since 1999.

Mr. McLemore has done an outstanding job as the City Manager of Winter Springs. In fact, Mr. Gilmore is very proud of how he has managed the city. He has great vision and has worked hard to implement that vision. He has ensured that budgets include only necessary and important

expenditures. With the help of others, he has successfully steered the City to its development goals.

Mr. McLemore has worked well with past Commissions. He takes their lead and brings projects to fruition. He was the guiding force for the development and construction of a town center. He fought through a great deal of opposition on the concept and the design. He was able to stand his ground. The result was the City got a beautiful addition to the city and not just another strip mall with a large parking lot. He guided the project through by hiring the proper consultants and maintaining the Commission's vision for it. Now the town center has a three story design with store front space below, and apartment and office space above. The parking lot design was also creative and pleasing.

In addition to the town center, Mr. McLemore has improved the contracts for waste pickup, increased the beautification of parks and ball fields, implemented a new sign ordinance, and improved city roads. Making the City attractive has been one of his major objectives. Under his guidance and leadership Winter Springs has become one of the top two places to live in Florida according to Money Magazine.

Mr. McLemore has a keen sense of anticipating where problems might occur. He thinks through issues. He is not afraid to make decisions or changes even if others do not always like them. For example, when the city needed of revenue due to some tax cuts, the Commission suggested a Fire Fee. The citizens did not respond well to this idea. Although it was not an ideal solution, he developed the idea of consolidating the fire department with that of the county. It was not an easy decision but one that had to be made to resolve the issue.

One of the biggest challenges Mr. Gilmore saw Mr. McLemore handle was the cleanup following Hurricane Charley in 2004. He had his staff working immediately after the storm. He worked closely with FEMA and quickly had contractors from out of town responding to the cleanup needs. Mr. Gilmore gives him full credit for doing a masterful job of managing the effort.

Although Mr. McLemore has had a good relationship with the Commission in the past, Mr. Gilmore feels the new members of the Commission do not share the same vision and goals the previous Commissioners had. They have unfairly attacked the City Manager on issues which are not within his control.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Leader,
- Great manager,
- Hard worker,
- Visionary,
- Dedicated, and
- Loyal

Strengths: Background and experience.

Weaknesses: None identified

David McLeod – Former Commissioner, City of Winter Springs, FL - (407) 695-1604

Mr. McLeod has known Mr. McLemore since 1996.

Mr. McLemore has been a major asset to the City. He is financially astute and has a strong understanding of how government finances work. In addition, he communicates well, is responsive to both the elected officials and department heads and has strong leadership skills. He understands what is important, is able to prioritize problems, and keeps focused on the agreed upon goals.

Mr. McLemore has been successful because he has surrounded himself with good people. He has hired excellent department heads, including a new Police Chief, Finance Director, and Parks Director. He empowers his staff and trusts their abilities and judgment.

Mr. McLemore makes good decisions after proper consultation and discussion. He has been a great asset to the Commission in this regard. His priority is to protect the Commission by helping them make wise, informed decisions. He makes sure he meets the needs of both the Commission and the citizens of Winter Springs. He is responsive to all requests and questions. He knows how and when to say no and never waivers in keeping to the rules and codes.

Mr. McLemore has promoted change within Winter Springs. He has brought in businesses and established a new city computer system. Through his leadership and influence, the Parks and Recreation department has been recognized nationally and internationally. The Police Department has improved and is highly regarded county- and state-wide. Winter Springs now has a very low crime rate.

Mr. McLemore worked through issues facing two particular communities. Tuskawilla and Oak Force were both in need of upgrades and beautification. Some citizens did not want these upgrades but he was able to show them the benefit of the changes and brought the community together. It was not an easy or short process but through the upgrades of lights, walls, and fountains, and the refurbishment of apartments, these two communities are now exemplary neighborhoods within Winter Springs.

Mr. McLeod recommends Mr. McLemore for any City or County Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Mentally strong,
- Understands his job,
- Fair,
- Responsive,

- Organized, and
- A good leader

Strengths: Financially astute, strong communication and leadership skills.

Weaknesses: None identified

Michael Blake – Former Commissioner, City of Winter Springs, FL - (407) 365-7051

Mr. Blake has known Mr. McLemore since 1996 and feels he has done a tremendous job as City Manager.

Mr. McLemore has had a long tenure in the city of Winter Springs due to his management skills, his experience, and his background. He is very intelligent and professional. He encourages those around him to do what is right, and is determined to see a project through to completion.

Mr. McLemore has a good understanding of his role as City Manager and his relationship with the Commission. He has always worked to protect elected officials, provide advice and counsel to them, and implement their vision of the city.

Mr. McLemore is the first professional City Manager Winter Springs has had. He has been able to bring the City from out of the dark ages into the 21st century. One way he did this was through the hiring of good department heads. He empowers his staff and provides a work environment that keeps them from leaving. He has positively influenced commercial development in the city. Previously, the City only had 10 percent of commercial property. Now it is approaching 25 percent. He had to fight through heavy political pressure to bring this change and he has been successful. He stayed focused on his goals even in the face of adversity.

On example of his abilities was the Tuscawilla district which needed improvement to its lighting and landscaping. The majority of the community wanted the improvements but a very vocal minority did not. After many court hearings and through the determination of Mr. McLemore, the City was successful in implementing what the majority of this community wanted. Mr. Blake credits much of this success to Mr. McLemore's ability to see projects through to fruition.

Mr. Blake would hate to see Mr. McLemore go but understands the political goals of the current Commission are different from those in the past. He would highly recommend him for any local government CEO position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Smart,
- Business oriented,
- Professional,
- Determined,

- Sees a project to the end, and
- Stands his ground.

Strengths: Experience and background; management skills.

Weaknesses: None identified

Cindy Gennell – Community Activist, City of Winter Springs, FL- (407) 699-5221

As a former Commissioner, Ms. Gennell was involved in hiring Mr. McLemore in 1996. Out of 112 applicants he was one of her top three personal picks for the job. Due to his qualifications and background he was the unanimous pick of commissioners and the mayor.

Ms. Gennell believes Mr. McLemore's greatest strengths are his ability to build consensus, strengthen the community, maneuver a project to completion, and foresee future problems. He is very careful in making decisions. He works for a full consensus rather than making decisions independently. Once a decision is reached, he makes a plan and sees it to the end. He is not afraid to use a consultant whenever he feels it would add value to a project.

Mr. McLemore has brought many important and positive changes to Winter Springs. The key was shifting the attitudes within the City from a stagnant mentality to a more current approach through technology and problem solving.

Communication has always been important to Mr. McLemore. He makes sure everyone is well informed and keeps all department heads involved. He initiated a newsletter that keeps the community informed. His dealings with the public are very professional. He is accessible and meets with anyone who needs his time. Mr. McLemore has the ability to put anyone at ease and allows them to feel comfortable expressing themselves openly.

One example of Mr. McLemore's faithfulness to the City and his abilities to manage difficult situations was demonstrated in his dealings with developers who wanted to buy and develop property in Winter Springs. He met personally with them to ensure they would work within the Commission's vision. It was important that the City maintain a certain image and he would not allow just any developer to come in with just any project. He instituted a Development Review Committee. Through this committee guidelines and ordinances were established that followed the wishes of the citizens and the Commission. This approach created a good balance between the City and potential developers.

Ms. Gennell believes hiring Mr. McLemore was the most important thing she did as a Commissioner. He has been solid in supporting and protecting the Commission. He has also educated Commissioners as they have come and gone. He is able to relate to any group he is with on any level and has the ability to fit in and move well between groups. He is a great asset to Winter Springs.

Reference Notes
Ronald McLemore

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- Professional,
- Ethical,
- Consistent,
- Competent,
- Good teacher, and
- Experienced

Strengths: Qualifications and background, builds consensus, strong vision, and skilled at managing projects to completion.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by:
Tiffany Gremmert
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for
RONALD W. McLEMORE

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found
County	
Seminole County, FL	No Records Found
Martin County, FL	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Seminole County, FL	No Records Found
Martin County, FL	No Records Found
Federal	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle – Florida	No Citations Listed
Credit	Very Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

Internet Research

January 14, 2009

Embattled city manager resigns
By Lance Speere

Ron McLemore sits in his city manager's chair overlooking the chambers of City Hall Monday night, quietly watching the proceedings below him on the floor.

The mayor and the five members of the City Commission are recognizing various city employees for anywhere from five to 30 years of service. Most of these are people he knows well; all of them work for a city in which he takes pride. He observes from his lone perch while about 25 members of the police department joyfully gather around Kevin Brunelle as he is officially inducted as the city's new police chief.

Hiring Brunelle will prove to be **McLemore**'s last act, for in a few moments the embattled city manager will make the announcement he is resigning after 13 years of service to the community of Winter Springs. The separation of **McLemore** from Winter Springs was a foregone conclusion to many in the community. The question was how and when.

The recent additions to the City Commission, who ran on campaigns opposed to **McLemore**'s supporters on the commission, had not publicly said they were going to seek **McLemore**'s removal, but the speculation was there in the media as to what was going to happen.

In November, **McLemore** himself had unsuccessfully interviewed for the city manager's job in Ormond Beach.

So when it arrived, at the first commission meeting of the new year, the separation was swift, with little fanfare, and with none of the thanks and gratitude afforded to the employees who had worked under **McLemore**'s supervision. But it was on his terms.

After the city commissioners and mayor had retaken their seats on the dais and following a couple of formalities, Mayor John Bush turned the microphone over to **McLemore** for a statement everyone at the front of the room had been told to expect.

In a steady voice, reading from a two-page prepared statement, **McLemore** began. "In light of changing dynamics in the city, I believe that it is in the mutual best interest of both parties for me to submit my resignation from the city effective this date," he read to a somber audience.

He spoke of his belief in God, of his abilities as a leader and of his pursuit of excellence for Winter Springs.

He spoke of the advances made by the city during his tenure as city manager, calling the advances and growth in Winter Springs "one of the great chapters in the book of Florida local government."

He spoke of the difficult decision to leave, and of his hope that the commissioners and City Hall would come together "with a new city manager that you believe is appropriate for your vision of the future at this time in the history of the city."

Finally, he thanked the elected officials with whom he worked, his staff and "the residents of Winter Springs who have contributed their support and cooperation to this uncommon epic of 'building community.'"

When he finished, he removed his glasses and stared straight ahead, little emotion on his face.

Later, he would say, "I would have never gotten through it if I hadn't read it."

All that was left was for the commissioners to accept his terms. In a controversial move at the final commission meeting of the previous board, the commissioners in a 4-1 vote had approved a severance package worth about $116,000 should the city manager be removed by the incoming City Commission.

The plan did not specify what would happen should the city manager offer his resignation, so over the weekend **McLemore** asked City Attorney Anthony Garganese to draft a mutual separation agreement honoring the same financial package.

The only discussion among the commissioners when presented with the document was to ask Garganese for clarification on whether there was any change in the terms. He confirmed there was none.

Accepting the terms seemed a foregone conclusion when no discussion was offered and "Yes" was repeated five times. With that, **McLemore** became the former city manager.

A 10-minute recess was called, and **McLemore** was left to himself on the right side of the dais while the commissioners remained seated or kept their distance from him.

He chatted casually with a few well-wishers before beginning the walk out of the chambers and into the foyer where he was met with a smattering of handshakes and greetings from those expressing their remorse.

As the former city manager began his walk down the hall to his office, the mayor was calling the meeting back to order. A decision needed to be made about **McLemore**'s replacement and where to go next.

McLemore had expressed confidence in both Kip Lockcuff, the Public Works director who had filled in previously for the city manager, and Kevin Smith, the General Services director. The commissioners ultimately agreed to appoint Smith as the interim city manager, who assumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Smith recommended that he bring an agenda item back to the commissioners at the next meeting to discuss the options available for beginning the search for a new city manager, and they agreed. Then the commission moved on with its business.

Back in his office, **McLemore** reflected on the fact that while he had hoped to retire in Winter Springs, he knew it was time to move on and said he had made up his mind during the previous week. "I don't see it being productive to stay without strong support," he said, noting he had seen the writing on the wall.

He began cleaning out his office during the weekend, he said, and planned on returning Tuesday morning to finish packing up his remaining personal belongings including the photos of his wife and children.

Monday morning he said he began notifying his primary staff of his decision.

"Disconnecting from the community - breaking relationships - that's the hardest thing," **McLemore** said.

But he said he was doing so with the belief that he was leaving Winter Springs a better place and with no regrets.

"It has been a really great journey, a blessing to me and my family," he said. "What is it they say about city managers? You want to leave it better than you found it, and I feel pretty good about it."

He spoke especially passionately about the creation of the city's war memorial honoring the country's fallen soldiers and the dedication ceremony.

"If it connects with people, you've done something really good," he said. "Every city needs a memorial to these people." **McLemore** said he has been back three times since the dedication ceremony.

He referred to the development of the Town Center and the achievements of the police department as benchmarks of his administration. He also called the success stories of the city's employees an accomplishment.

"To see them catch fire and rise in the organization," he said, mentioning the newly appointed police chief among a couple of names, "that is huge."

The future for **McLemore** is unclear, but he said he would soon begin interviewing for city manager positions. He hopes to remain in Florida, where his wife's parents live, and he said he won't rule out eventually retiring back in Winter Springs.

Monday night, midway through the commission meeting, the former city manager is back in his office when his cell phone rings. It is his wife. He's in his office, with a couple of newspaper reporters. He'll be home soon.

Seminole Chronicle
December 10, 2008

Commission finds home for reserve
By Lance Speere

WINTER SPRINGS - The city of Winter Springs has agreed to temporarily spread $21 million of its reserve fund among more than 80 banks to ensure FDIC protection while the city waits to hire a full-time financial manager.

According to City Manager **Ron McLemore**, the money was placed Tuesday in CNL Bank in Orlando as part of the Certificate of Deposit Account Registry system, a program that allows a bank to spread the deposit among participating financial institutions up to the new FDIC limit of $250,000.

The decision was finalized during Monday's City Commission meeting by a unanimous vote.

CNL in Orlando offered the highest rate of return, 2.3 percent on a one-month CD, of the bids solicited by the city manager's office. Commissioner Rick Brown wanted to see the city utilize a local bank as host, citing preservation of capital as the primary factor in making a choice.

McLemore said three participating Winter Springs banks were contacted, with Riverside Bank's rate at 1.734. Colonial Bank and Citizens Bank were at 1.5 percent and 0.803 percent, respectively.

"This is a $7,000 giveaway," **McLemore** said, objecting to the amount of interest that would be lost in one month if the city went with Riverside.

Commissioner Sally McGinnis said keeping the money local would be desirable, but it was in the best interest of the city to look for the highest return.

The initial plan was to take the $25 million the city had in The Reserve's U.S. Treasury Fund and directly invest it in treasury bills, with Regions Bank serving as the custodian.

McLemore learned Friday that the city could only buy up to $5 million in treasury bills per week, and he notified the commission during a special meeting that evening that an alternative was necessary.

At the meeting, he requested permission to utilize CDARS, or to at least solicit other options because he considered the interest yields on treasury bills to be too low.

The yield during the first six days of December has been averaging around .02 percent, and on Tuesday was at .00 percent. "It's the only option out there for us," **McLemore** said of the CDARS option.

McLemore first became aware of CDARS as a possibility for the city's reserves about a year ago, but it wasn't until the FDIC limit was raised to $250,000 in October as part of the federal Stimulus Act that it became an attractive option.

Commissioner Joanne Krebs initially objected during Friday's special meeting to using CDARS, concerned that the program was taking advantage of a loophole in the law.

"I can't support programs that go against the spirit of the law," she said at the time, and she reiterated that position on Tuesday with the Chronicle. "I wanted it put on the record there could be some other concerns," she said, agreeing only to a short time in the program until more information is gathered. "Hopefully, our financial adviser will be able to advise us better."

McLemore said the application deadline for the financial manager position is Dec. 17, and a decision could come as early as the first meeting in January, with the second meeting more likely.

Krebs also agreed with the move, provided the city proceeds with purchasing the maximum allowed $5 million in T-bills this week to diversify the reserve, which the commission approved. **McLemore** told the Chronicle that was being done.

Since CDARS' establishment in 2003, 29 states have passed or enabled legislation allowing municipalities to invest public monies in the program, bringing the total to 40 states and the District of Columbia eligible for participation, according to Phil Battey, the vice president for legislative and public affairs with Promontory Interfinancial Network, the founding organization of CDARS.

"All we are doing is what the bank customer can already do," Battey said of the program, disagreeing with labeling CDARS as a loophole. "We offer convenience; the people are looking for security."

Battey said the economic climate is making CDARS even more attractive to investors and banks, with nearly a third of the nation's banking system now participating in the CDARS initiative.

"Generally we are doing four times the transaction volume per week than in January," he said, with participants ranging from businesses to non-profits and public entities. Battey said the public sector investments were not increasing at the same rate as the total, but he said they were experiencing "steady growth."

Seminole Chronicle
December 10, 2008

National search axed for Brunelle
By Lance Speere

WINTER SPRINGS - Monday's Winter Springs City Commission meeting began with an inauguration of two new commissioners and one incumbent, with some audience members wondering how long it would take before the balance of power took a noticeable shift.

By the time Commissioner Rick Brown had finished his report - about two hours into the regular portion of the meeting - the answer was evident.

Backed by the rest of the commissioners, Brown called for the city manager to end the national search for a new police chief and extend interim Police Chief Kevin Brunelle's probationary period to a full year - a move City Manager **Ron McLemore** objects to, but he told the Chronicle on Tuesday he would abide by the commission's request.

Monday's meeting began with the inauguration celebration of new commissioners Jean Hovey of District 1, Gary Bonner of District 3 and incumbent Joanne Krebs of District 5, with speeches by family and friends followed by a reception in the City Hall lobby prior to commencement of the regular meeting.

Brown's motion during the report portion of the meeting to end the national search for a police chief caught the interim chief by surprise. Brunelle said during a break in the meeting he was pleased with the recommendation but would have to speak to **McLemore** more before making further comments.

The city manager initially objected to the motion, stating that he thought they had reached an understanding to do a national search. "You are basically saying to me that you got to do this," he told the commissioners before outlining the procedures that were in place for the search and why they were beneficial.

"Kevin needs to know that he competed and earned this job," **McLemore** said of the interim chief. "I don't want to be on a collision course with the commission and I want to work with you on this."

Regardless, he remained concerned on Tuesday that this would carry the appearance of a political appointment. He believed Brunelle would be better served by a national search, using community input.

In an interview Wednesday morning, Brown disagreed with the label.

"I don't consider it a political appointment at all," he said. "Kevin has been competing for that job every day of his career."

Brunelle, a 20-year veteran of the Winter Springs Police Department, was appointed interim chief on Nov. 3 following the resignation of 12-year Police Chief Dan Kerr. Kerr accepted a position at Seminole Community College as the public safety director and hand-picked Brunelle as his replacement.

Brown was pleased to hear that **McLemore** was going to follow the commission's request. "It's a promotion," Brown said, "and should be seen as that. (Brunelle) is the right person at the right time for the right job."

Despite his objection to the commissioners' vote, **McLemore** said he would go along with the request so long as a one-year probationary period was attached to the appointment with conditions.

"There are definitely some things I would like for him to accomplish," **McLemore** said.

On Tuesday, **McLemore** said he had yet to schedule the meeting to discuss the parameters with Brunelle, but it would be "sometime in the near future."

"We'll sit down together and work out a plan for a year and get our expectations together," **McLemore** said, "and I'll tell him what I think is important with that job and things that I think he needs to shore up as far as his credentials go. We'll go from there. He is a very talented person and he should do a very good job."

Brown said he was confident Brunelle would meet any of the expectations as long as what the city manager required was "reasonable." For his part, **McLemore** said, "I'm going to help (Brunelle) all that I can during this probationary period."

Brown's original motion initially directed **McLemore** to end the search, but the motion was deemed a violation of the city's charter because the city manager has sole hiring authority of the police chief.

According to the city manager, Brunelle's salary as interim chief is $86,609. **McLemore** said an increase was not out of the question. "I'll have to give it some thought," he said Tuesday. "I'm not sure if it will be fair for a year; we'll talk about that." Kerr's salary was more than $126,000 when he resigned.

During Brown's report, the commission also voted 4-1 to dismiss former Commissioner Ed Martinez from the Winter Springs Planning and Zoning Board.

Brown made the motion on the grounds that it was inappropriate for someone to serve in an advisory capacity to the city after lying to the state ethics commission about Brown. Commissioner Sally McGinnis was the lone no vote.

The Florida Commission on Ethics cleared Brown in October of any misconduct. Brown defeated Martinez in the 2006 election for the District Two commission seat. Brown told the Chronicle on Wednesday that he was still considering the possibility of taking legal action against Martinez and would confer with his attorney after the new year.

Seminole Chronicle
December 3, 2008

Officials should give McLemore a chance

Maybe things won't change in Winter Springs.

Last week, the outgoing City Commission voted to give City Manager **Ron McLemore** a severance contract. Basically, if **McLemore** is let go for any reason other than gross negligence, criminal misconduct or intentional misconduct.

If **McLemore** is fired for pure politics, he gets six months of his base salary, as well as all the sick time and leave time he's accrued. Last week, that package was estimated at about $116,000.

McLemore's logic is that he should have had a contract but didn't. In his original contract, he would have gotten nine months of pay for being terminated for political reasons.

McLemore deserves some job security. He's been one constant in Winter Springs over the last 12 years, at a time when the city has risen again and again.

But he should have asked the incoming City Commission for that security. It's not the ends that reek of dirty pool; it's the means.

What **McLemore** was arguing last week is a tough argument to rebut. Overall, in the last 12 years, the city has done good things. These last 18 months have seen more downturns and unpopular decisions - mostly, the fire fee that got citizens (and commissioners) up in arms, the fire consolidation that has left many bitter and a dispute over the legalities of investment policies.

In short, there's been some good. And there's been some bad.

Is **McLemore** to blame for all the bad things? Not entirely. Everything that's been done has had the blessing of at least three city commissioners, and often times he has had more than that on his side.

Citizens made their voices heard when they decided to pump new life into the commission by voting out the incumbent and voting in another candidate who isn't close to the current commission. So what's left is **McLemore**.

Does that mean **McLemore** should immediately get the boot for what's happened? We say no. The new commission will have to work with **McLemore**.

He's a strong leader. He works for the city of Winter Springs and answers to the elected commissioners. Now, with his new contract in hand, he deserves a chance to prove that he can work with the new commission. He's a smart guy and we think he, along with the new commission, has what it takes to boost Winter Springs to a new level.

Seminole Chronicle
December 3, 2008

Manager secures $116,000 severance
By Abraham Aboraya

WINTER SPRINGS - In what the dissenting voter called a "golden parachute," the Winter Springs City Commission on Monday voted 4-1 to give City Manager **Ron McLemore** a severance package worth an estimated $116,000 if the incoming City Commission decides to let the manager go.

The severance package, while not a complete employment contract, will give **McLemore** six months of his base salary if he's fired for anything short of "criminal conduct, gross negligence or intentional misconduct."

If fired for "convenience," or because the incoming City Commission disagrees with his policies, **McLemore** is also entitled to his accrued vacation and sick time - which amounts to an additional four months, he estimated Monday.

With a base salary of $140,000, the payout would be at least $116,000, although **McLemore** estimated it at about $120,000 without combing through all the specifics. The severance package was the last thing the current City Commission voted on as it was the last meeting for outgoing city commissioners Don Gilmore and Robert Miller.

"My goal is to show the new Commission that we can work together," **McLemore** said. "My goal is never to have to exercise it (the severance package). My goal is the city wouldn't have to pay me a dime."

While not at the meeting directly, Commissioner Rick Brown was the lone vote against the severance package. Speaking over the phone, he said the severance package amounted to the municipal equivalent of a "golden parachute."

"Just for the record, I think it's inappropriate," Brown said after asking **McLemore** why he didn't wait to bring this before the new City Commission. "I think it compromises your position and the position of the outgoing commissioners."

McLemore said that most managers would have had an active contract, and that his contract originally called for nine months of severance. He said if they were looking for a new manager, they would have to negotiate a new contract, which would include severance.

His last severance package was for nine months of salary, he said.

"I think [six months] is entirely reasonable," **McLemore** said. " I, as anyone, am looking for a reasonable amount of certainty in my life going forward. ... I feel like I've taken care of this city for

a long time and I think I deserve a certain amount of respect and a certain amount of retention from this commission in looking after my interests."

Commissioner-elect Gary Bonner said he was surprised by the addition of the item into the agenda.

"I respect the decision of the commission tonight," Bonner said after the meeting. "I think speculating on the decisions that have been made is looking in the rear-view mirror. I'm focused on looking ahead."

Bonner, whose campaign was backed by Brown, said he is looking forward to working with the manager. Bonner has publicly said he isn't coming onto the dais with any preconceived notions about staff.

"I think, from my experience, severance packages are typically a component of an employment agreement," Bonner said. "In this case, it's unusual that we only have this component of the agreement and not the entire agreement. That's a bit confusing to me."

McLemore said he's been operating without a contract for between two or three years, mostly because he was planning on looking for employment in other cities. He said his personal circumstances changed.

Last week, **McLemore** lost his bid to be the city manager of Ormond Beach. He cited a split commission as his reason for looking for other employment.

"We made the decision to stay here and make this our retirement home," **McLemore** said.

Orlando Sentinel
November 23, 2008

Winter Springs city manager ponders next move
By Sandra Pedicini

WINTER SPRINGS - City Manager **Ron McLemore** has tough decisions to make about his future, now that he faces a majority of commissioners unhappy with his leadership in Winter Springs. **McLemore** recently learned he did not get the job as Ormond Beach city manager. So the question is whether he will resign or stay and try to get along with the new commission. Neither of commissioners-elect Gary Bonner and Jean Hovey has said publicly they plan to oust **McLemore**, but both are aligned with people who have not liked **McLemore**'s policies and style. If **McLemore** resigns before new commissioners take their seats next month, he could end up with a more-generous severance package than he would under the new commission.

The Voice
Nov. 21, 2008

McLemore facing coup as Ormond slips away
By Jenny Andreasson

Winter Springs is in the midst of a coup. It's been in the works for about two years, since restaurateur Rick Brown won office over Ed Martinez in what was a mechanical campaign versus one built on emotion. Brown's business sense is admirable, and it's clear his vision for the city's future is one that's more business-friendly. That being the case, he's found a good friend in Joanne Krebs, who won office unopposed four years ago and again faced no opposition this year.

The two have voted in concert, and in opposition to the rest of the Commission, on a variety of issues, forming a voting bloc that's unsettled other commissioners. The Commission is facing a rift, with City Manager **Ron McLemore** as the wedge.

The manager is the most powerful man in the city, and not just for his title. It's unusual for a city manager to hold office for more than a few years — and **McLemore** is nearing his 13th. He has outlasted everyone who sat on the Commission at the time of his hire in January 1996. He knows the staff and the city's infrastructure as well as anyone could, which to someone uncomfortable with his influence would be rather threatening.

Unfortunately even with the city's high regard nationally as a great place to call home, the city residents' perspective hinges on a smattering of financial decisions, rather than on an objective quality-of-life assessment.

McLemore has been conversely criticized for being too conservative with the city's reserve fund and too reckless with the city's investments and budgeting. Any look at the way his staff is run, and how tightly packed is city hall to save money on office space, will tell you he's a good manager. Financial problems are directly related to the city's uncomfortably low tax rate, one that ultimately backfired this year with the Commission voting to relinquish control of its fire department because there wasn't enough funding to pay for it.

Since the Commission faced the wrath of angry residents in the last three years for even suggesting raising its tax rate, the city has held relatively firm, and now with the collapse of the housing market, it's suffering financially. Ultimately that responsibility rests with a noisy collective of homeowners unwilling to tolerate even an average tax rate for a Florida city — which, compared with the nation as a whole, would still be low.

Ironically, people paying so little for the city's high-value services are the same ones who gobbled up the story during campaign season that Winter Springs needed fresh leadership — when the real change it needed was a reasonable tax rate that would've kept the fire department in city control, and would've made the oft-maligned fire fee unnecessary.

Brown backed two Commission candidates this fall, Gary Bonner and Jean Hovey, and both won office. What's special about the election of the two is it brings his alliance to four members — just the amount of votes needed to unseat the city manager. As this edition of The Voice notes, no commissioner will admit to wanting the city manager fired. Hopefully they sincerely don't want that.

It is imaginable that having four commissioners on the dais united in holding **McLemore** more accountable, and reining in his influence, will help the city. Having a healthy balance of power between the city manager's office and the Commission is a good thing. Since **McLemore** lost his bid to become Ormond Beach's city manager on Tuesday, it's possible he'll stick around and see how things play out. He has long said he wanted to retire in Winter Springs, hopefully after bringing the Town Center to fruition. That would seem to be contradicted, though, by his statement to the Orlando Sentinel during the Ormond Beach hiring process that he's "always looking around out there."

Winter Springs' immediate future will either be a standoff between a quartet of commissioners and the manager, or a decisive shift in the balance of power to the Commission's junior members. The only clear thing is that **McLemore** won't be heading to Ormond Beach. Whether he can work out his differences with the incoming Commission and continue to provide residents a high quality of life and effective leadership is another matter.

WFTV
October 12, 2007

Bald Eagles Could Interfere With City's $800 Million Project

WINTER SPRINGS, Fla. -- A newly discovered nest of bald eagles is fueling doubts about the future of a new downtown in Winter Springs. The city has an $800 million project that would drastically overhaul the area, but bald eagles are living right in the middle of it.

The nest is at the top of a cell phone tower. Experts said it was another sign of less natural habitat for the birds and now the city of Winter Springs may have to do some adapting of its own.

Between traffic, city hall and Winter Springs High School is an American icon perched on a monument to Central Florida's growth. A pair of eagles chose to build a nest 150 feet up with none of the privacy Mother Nature usually provides.

"This pair, we have seen them mating on the cell tower, which is a good sign," said Lynda White, Audubon Center for Birds of Prey.

While it's a great opportunity for eagle expert Lynda White, it's a potential problem for the city of Winter Springs. The urban eagles are potentially too close to the ongoing development of an $800 million town center project, so the city hired an environmentalist to figure out what to do next.

"We don't know what the impacts would be on the master plan, but that's what we'd ask our environmentalist to assist us with," said city manager **Ron McLemore**.

While the bald eagle is no longer on the endangered species list, White said they're still protected and that could put the brakes on any major construction within about 600 feet of the nest.

"Worst case, if the city wanted to build something within the territory that we think should not be disturbed, they would be asked to wait until the birds are not here," White said.

If the eagles choose to lay eggs, that means they could stay on top of the cell tower well into next year. White said the tower is actually prime eagle territory and there could be as many as four or five other pairs within just a few miles of the area.

Believe it or not, Florida has the third largest population of bald eagles in the nation, after Alaska and Minnesota. The eagles spend an entire hurricane season building a nest. Eaglets tend to hatch in January and spend the next ten to 12 weeks in that nest.

Seminole Chronicle
January 4, 2007

Isis to offer everything residents will need
By Kyle Teal

WINTER SPRINGS -- Imagine waking up to the smell of coffee brewing in a Barnie's right downstairs, or walking out onto the balcony to the bustle of Publix customers, restaurant patrons and all that completes the idyllic image of city living.

Residents of the new Isis Condominiums, under construction in Winter Springs' Town Center, will take in these unusual views, sights and sounds, as they begin to move into their new homes in the fall of 2007; they'll be the first residents in the central district of the Town Center, a 63-acre Mediterranean-style urban development.

The 41 homes that make up Phase I of this long-term project, at the corner of Tuskawilla and Hickory Grove roads, will all be situated near shops, restaurants and business offices, including a dentist and a doctor's office.

Some of the planned tenants for the business area include Hollywood Bistro, Great Clips, UPS, Washington Mutual, Merle Norman Cosmetics, Wireless Zone and Mt. Fuji Sushi.

Mayor John Bush said the community will be self-sustaining, with residents of the condos in walking distance to pretty much anything they need, while the Town Center businesses will flourish, based on the built-in customer base.

The condos are in high demand, Bush said.

"It appeals to younger people and empty nesters," he said. "It's interesting to note the one-bedrooms sold out the quickest."

The pre-sales of an additional 312 Isis units have begun, and it's expected those homes will also sell out before construction completes. The South Building, near the Cross Seminole Trail, will house 193 units, and the North building will house the remaining 119 homes.

By 2010, when it's expected construction of the Town Center will complete, there will be 1,000 homes and 600,000 square feet of retail space.

City Manager **Ron McLemore** echoed Bush's sentiment that there's appeal for this type of urban living.

"You can expect young professional couples with no children, singles without children, retirees without children and a minimal number of couples and singles with children," he said.

The fact that all of Phase 1's condos have sold is a pretty good indication of Isis' projected success.

"We believe that approximately 4,000 residents are necessary to make the Town Center a success," **McLemore** said. "We will easily meet this goal."

The condos boast luxuries and amenities, including master bathrooms, hardwood floors, high-end appliances, a fitness center, a community room complete with a catering kitchen, a courtyard grilling area, a media room, two pools, a bocce ball court and a putting green.

The most popular choices for tenants thus far - the one-bedroom studios - offer 704 square feet. Isis two-bedroom units offer 1,083 square feet and three-bedroom units, 1,413 square feet. Condo prices range anywhere from the low $200,000s to $300,000.

Each condo includes crown molding in its formal areas, ceramic tile in the kitchen, bath, and laundry rooms. Kitchens have wood cabinetry with lighting, granite counter tops and all the necessary appliances from GE Stainless Steel.

City Commissioner Joanne Krebs said she is grateful for the benefits Isis will bring to its residents and to the people of Winter Springs - particularly the tax-base increase. She hopes that the increase, along with the impact fees for the Town Center, will help Winter Springs pay for things like police cars, fire trucks, pools or sports facilities

"With an increased tax base we may be able to offer more services to residents," Krebs said. "Increasing the tax base may also help to lower taxes as well as help sustain our city."

Isis will do more to protect our natural areas by building taller structures on small plots of land, Krebs said.

She also said Isis holds advantages over other complexes. Other than amenities within the community, the location itself will make life easier for its residents.

"You would have a shorter commute-time," she said, "Which will leave more time to spend with family."

The project's developer, the James Doran Company, founded in 1882, has an expanding portfolio including high-end projects all over the Southeast, some of which can be found in Northshore Town Center in Knoxville, Tenn., Downtown Daniel Island in Charleston, S.C. and Midlothian Town Center in Richmond, Va.

Look Up Orlando Magazine
2007

Getting to Know...Ron McLemore
City Manager, Winter Springs, FL

What individuals have influenced you most and how?
My professor at the university I attended. His name was Ken Henning, he encouraged me to go into public service.

What would surprise us to know about you?
I would rather watch love stories than war movies, and my heart's desire is to conduct the New World Symphony.

What is your favorite food?
Pecan Pie - anyway I can get it.

What was the best book you have read - what book would you recommend?
I am an avid non-fiction reader, and my favorite book is usually the one I'm reading. This one is called The World is Flat. Fascinating!

At what age did you trust Christ as your Savior?
Since I can remember. I've always known Him as my Savior.

Do you have any pets?
A fluffy white little doggie. She's a poodle, but don't ever tell her.

What is your favorite sports team?
The Georgia Bulldogs - Go Ugga! Woof! Woof!

Orlando Sentinel
October 22, 2006

TENSION MOUNTS IN RACES: Hopefuls in Winter Springs' 3 contests get snippy as voting nears.
By Sandra Pedicini

Oct. 22--Residents are challenging Winter Springs' political establishment and saying it's time for changes.

David Mize is going up against incumbent Mayor John Bush in what has become a particularly contentious election, while Matt Matisak faces City Commission Seat 4 incumbent Sally McGinnis, saying she has not proven herself a leader during her four years as a commissioner. Businessman Rick Brown and former commissioner Ed Martinez are vying for an empty Seat 2 that Michael Blake, who recently lost a bid for the Seminole County Commission, is leaving.

Mayor's race Bush says voters should return him to office because he has the experience and has served as a good ambassador for his city. "I've tried to be at the table," he said. "It has to do with showing up and listening." In March, he called a meeting in which commissioners decided to move ahead with an ordinance barring annexation east into the Black Hammock. That was a dramatic reversal from the city's previous policies. Then, in late September, he announced a proposal pushing for the city to look into purchasing other land for preservation. "Better late than never," he said, when asked about the timing. "I should just do nothing between now and [Election Day] Nov. 7?"

But Mize says the mayor's efforts have been too little, too late, and he describes them as election-year maneuvering. Bush describes his challenger as an "aginner" and "a loose cannon" who is running because his house was flooded with sewage from a city lift station in the hours after Hurricane Charley. Mize acknowledges his unpleasant experience with city government was "the catalyst" for his interest in local politics. He and his wife, Wendy, have said the city did not offer enough assistance to them and other families whose homes were flooded. The city eventually reached a financial settlement with them. But the Mizes also researched the workings of city government, and, they said, they found many things that troubled them.

David Mize questions everything from the city's fast pace of development to Bush's integrity. He said he is unhappy with decisions to allow town homes in places such as a 47-acre site previously zoned for industrial use near U.S. Highway 17-92. Commercial and industrially zoned land should be kept that way to boost the city's tax base, he said. Bush did not vote on the rezoning but sent a letter to residents supporting it. He said a residential community was more compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. The mayor does not vote except when there is a tie.

Mize said the city also missed an opportunity to buy Winter Springs Golf Course. The city had been studying the idea, but private investors snatched it up. Since then, there have been complaints that the grounds have been neglected. Bush said he would like to have bought the golf course and still wants to, but the city needed to closely study the issue. "You don't pull out your checkbook and

write a check for $2.2 million," Bush said, referring to what he said was the asking price at the time. Mize's criticism of the golf-course issue upset some city officials, who said his campaign literature stated incorrectly that the city had sold the property. The golf course actually was sold by a lender that had taken over the course and two others from an Orlando management company. "It was not the exact truth," Mize said of his campaign literature. "It's literary license."

Mize has been critical of City Manager **Ron McLemore**, calling him "arrogant, indifferent and difficult to work with." He says **McLemore**'s $133,000 salary -- and that of many other city managers in the county -- reflects "self-importance." Mize said he would encourage a pay freeze for **McLemore** and other top-ranking city employees, perhaps for a couple years.

Bush said **McLemore** is not a bad city manager. "You can argue with . . . some of the things he does, but look at our city," Bush said, citing low tax and crime rates. "What's the issue here?"

Mize said garbage fees also are too high when compared with other cities and starting salaries for police officers and firefighters are too low. Bush said the garbage fees are higher because Winter Springs renegotiated a multiyear contract with the waste-collection company within the past year. Police officers, firefighters and other city employees also are getting raises of up to 7 percent this year, he said.

Mize also has questioned Bush's integrity. He is critical of a town house Bush bought from the city for about $86,000 last year. The town house was one of four the city had obtained at foreclosure after helping finance them -- along with dozens of others -- for the Wyman Fields Foundation, the troubled nonprofit agency whose director pleaded no contest last year to embezzling money.

Bush said he bought the town house for his son, who is disabled. "He, like anybody else, wants to be on his own," Bush said. "I didn't get any special treatment. It's a perfect place for my son to live, and that's what I was concerned with." But Mize said elected officials "must avoid even the perception of impropriety. I have concerns about that whole issue." The purchase was brought before the City Commission for a vote and passed 4-1. The mayor did not vote.

The Mizes also questioned how aggressively the properties were marketed before Bush's purchase. City Commission minutes show **McLemore** said the properties were multiple-listed, but the Orlando Regional Realtors Association said it has no record of the property on its MLS system in the past 10 years. Of the four, it shows one in June 2003, but the listing later expired.

McLemore said Wyman Fields had assured him it had tried to sell the property. "They represented to me beyond any shadow of a doubt they had multilisted these units," he said.

Seat 2 Rick Brown wants to succeed departing City Commissioner Michael Blake. So does Ed Martinez, who stepped down from the commission in 2004, citing his wife's health problems, and moved out of the city. Martinez moved back last year. Brown said the city is undergoing tremendous residential growth and needs his vision and business experience, including high-level positions at software companies. He now owns Tijuana Flats restaurants, including the one at Winter Springs Town Center, and has pushed for a joint Winter Springs-Oviedo chamber of

commerce. He said he wants the city to seek more economic development. "The city's a different place right now," he said. "It's a different city than when Mr. Martinez served."

Martinez said it's his political experience that's needed. "You can't just come out of left field and say, 'I'm going to delve into this,' " Martinez said.

Brown and Martinez generally agree on many issues, such as wanting the city to buy Winter Springs Golf Course, supporting **McLemore** and having concerns about how Town Center has developed. Both have reservations about how much high-density development has been approved, though Martinez supported the city's vote on the industrial-zoned property while Brown thought it was a bad idea.

Brown and Martinez are far apart on the issue of how Winter Springs handled the Black Hammock. Brown says the city never should have tried to move into the Black Hammock. Martinez says Winter Springs jumped too quickly to pass an ordinance declaring it would leave the Black Hammock alone.

Seat 4 Matt Matisak says Sally McGinnis has not proven herself a leader. He criticizes her for not pushing initiatives and not challenging staff enough on big issues.

McGinnis says Winter Springs is doing well and that she should be returned to office because of her experience. "I understand how city government works," she said. "Government is cumbersome and slow. You just have to finally accept that." She said much of what she does is behind the scenes, such as working with former Oviedo City Council member Regina Bereswill to bring the two cities together for discussions and to resolve their differences.

Matisak, chairman of the city's code-enforcement board, said he has tweaked procedures to make residents more comfortable and to help other board members understand procedures. Matisak said he wants more open government, with videos of meetings available on the county's cable-TV station and the Web. McGinnis earlier this year voted with most other commissioners against televised meetings out of concern over the costs. Matisak said the city should not ever have tried annexing into the Black Hammock.

When asked about the city's previous policies toward the environmentally sensitive area, McGinnis said, "It's over; it's done. It goes way back before me." While acknowledging high-density development can preserve green space by clustering development, Matisak said he fears the city has been approving developments without preserving enough land. However, he said he is heartened by Bush's recent call for a city land-preservation program.

McGinnis said she is comfortable with the amount of high-density residential development in the city, saying single-family housing creates sprawl. Developments undergo intense aesthetic review, and they look good, she said. "There's nothing in Winter Springs that looks like it came out of a kit." Matisak said the city needs to show more vision in determining the future of Town Center. McGinnis acknowledges issues with the first phase of the multi-use complex, but "it will not happen anymore. It's working out. The merchants are not unhappy."

Matisak also has concerns about **McLemore**, saying he can be too heavy-handed. Matisak said he would try to rein in the city manager but not get rid of him. McGinnis laughed when asked about **McLemore**. "This whole race is about **Ron**," she said. "I think he does what he believes is best for the city." A routine background check on candidates found that Matisak filed for bankruptcy-court protection in 1998. Matisak said the Chapter 7 filing, which was when he was in college, was a turning point in his life that taught him the value of managing money.

"I'm glad it happened to me," he said. "It opened my eyes."

Orlando Sentinel
July 3, 2006

Investors snap up Twin Rivers golf club.
By Robert PeRez

Jul. 3--Twin Rivers Golf Club, one of three financially troubled golf courses that Seminole County officials considered buying earlier this year, is under contract with a private investment group.

The buyers, operating under the name University Golf Club Inc., are partners in five Central Florida courses and have a reputation for turning around struggling properties.

Bob Dello Russo and Chad Barton said they hope to close on the property by mid-July, if issues regarding water supply can be worked out. The local utility, Alafaya Utilities Inc., has had problems recently providing sufficient reclaimed water to customers, including Twin Rivers, Barton and Dello Russo said.

"We don't think it's a major problem," Dello Russo said. "If Alafaya can't provide the water, we'll go to St. Johns [River Water Management District] and get a permit for a well."

Dello Russo and Barton own Country Club of Deer Run, Casselberry Golf Club, Wekiva Golf Club, Country Club of Mount Dora and Rock Springs Ridge Golf Club.

Twin Rivers was one of three taken over and put on the market by Banc of America Strategic Solutions last year after the lender took possession of them from Meadowbrook Golf Inc., an Orlando-based management company.

The courses initially were offered as a package, but Winter Springs Golf Club and Sabal Point Country Club were sold to separate buyers earlier this year.

California businessman Arman Rahbarian bought the Winter Springs course for $2.1 million. Last month, he closed the course and dismissed more than two dozen employees. He promised city officials the course would reopen, though he gave no timeline.

Rahbarian is still trying to determine what would be the best use for the property, said Winter Park attorney Christopher Cathcart, who has been retained to manage it.

In the meantime, at least one of the golf course's neighbors has complained to city officials about high grass on the course. A letter was written to Cathcart about the complaint, said Winter Springs City Manager **Ron McLemore**.

But **McLemore** noted that the golf course is technically a conservation easement. That prohibits development, he said, but it doesn't mean the owner has to keep it looking like a golf course.

An investment group behind four apartment-to-condominium conversions bought Sabal Point Country Club in June. It is unclear what RB-GEM Golfbrooke LLC paid for the course, which was advertised for $2.375 million.

That group turned over operations to a private company, Kitson & Partners, but the course has been closed since Banc of America closed it in January.

Last month, the new owners met with representatives of homeowners in Sabal Point, an older, upscale subdivision near Longwood. Wayne Hunicke, president of Sabal Point's largest homeowner group, said residents are concerned about the lack of maintenance on the course and its water features.

"The frequency of callers complaining about weeds and ponds has increased," he said. "We're all having a hard time figuring out why more hasn't been done."

But Hunicke said the meeting with owners left a good impression with residents, which makes it easier to remain hopeful.

"If they spend money for the club, they're going to do something with it," he said. "Residents are no happier [since the golf course was sold]. If fact, they may be a little unhappier. But at least there is reason for optimism."

Orlando Sentinel
April 5, 2006

Florida's Shame -- The new villains
Cities invade Central Florida's wilderness
By Paul Owens

Like happy endings? Then you might not want to read this.

NOV. 2, 2004: What a great day for Seminole County residents. Hurrah. By their votes, they were actually going to protect precious land against the sound of the bulldozer. Not many other counties in Central Florida could claim that, now, could they? After all, who in Seminole hadn't made the trek to the Black Hammock?

It's hard to believe that just a few short minutes from their subdivisions with homes cheek-to-jowl, they could sit at a fish camp on the shores of Lake Jesup. Residents could sip a drink and watch gators slip through the water while a snowy egret, maybe even an eagle, soared above. Nearby they might spot an endangered wood stork making its way through the dark swamp. And they knew they could take a look at something called the cuplet fern, a plant so rare that this is the only place in the continental U.S. where it can be found in the wild. Now this is more like it. This is why they stay in Florida.

They also knew that the Black Hammock, with its dripping Spanish moss hanging from the water oaks that fill the swamp, was only the beginning. It was the gateway to rural Seminole County. Lake Harney, the Econlockhatchee River, the St. Johns River. They all now would be protected from citylike subdivisions. Finally.

NOV. 16, 2004: No, this can't be happening. The city of Winter Springs, which sits right next door to the Black Hammock, is in court to stop the voters' bid to save the hammock and the rest of rural Seminole County. Please say no. Was their vote just some sort of bad joke cooked up by a prankster? Why else would Winter Springs' lawyers be marching into the courthouse with a piece of paper arguing that the voters had somehow violated the city's rights? The county can't tell the city what to do, it says.

Then we come to our senses. We realize we shouldn't have been surprised. Winter Springs was the reason that Seminole commissioners asked voters whether they wanted to keep the area rural. And can you blame them? Winter Springs was making moves to put sewers -- sewers -- in the hammock even though it wasn't even in the city limits. Anyone who has been in Florida more than 10 minutes knows what sewers mean. They mean subdivisions and plenty of them. All Winter Springs needed to do now was bring the land into the city, a simple feat in Florida. Even worse, Winter Springs wins the first round in court. It may actually win the right to prevent the Seminole commission from protecting the rural area. Pardon us if we're not cheering. But Winter Springs doesn't stop there. It also supports a bill gaining steam in the Legislature that would allow Winter Springs to ignore county voters who want to protect land. The Winter Springs cheerleader for all this is City Manager **Ron McLemore**, who has backed one scheme after another for the Black Hammock.

Ready for the punch line? The Winter Springs commission now says it doesn't even want to put a subdivision in the hammock. It just wants the right to do so.

So let's take Winter Springs at its word: It's not going to develop Black Hammock or other wilderness in eastern Seminole. Why does it want to give other cities the right to? Why does it want to leave this precious land victim to any developer who can sweet-talk the next new commissioner? We all know how those conversations turn out. And what about the next Oviedo City Commission? That city also sits right next door to Black Hammock.

Well, it can't be that bad, can it? Can a win for Winter Springs really destroy Seminole's way of life? Well, yes it can. Here's the ugly truth: If cities are allowed to fill rural eastern Seminole County with subdivisions, that area alone will have more residents than the entire city of Orlando has now. It would house even more residents than presently live in Osceola County. All told, it could mean 80,000 new houses, 240,000 more people. Wonderful. Houses replace the critters. Now are you happy, **Ron McLemore**?

But at least in Seminole there is some hope. Maybe Winter Springs will come to its senses and drop its suit. Or maybe it will stop backing the bill in the Legislature.

In Lake County there is one case that has no hope. There, Groveland went to court against its own city voters to pave the way for a subdivision in the Green Swamp. Yes, that's the same swamp the state 30 years ago vowed to protect against just this sort of development. The 560,000-acre swamp is filled with waterways and endangered animals that need plenty of space. Groveland too had a city manager -- Jason Yarborough -- engineering the assault. Thankfully for the Green Swamp, he's no longer there. But his big reason for supporting this Banyan subdivision is that the developer might donate a park. Welcome to the new Florida. Do whatever you want as long as you donate a park or a school. Works every time.

That was last July. So has Groveland gotten its park? Not yet, says the new city manager. They are still working on it.

Orlando Sentinel
August 11, 2005

Taxes going up -- but maybe not that much.
By Sandra Pedicini

Aug. 11--Winter Springs residents are in for a shock when they open their property-tax notices later this month.

How does an 86 percent rate increase sound?

That's what they'll find: a proposed general city tax-rate of $8 per $1,000 of taxable value, compared with $4.30 now. That would mean an additional $832.50 on a $250,000 house with a standard homestead exemption.

But don't panic, city officials say. They don't really plan to raise taxes -- that high.

Winter Springs Mayor John Bush, in fact, said the proposal was made "tongue-in-cheekly."

But City Commissioner Robert Miller said he thinks it's time for Winter Springs to talk more seriously about how it plans to pay for future expenses. That includes not only government staples, such as more police officers, but also a parking garage for the city's new town center, a community center and splash pads for kids in city parks.

Commissioners don't yet know how much those things will cost or what options they have to finance them. So they voted 3-2 last month to set the proposed tax rate sky-high and give themselves some wiggle room before they vote on a final rate in September. Cities can go lower than a proposed tax rate, but they cannot go higher.

"It was late and it was getting out of hand, and we couldn't reach a consensus," Miller said. "We just said, 'All right, we'll just set it at 8 and whatever we decide to discuss in the next two or three meetings, we won't have to be restrained.' I think we just picked it out of the blue."

Seminole County Property Appraiser David Johnson said he has never seen a city propose such a big increase in his 19 years with the office.

"It's going to upset the residents quite a bit," he said.

Orange County Property Appraiser Bill Donegan gasped when told of Winter Springs' proposed figure.

"To get that way far out, all that's going to do is cause telephone calls for the property appraiser and the city," he said. "This is just going to cause a lot of anxiety."

Paula Davoli, who lives in the Tuscawilla community, agreed. The notices, she said, are "going to get a very strong reaction from people.

"I would hope there would be quite a lot of people questioning their commissioners and appearing at the next City Commission meeting to force some of these answers."

Miller said that's fine with him.

"We'll get people to come in and tell us how they feel," Miller said. "I'm not asking for a riot, but most City Commission meetings are not very well attended . . . It's difficult for us to get feedback on a lot of these things."

So what might the final figure be?

"I don't think you'll see the commission do anything crazy," City Manager **Ron McLemore** said.

Miller said he'd doesn't see an increase of more than $2 per $1,000 increase, though that still would equal a $500 jump on a $250,000 house.

But "I'll be surprised if we raise taxes at all," said Mayor Bush, who has no vote on the matter. "None of the city staff have asked for anything that would justify a tax increase."

Seminole County Watch
Thursday, April 14, 2005

It's only tax money, let's spend it all!
By Slats Murphy

Winter Springs City Commissioner Robert Miller loves to rail against irresponsible behavior and reckless spending, but apparently only when it is that of others. As with most politicos, Miller does not want his stringent rules of expectant behavior applied to himself.

The commission discussed at their meeting this past Monday night a pay raise for City Manager **Ron McLemore**, in conjunction with his yearly review, which **McLemore** finally submitted since it's having been due in November.

While the commission debated the issue, Miller placed the city's piggy bank on the dais and beat upon it with whatever he could find in an attempt to break it open and give the entirety of the contents to **McLemore**.

We're speaking only figuratively, but that was Miller's intent. The commissioner lauded **McLemore** to dizzying heights, comparing the city manager favorably to some of the nation's leading corporate executives and their salaries of millions of dollars.

At one point, Miller threw out figures of $20,000 to $25,000 as the amount **McLemore** should have tacked onto his current salary, estimated with benefits to total $154,000 yearly in compensation before any raise.

One meeting observer went so far as to say that at times when **McLemore**'s mouth was not open as Miller spoke, the commissioner's voice sounded faint and muffled. Slats' limited knowledge of anatomy learned on the streets of the city allowed the meaning of that statement to be obviously clear.

Only Commissioner Michael Blake, the petulant and imperious one, made any kind of stand for fiscal sanity and responsibility on behalf of the city's residents. This time, Blake actually lived up to his charge to do the "people's work."

Unfortunately, he and the residents of the city were failed by the four other commissioners, who voted to give **McLemore** a six-percent increase for the coming year.

So there is no misunderstanding (we'll leave that for the School Board), let it be clearly stated that **McLemore** is very good at what he does. But he is also already very well-compensated for a career dedicated to "public service." In the current economic climate, a six-percent increase is pure foolishness and folly.

More importantly, it is a slap in the face to Winter Springs' many hard-working residents trying each day to make a decent living and a better life for their families. A six-percent annual raise is unheard of for many of the city's residents. A six-percent raise for their city manager is not reflective at all of the economic conditions with which they must deal. Above all, it was totally unnecessary and frivolous.

In calling the roll on the commissioners and their vote, Slats gives a resounding "yea" to Michael Blake, and very definitive "NAYs" to Joanne Krebs, Sally McGinnis, Don Gilmore, and Robert Miller. Motion to condemn the commissioners' irresponsibility and abuse of the public trust carries.

Seminole County Watch
March 16, 2005

My lips are moving but I hear someone else's voice
Slats Murphy

Winter Springs Mayor John Bush admonished the unidentified city managers of two nearby towns at the close of Monday night's Winter Springs City Commission.

Their offense, in Bush's view, was to criticize County Commission Chairman Carlton Henley for comments included in his State of the County address on Feb. 18. In that address, Henley called for consolidation of services between the county and the seven cities within the county.

Bush said it was a no-no for the two city managers to be quoted in the next morning's paper as being critical of Henley's ideas on consolidation, specifically because they were non-elected officials who, as such, should not presume to speak for their cities.

Kind of funny coming from a mayor who does not even have a vote on his own city commission, and who serves as little more than window dressing and occasional cheerleader for city causes.

It is even more amusing considering that the Winter Springs City Commissioners often take their lead from their own City Manager **Ron McLemore**, often serving as nothing more than rubberstamps for his advised actions.

Mayor Bush wants us to think city managers do not have the right to "speak" for the cities they run, when in Winter Springs, at least, it is usually only the city manager's voice that is ultimately heard. **McLemore** must be an especially adept ventriloquist: he has even convinced his dummies they are speaking for themselves.

By the way, Bush would not publicly name the city managers nor their cities when he blasted them at Monday's meeting. For the record, they are Frank Clifton, Casselberry City Manager, and John Drago, Longwood City Administrator.

Orlando Sentinel
November 17, 2004

Winter Springs, Fla., asks judge to rescind growth measure
By Gary Taylor

Nov. 17--SANFORD, Fla. -- A charter amendment limiting growth in the eastern half of Seminole County was approved by 56 percent of the voters earlier this month, but now its fate is in the hands of one person.

Seminole-Brevard Circuit Judge Nancy F. Alley heard more than six hours of testimony and arguments Tuesday -- more than twice the time allotted for the case -- as attorneys for Winter Springs tried to persuade her to toss out the ordinance.

Alley said she probably won't make a ruling until after next week.

Seminole County will not enforce provisions of the amendment until after Alley rules.

Although the county established an urban-services boundary east of Oviedo, Winter Springs and Sanford a decade ago, Winter Springs has annexed several parcels.

Winter Springs City Manager **Ron McLemore** testified that his city had been willing to enter into a three-way agreement with the county and Oviedo that would have prevented either city from annexing land from the rural area, but went ahead with annexations when Oviedo did not participate.

The county decided to put the issue before the voters after Winter Springs submitted plans to the state showing it intended to extend water and sewer services into the rural area, Deputy County Manager Don Fisher testified.

Winter Springs attorney Anthony Garganese challenged the validity of the amendment on several grounds. He argued that the title and description on the ballot was confusing and that the amendment violated the county charter because it addressed more than one issue.

Alley questioned County Attorney Steve Lee about the single-issue question, saying the amendment appeared to address limiting growth in the rural area while making a change that would allow future charter amendments to supersede municipal ordinances.

Lee acknowledged that the charger supersedes city laws. "The city doesn't like that, but it's legal," he said. "They're not happy because the county had exercised its authority in part to supersede their home rule."

Orlando Sentinel
April 29, 2002

Seminole County, Fla., Faces Tough Decisions Regarding Urban Sprawl.
By Robert Perez

Apr. 29--Look back at the Sentinel's report examining how the planned new community of Baldwin Park will change the face of Orlando.

In 1994, Seminole County leaders took a bold step and drew a line in the sand east of Winter Springs and Oviedo, declaring that urban sprawl would creep no farther.

This urban service boundary cut off much of rural eastern Seminole from getting county water and sewer service. The assumption was that a lack of those services would discourage denser development.

That policy has been used as a shield for those who want to retain the area's unspoiled wetlands and hardwood forests and expanses of old orange groves and pastures.

But a legal battle threatens to undermine the protection. Winter Springs is challenging the idea that the county can stop it from annexing or providing services to an area simply to curb growth.

Environmentalists and other supporters of the policy fear a legal victory for the city would not only doom efforts to protect rural east Seminole County, it could threaten the whole concept of growth management in the state.

Tom Minter sees things differently.

Minter's family spent the past 47 years clearing, cultivating and farming 35 acres of citrus groves and pastures along De Leon Street in the Black Hammock area near Lake Jesup. Now it's time to sell and move on.

"I'm not going to continue farming, not on property that is this valuable," he said. "This land is worth $40,000 to $45,000 an acre. It's stupid to farm it."

When Winter Springs annexed Minter's property, at his request, and two other parcels along De Leon last year, nearby Oviedo and the county sued.

The annexations and proposed extension of water and sewer services violate the urban service boundary, they argued.

After months of futile mediation efforts, the issue is headed for the courtroom.

Environmentalists and residents of rural east Seminole County cheered when the county created its urban service boundary. Finally, there was a written policy to fight sprawl.

After considerable coaxing and political pressure, Oviedo also agreed to the concept.

The city and county adopted a plan that established where Oviedo's northern boundary ultimately would end, and Oviedo promised to not extend water and sewer services beyond that line. However, Winter Springs never signed on to the agreement because officials there disagreed with the concept of limiting annexations.

Winter Springs City Manager **Ron McLemore** is blunt about the city's position: There is no way that Oviedo or the county can stop Winter Springs from annexing property if the annexation is legal and voluntary.

"Oviedo is upset because they went into that agreement with the county and hung themselves," he said. "That agreement is not worth the paper it's written on."

McLemore's tough talk and other actions by Winter Springs officials have made it easy for opponents to make them out as development-happy bad guys.

A proposed housing development called Battle Ridge, along the south shore of Lake Jesup, spawned the debate that led to the county adopting its urban service boundary. Under the policy, Battle Ridge would be limited to one house per three acres in the county.

The developer turned to Winter Springs, and the city eagerly annexed the 300-acre development and promised to extend to it water and sewer services.

For a time, a banner on the wall of Winter Springs' planning office said it all: "Eastward Ho! East of Battle Ridge!" The rallying cry -- printed only partly in jest -- was a slap at officials in Seminole County and Oviedo.Once in the city, Battle Ridge was eligible for nine times as many homes. The development, now under different ownership and known as Belle Fair, will end up with about three homes per acre, though much of the wetlands on the property have been donated for conservation.

A more recent skirmish stems from the city's plans to put oversized water lines through Belle Fair. **McLemore** said the lines are necessary to provide proper fire protection to several commercial businesses in the area. But critics say the oversized lines combined with the annexation of property east of Belle Fair provide further proof of the city's expansionist agenda.

Environmentalists and Black Hammock residents say that, if Winter Springs succeeds in court and is allowed to annex the parcels east of Belle Fair, the future of the Black Hammock is at risk.

What's more, they argue, if a county's attempts to rein in development can be ignored by rogue cities, with the blessing of the courts, the whole concept of managed growth goes out the window.

"I looked at the county's [comprehensive development] plan and it said, 'This is the country,' " said Jim Logue, president of the Black Hammock Association, a group of homeowners in the hammock who are fighting to preserve it. "Changing that plan should be hard, not just at the whim of someone who wants to change it to make more money."

"There has to be a line in the sand, and we have to honor it," said Cecilia Height, who handles Lake Jesup issues for the Sierra Club of Central Florida. "I think they should go back and redevelop property that's already in the city."

But Winter Springs counters that, if an area wants to guard against sprawl, the way to do that is to limit how much can be built, not stop cities from legally annexing property.

"Let's stop talking about annexations. That one you've already lost, **McLemore** said. "Let's start talking about land use."

He said the city is willing to lower the number of homes it will allow in areas that are ecologically sensitive. But large parcels that have long been used for farming don't meet the criteria.

"If you've got wetlands or you've got protected species, you've got my attention," he said. "If you've got fallow farmlands, you don't have my attention."

Minter agrees.

"Look at all the orange groves in the area," he said. "That's not a natural setting. I don't want to see high density, like a bunch of $80,000 houses. We're talking about $250,000 or $300,000 houses. I really don't understand why the county is complaining."

Developers are looking at recently annexed parcels in the city, including Minter's. Under county rules, about 10 homes could be built on Minter's 29-acre parcel. Under city rules, the number of homes jumps to about 90.

No matter the outcome, Minter is leaving the place he has called home since he was 8. The changes in east Seminole County in his lifetime have already made it "a paradise lost," he said, adding that he will continue farming on 200 acres he bought in Georgia.

But Logue, Height and others aren't giving in and have vowed to continue the battle. They know they're in for a long one.

"I guess they aren't going to be happy until they've paved over the entire state," Height said.

Orlando Sentinel
March 15, 2002

DeBary, Fla., Dreams of Town Center
By John T. McCann

Mar. 15--WINTER SPRINGS, Fla.--Describing their push for an upscale town center on 70 acres at U.S. Highway 17-92 and Dirksen Drive, DeBary officials said plans are in the infancy stage.

They took a few baby steps Thursday in Winter Springs, examining a town center there that's much to their liking. The sticking point in DeBary is making sure both the city and the land owners leave the table with a piece of the pie.

By peppering Winter Springs City Manager **Ron McLemore** with questions, DeBary Mayor Carmen Rosamonda and council member Bill Long demonstrated their commitment to a neo-traditional town center for DeBary.

Rosamonda and Long envision it as downtown DeBary, a hub of activity where people would gather to do business, shop or just chill out and relax. Think Winter Park Village or an atmosphere similar to the Disney town of Celebration, where residents can walk from work to the market and then home.

It's nice, but it comes at a price, said Steve Costa, a commercial real estate professional with Charles Wayne Properties, which represents his family, which owns the land in DeBary.

"I'd love to develop a neo-traditional town center," Costa said. It "depends on whether or not we can work with the city and come up with some type of financial assistance."

No dollar amounts have been tossed around. There's a 7 p.m. workshop Wednesday at Town Hall to discuss the matter. Costa said the original plan for the land was a shopping center, single-story office space and a 300-unit apartment complex. DeBary officials don't want anything resembling a strip mall, and if that's what the land is going to be used for, then they don't see the need for city dollars.

They want neo-traditional.

Costa wants a financial commitment. City officials also need to show him that DeBary can attract business people able to afford the higher rents once the high-end neo-traditional town center is built.

Costa said business space that's now $10 to $15 a square foot in DeBary could jump into the Winter Park-range of $25 to $30 a square foot.

Somebody has to pay for it, so after Rosamonda, Long and City Manager Richard Diamond drove around the Winter Springs site now under construction off State Road 434, and after a presentation

of colorful renderings about the estimated $300 million neo-traditional Winter Springs town center, Debary's mayor had a question: how much?

McLemore said the project is costing Winter Springs about $6 million, coming from bond money and a penny sales tax.

While Winter Springs has twice as many residents as DeBary, Rosamonda said, the two cities have similar growth patterns. He wanted to see how Winter Springs approaches its town center plans and get some ideas for DeBary.

"We're trying to upscale a bit," trying to give DeBary some character, Rosamonda said. "We have to balance the city's participation with the market."

With competition from surrounding malls and shopping centers, **McLemore** said, a town center for Winter Springs doesn't need to be a retail destination.

The focus is making Winter Springs a housing destination where an expected 5,000 residents will be able to take a 5-minute walk and fulfill their shopping and leisure needs.

"We understand, we're not going to have Bloomingdale's and Macy's and all that stuff," **McLemore** said. "We're going to have mom-and-pop and Publix-type development."

This is how DeBary needs to be thinking, **McLemore** said.

Orlando Business Journal
August 18, 2000

Suburban Winter Springs gets downtown (James Doran Co. receives development contract)
By Alan Byrd

WINTER SPRINGS -- Do the 15 acres at State Road 434 and Tuscawilla Road look downright desolate?

Look again: After four years of on-again, off-again plans, it looks as if Winter Springs finally will get a brand new, old-fashioned downtown built on the site. Charleston-based James Doran Co., the development concern that built the International Festival at Kirkman Road and International Drive, has agreed to build a 316,000-square-foot Winter Springs Town Center.

"The whole gist is to create a focal point in the community that will give Winter Springs an old-town sense, instead of a suburban-type feel," says **Ron McLemore**, Winter Springs' city manager.

The center, with its planned clusters of three-story buildings, is being compared to the recently opened Winter Park Village, a town square-type development complete with a mix of retail, restaurants, office and residential rental space. But Winter Springs' development would only be the first phase of a broader plan that includes future residential development and, possibly, a hotel. Those projects would be developed by other companies. The property has long been eyed by other developers hoping to create the "inner city" sprawling Winter Springs now lacks.

In early 1999, a Las Vegas developer entered into a contract to buy the land from The Schrimsher Group. Former Major League Baseball player Darren Dalton poured $50,000 into the deal.

But by the middle of last year, the developer, Rohit Joshi, had not paid the cash deposit for the deal and the sale fell through.

Earlier this year, city officials hosted a group of potential investors to try to spur the project. It's not as though the city was being hard-nosed: It had offered to contribute infrastructure to the development, such as four-laning Tuskawilla Road north of State Road 434.

James Doran Co. was not part of that meeting between the city and developers, but the company had been scouting the site since last summer. "There are a lot of homes near the site," says Charles Carrington, the attorney for the developer. "Plus, the per capita income is desirable for retail."

Carrington would not discuss costs. However, a similar development being built for nearby Altamonte Springs at North Lake Boulevard and Cranes Roost Lake is expected to cost about $100 million.

The James Doran Co. hopes to start construction on its portion of the ambitious project sometime within the next year. Completion should follow six to 12 months later.

Palm Beach Post
May 7, 1997

EX-WORKER WHO REPORTED SECRET TAPES WANTS BACK PAY
By Pat Moore

Former Martin County Recreation Superintendent Robert Dent spent nearly two hours Tuesday reading jurors the glowing employee performance evaluations he received his first four years on the job.

But praise for his professionalism quickly turned to criticism after Dent complained to the county's personnel director in February 1993 that his boss had secretly tape-recorded conversations of secretaries in their office. "It was an illegal act," Dent testified in the e retaliation for reporting the tape-recording incident.

"I felt it was highly unethical and I felt in all likelihood it was against the policies of the county to tape-record someone's work area without their knowledge," Dent said.

Less than a year after Dent reported Parks and Recreation Director Robert Denison had taped the secretaries' conversations, Assistant County Administrator **Ron McLemore** called Dent to his office and gave him the choice of resigning or being fired. **McLemore** "said I had embarrassed the county by my comments (about the taping) to the press and that I had caused letters to be written from the public to the commissioners," Dent told jurors.

Dent said he was surprised that he hadn't received any written warning from **McLemore**, but he agreed to resign rather than be fired. The state attorney's office investigated the incident but did not file charges because the secretary who was taped refused to prosecute.

For the past two years Dent has been employed by the Nature Conservancy at Blowing Rocks Preserve on Jupiter Island. He also serves on the county's Lands for You land acquisition selection committee. He wants jurors to award him back pay and benefits and future wages he could have earned had the county not fired him.

In October a retired judge who heard an abbreviated version of the trial during a nonbinding arbitration session recommended that Martin County pay Dent $287,600. The county refused and asked for a jury trial.

The county's attorney, Kenneth Carmen, told jurors Dent deserves nothing. "The tape-recording incident had nothing to do with the termination of his employment from Martin County," he said. "Mr. Dent could not get along with his fellow employees and they could not get along with him."

Several of the employees Dent supervised complained to the county administrator that Dent treated them with a dictatorial, authoritative and rude attitude, Carmen said in his opening statement to jurors.

Palm Beach Post
November 24, 1995

PAL-MAR LANDOWNERS SUE, CLAIM TAX FOR STUDY UNFAIR
By Jeff Diamant

County officials faced a hard sell last spring and summer when they presented plans to charge every property owner in the county $9.75 for a study on how a storm water utility should be implemented.

Dozens of residents came to meetings to complain. Still, the commission passed the tax. If the flash floods of October convinced many residents that the county needs better stormwater management and that the tax was worth their money, at least two residents didn't change their minds.

Robert Berman and Joanne Berman, who own land in the Pal-Mar Water Control District, sued the county to protest the tax. Pal-Mar is a 13,000-acre tract that straddles the Martin and Palm Beach county line

The study financed by the tax is designed to determine how much storm water a given property produces. A main factor in this is whether the ground absorbs water or produces runoff. But in marshy Pal-Mar, which no one in Martin County expects to be developed, the Bermans don't think they should pay anything, even for a study.

``It's unfair because there's no secret about the fact that Martin County has gone well out of its way for 25 years to make sure this property is never developed," said Robert Berman. ``Clearly there is no intention by anyone to ever allow the development of this land."

Berman is president of the Palm Beach Heights Landowners Coalition, which claims 5,000 members. He said he hopes to gather enough residents to join him in a class-action suit against the county.

Landowners in Pal-Mar were led years ago to invest in the parcel after being told it could be developed. But its wet conditions make it unsuitable for development, and state agencies such as the South Florida Water Management District and the Land Acquisition Advisory Council have considered buying it for preservation.

Berman said that even if the county was going to assess Pal-Mar, it should have done so proportionately. But every parcel of land in the county pays the same tax for this study, regardless of its size.

``A quarter-acre lot in Pal-Mar pays the same as a 10,000-acre tract anywhere else in the county," Berman said. ``It's not fair."

The lawsuit, filed Oct. 24, also charges that the Bermans did not receive notice of the tax by first-class mail.

Ron McLemore, the county's stormwater utility manager, said $9.75 is a relatively small charge for a program that promises to greatly improve the county's drainage.

``We have to determine who is going to benefit from our stormwater utility," **McLemore** said. ``After this year, the taxes will only go to people who benefit from it. If they don't (benefit), they won't be billed any further."

``It's a one-time thing that needs to happen in order for us to be at the point we need to be at," **McLemore** said.

But Berman said the tax, even for one year, is still unfair.

``Right now, a quarter-acre parcel in Pal-Mar pays a total annual ad valorem tax to Martin County of $1.57," Berman said. ``You're charging them an equivalent of six times their annual tax bill for this."

``The method they chose for it was unfair," he said. ``The whole purpose is to tax people for the benefit they're going to receive. Nobody would say Pal-Mar will in any way benefit from this assessment."

The county's stormwater utility will involve building and maintaining retention ponds, ditches and swales. It would include sediment-control devices to collect stormwater silt before it enters lakes and rivers. Officials hope that more controlled use of stormwater runoff can improve drainage and increase the water supply found in shallow aquifers.

Palm Beach Post
August 8, 1995

COMMISSION ENDORSES SHAKE-UP
By Jeff Diamant

Martin County Commissioner Dennis Armstrong surprised commissioners and administrators Monday when he proposed cutting the personnel department and an assistant county administrator.

Commissioners quickly approved the proposal 5-0. The moves would cut more than $200,000 from the county's operating budget, mostly from the salaries of assistant county administrator **Ron McLemore** and personnel director Steve Novak.

McLemore makes $68,000 a year and has worked for the county since March 1993. Novak makes $51,000 a year and has worked for the county since March 1990.

The personnel department's two secretaries and the county's executive assistant also would be cut.

The move would shake up the top of the county's administrative structure. County Administrator Peter Cheney would be responsible for **McLemore**'s current duties, which include supervising the growth management, public works and utilities departments. The personnel department probably would become a division of the budget department.

Armstrong said the move represents the commissioners' desire to exert more control over the budget.

``That's what we're supposed to do," he said. ``That, to me, has been part of the problem. We, as a board of county commissioners, need to exercise more control."

McLemore declined to comment on the move. But Novak defended his department while speaking to commissioners at Monday's budget workshop.

``This department is a necessity," he said. ``We don't have enough people as it is."

The vote comes one week after the commission tentatively approved the hiring of administrative assistants for each commissioner. The assistants would help commissioners research issues.

After approving his proposal Monday, commissioners told Armstrong to revise it to consolidate the engineering, general services and construction maintenance departments as divisions of the public works department.

Asked what he thought of the proposal, Cheney said, ``I haven't read it yet." Cheney and Budget Director Dan Hudson prepared the tentative county operating budget of $75.83 million.

Tensions increased as the 10 hours of meeting progressed. At 7 p.m., while reviewing the growth management department, commissioners Charlene Hoag and Marshal ``Bud" Wilcox sparred over the county's attention to the review process for the proposed 6,400-acre SeaWind development. The proposed growth management department adds a reviewer who would focus on SeaWind's compliance with county rules. Hoag said the county is using SeaWind to create a ``dynasty" of reviewers.

``Maybe we ought to hire 50 people. Then we'd be real happy, Bud. We could have the growth management militia," Hoag said.

Wilcox said, ``Maybe we need it."

The Palm Beach Post
February 8, 1995

MARTIN ENDORSES $3.3 MILLION PLAN TO FIX FLOOD SITES

By Marc Freeman
Tropical Storm Gordon doused Martin County officials like a cold shower.

They found flood control virtually nonexistent in 232 locations and no county plans on tap to install drainage, said **Ron McLemore**, assistant county administrator. The wet reality check resulted in the county's new Emergency Stormwater Response Plan, approved Tuesday by county commissioners.

In the $3.3 million plan, the county's 23 most flood-prone areas should be corrected by October, said **McLemore**. The cost of correcting those areas will be $1.1 million.

Work on the remaining 209 problem areas will follow in 1996 and 1997 and will cost $2.2 million.

Most of the top 23 trouble areas are in Hobe Sound and Jensen Beach. In those communities, many neighborhoods were built without drainage systems up to today's standards, **McLemore** said.

The commissioners who represent those areas - Marshall ``Bud" Wilcox for Jensen Beach and Janet Gettig for Hobe Sound - voted against the emergency plan because their constituents will pay for almost all of the first phase.

Both commissioners favored a countywide tax to pay for the entire $3.3 million worth of work because former commissions allowed developments without proper flood control.

The emergency work will repair Gordon-related property damage and prevent extreme street flooding after future heavy downpours, **McLemore** said. The balance of the projects will correct nuisance flooding that is ``not justified (now) from an emergency point of view."

Palm Beach Post
May 19, 1994

A REAL WAKE-UP CALL FOR MARTIN COUNTY

The fiasco revealed by The Post's scrutiny of Martin County government's bills means county officials aren't doing enough to detect and stop abuse of telephone use.

To be fair, Martin County probably isn't the only government agency whose employees misuse phone privileges. But the abuses are still serious. They ranged from a clerk calling her Fort Pierce home as often as five times a day to an assistant county administrator using long-distance lines reserved for county business to call Georgia about refinancing his house and to chat with relatives on Florida's west coast. A computer repairman who used county long-distance lines to play computer games for as long as three hours a day left after he was told he would be fired when his activities were revealed.

Some county employees pleaded ignorance of telephone policies. The county uses a state SUNCOM line, a service provided all 2,000 state agencies, counties, cities, school districts and college campuses, for long-distance calls. Employees are forbidden to use SUNCOM lines for personal calls. If all SUNCOM lines are busy, workers are told to hang up and dial later. Calls using more expensive AT&T and Southern Bell lines are to be made only rarely.

Because Martin County often operates in a small-town, laid-back kind of way, it's possible that the intricacies of the phone system may not have been adequately explained to all employees. If this is the case, it's inexcusable. Some abuses, however, are so blatant that it's clear the employees should have known that what they were doing was wrong.

Take, for example, Assistant County Administrator **Ron McLemore's** excuse for making more than 150 calls - some of them personal - on AT&T lines at county expense. He says he doesn't remember being told that SUNCOM was the primary line. That sounds, at best, hard to believe. Mr. **McLemore** said he will reimburse the county for the personal calls, but he can't explain why he so often chose to use the more expensive AT&T lines. If the county's No. 2 man doesn't play by the rules, how can he orde r other employees to do so?

Computer monitoring of bills, an auditor to analyze bills and assigning department heads to scrutinize bills all are good steps the county now has decided to take. If a Post reporter can uncover so many abuses simply by looking at the bills, a competent county employee could - and should - be able to do the same thing.

The Miami Herald
May 26, 1990

ORIOLES SPRING OUT OF MIAMI
By Scott Fowler

No bats will crack. No balls will smack. The city of Miami will suffer through a silent spring next year for the first time since 1959.

The Baltimore Orioles have no permanent spring stadium, and they aren't quite sure where they are going. But one thing is certain -- the O's are breaking up a 31-year relationship with Miami to move their spring training headquarters to Florida's Gulf Coast.

The Orioles announced Friday that their minor-league training complex in Sarasota will also serve as their major- league spring base in 1991.

But that sprawling facility doesn't include a stadium, just a series of fields, so the Orioles will rotate their home games between several Florida west coast cities in 1991. The Chicago White Sox, who already play at Ed Smith stadium in Sarasota, have agreed to let the Orioles play five home games there, White Sox Vice President Howard Pizer said. The Orioles have also scheduled some games at Bradenton and are trying to get a few at St. Petersburg and Port Charlotte.

Meanwhile, the team continues to negotiate for a permanent site by 1992. Naples is the leading contender, with St. Petersburg and Bradenton also possibilities.

Miami City Manager Cesar Odio said Orioles officials had told him that the team would play at least two games in Miami in 1991. O's spokesman Bob Miller said there is a chance of that, but that the Orioles aren't promising.

The Orioles' departure leaves the New York Yankees, stationed in Fort Lauderdale each spring, without a primary spring opponent and as the team with the southernmost spring training base. Yankees owner George Steinbrenner has said he would worry his club was "on an island" if the O's left. Yankee spokesman Jeff Idelson said he didn't know what the squad's far- ranging plans were Friday: "We'll be there at least through 1991, that much is certain."

Yankee Senior Vice President Arthur Richman said the club isn't getting itchy feet. "We have enough teams to play even without the Orioles," he said. "We're sorry to see them go, but it shouldn't have too much effect on us."

Orioles President Larry Lucchino said it has been too disruptive for the Orioles to train in their Twin Lakes complex in Sarasota for two weeks every spring and then relocate to Miami for their games.

"The facilities at Twin Lakes park are high quality but we've only been able to take advantage of them for part of the last two springs," Lucchino said. Without a sure setup to run to, however, the O's move gave the appearance of a team running from something. Miller denied the Orioles were desperate to go, however.

"We definitely are not leaving because of the neighborhood surrounding Bobby Maduro or because of the distance to other teams," Miller said. "This is not a situation where we're upset or anything. We're very nervous about this being interpreted correctly. We don't want to inflame Miami.

"We just need to stay in one place. Plus, Twin Lakes is a better facility. There are four baseball diamonds there, more batting cages, more pitching mounds. You can get your entire organization out there at once. . . . In Miami, we just had the stadium itself plus about half another field. We were having to send players over to St. Thomas (University) to practice."

Homestead City Manager Alex Muxo, who courted the Orioles for more than a year as a candidate for his city's new $12 million stadium, had a different interpretation of the Orioles' evacuation.

"I think we really lost out on our chance to grab them because they had soured on Dade County," Muxo said. "They just felt the last two to three years that they never got any support from the community."

Odio said it isn't the city's fault the Orioles are leaving. "I don't like it at all, it's a sad thing," he said. "But we didn't have enough land to do much for them. We couldn't have done any more. . . . We couldn't force people to come to the games."

He said the city will not attempt to lure another team to Miami.

Baltimore's average attendance at Bobby Maduro dropped drastically this spring, from the 1989 average of 5,403 fans to the 1990 average of 2,034. Since the stadium's capacity is the nation's largest for spring training, the few fans who did come this year were lost amid acres of empty seats. The graffiti- marred walls and swirled concertina wire of Bobby Maduro didn't help the atmosphere.

The skeleton of a stadium now rising in Homestead appears the only hope for spring baseball in Dade County for 1991. Officials from the Pittsburgh Pirates, who have seen the facility several times, visited again Monday and Tuesday. The Pirates are considered very unlikely to go back to Bradenton next season, and Muxo thinks he will land them.

"If I had to guess right now, I'd say we'd get the Pirates," Muxo said. "I feel very, very good about them."

Homestead's complex undoubtedly will be up-to-date, with 14 skyboxes, five fields and a 6,500 seats. Its deep South Dade location is its major problem. Homestead is 49 miles from Fort Lauderdale, and 89 miles from the Atlanta Braves and Montreal Expos in West Palm Beach.

Collier County, which encompasses Naples, is considering building a $14 million to $17 million complex. **Ron McLemore**, the assistant county manager, said county officials plan to use a bond issue and tourist development tax for revenue. **McLemore** said the stadium won't be built without the guarantee of a long- term tenant and could not be ready until February 1992 at the earliest.

"But Baltimore is very, very interested," he said. "And Boston (rumored to be leaving Winter Haven) is close behind them."

The Orioles' departure won't help Miami's chance to capture an expansion baseball franchise. Steinbrenner has said it would hurt badly. But a spokesmen for one of the two groups looking for a franchise said he disagreed.

"Miami has a unique history of supporting professional franchises," said Jerry Bernfeld, marketing manager for the Miami Sports and Exhibition Authority. "I still think we will get one, either here or out at Joe Robbie Stadium (which will soon undergo $6 million to $10 million in renovations to make it suitable for a major-league tenant)."

Resume

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RESULTS ORIENTED EXECUTIVE WITH 18 YEARS OF MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE IN MULTI-CULTURAL, FAST-PACED ENVIRONMENTS

WORK EXPERIENCE

2003–Present City of Miami Miami, FL

Director, Grants and Sustainable Initiatives (dual role since 2/07)

- Department Director responsible for City's grants and environmental programs
- Responsible for developing City's Climate Protection Plan
- Advise Mayor and administration on carbon reduction activities
- Creating environmental resource center for general public
- Develop strategies to reduce fuel and water consumption
- Drafts legislation to improve building efficiency and streamline operations
- Helped secure over $53 million in competitive grant dollars
- Work with all City departments on project planning and budgets
- Regularly meet with other govt. officials on City issues
- Work collaboratively with Budget dept. to ensure general fund contributions
- Implemented VISTA program to 15 area nonprofits for fund development
- Responsible for several key measures in City's Balanced Scorecard
- Recruit, train, and evaluate professional grant writers and support staff
- Assist government liaisons in securing money from legislators
- Advise City Manager and Mayor as member of executive leadership
- Work with City Commissioners to fund needed projects
- Represent City on River Security Committee and Miami River Commission
- Oversee special projects for the City Manager

2000–2003 Regis House, Inc. Miami, FL

Executive Director

- Responsible for overall operation of non-profit community mental health center
- Oversaw operating budget of $3.5 million while ensuring profitability
- Overall responsibility for 40 staff in 12 programs, serving 200+ people daily
- Increased government and private grants by 50%
- Turned around organization on brink of bankruptcy
- Resolved several inherited employee lawsuits
- Planned and monitored programming to comply with mission and guidelines
- Recruited and trained management staff
- Facilitated strategic plan and monitored goals for performance
- Supervised renovation of building that doubled office space
- Recruited Board members and facilitated Board involvement
- Served as ex-oficio member of the Board of Directors
- Served as public spokesperson for the agency and oversaw media campaign

1997–2000 AXA Advisors, Inc. Miami, FL

Financial Advisor

- Worked with individuals and businesses in order to prepare a personal financial profile
- Reviewed client's financial status and made recommendations to help them meet goals
- Prospected for new clients in the community and through referrals
- Evaluated and decreased business risk to ensure company viability
- Utilized portfolio of 30 mutual fund, life insurance, and brokerage companies
- Maintained client base of 200+ clients in the middle to upper income classes
- Trained new representatives in the field and on computer based planning modules

1994-1997 Florida Environmental Quality, Inc. Miami, FL

Finance/Telemarketing Manager

- Secured financing for customers purchasing water treatment systems
- Collected and monitored $2.3 million in annual gross revenues
- Oversaw collection of accounts receivable in excess of $60,000
- Maintained all sales records and attended court for delinquent accounts
- Analyzed customer credit reports and visited clients to facilitate finance paperwork
- Advised owner on strategy as part of senior management team
- Managed telemarketing department of 11 telemarketers and 1 assistant manager
- Responsible for hiring and annual reviews of employees
- Hired as Assistant Telemarketing Manager and promoted within three months

1990–1994 Christian Children's Fund, Inc. Richmond, VA

Customer Service Supervisor

- Supervised all work of 20 customer service representatives
- Monitored and trained staff on proper call handling and letter writing technique
- Revised department-wide procedures manual
- Communicated with international offices in resolving difficult child-related cases
- Reviewed department budget and compared to spending
- Translated correspondence and served as an Interpreter in Spanish

EDUCATION

2004 Florida International University Miami, Fl
Management Certificate, Center for Strategic Mgmt.

1989 Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond, VA
Bachelors of Science, Mass Communications

1985-1986 University of Miami Coral Gables, FL
Double Major, Advertising and Psychology

1987 Universita Per Stranieri Perugia, Italy
Intensive Italian, Summer Course

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Volunteer Florida, Vice-Chair, Governor-appointed Commission on service, 2000-2006
- Leadership Miami – Grad, 2000
- Ecomedia National Advisory Board Member, 2007
- US Green Building Council, South Florida Chapter Board Member, 2007-2008
- Miami River Commission, Mayor's designee 2005 – Present
- Port of Miami River Security Committee, 2003-Present
- United Way, Emergency Food and Shelter Board, 2003-Present
- Regis House Board Member, Treasurer, 1998-2000, Secretary 2003-2006
- Miami-Dade County Juvenile Justice Board, Mayor's designee 2005-2006
- Commissioner's Designee, Miami-Dade County League of Cities, 2005-2007
- Little Havana Community Partnership, Co-Chair, 2003
- Front Porch Riverside, Council Member, 2002-Present
- Citizens For A Better South Florida, Board Member, 2005-2007
- Hands On Miami Volunteer 1999-Present
- Citizens For A Better South Florida Volunteer, 2001-Present
- United Way Volunteer, 1999
- Florida Historical Museum Volunteer, 1998
- Area Stage Company Board Member, 1997-1999
- CCF, United Way Committee Chairman, 1992

LICENSES AND COURSES

- NASD Series 7, 6, 65 – Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds, and Investment Adviser (expired)
- State of Florida Life, Health, and Variable Annuity License (expired)
- Barry University, Project Management Course (certificate)
- Government workshop on grants performance
- LEED Accreditation, currently studying and taking test in December 2008
- CPR certified

LANGUAGES

- English & Spanish

REFERENCES

- Furnished upon request

CB & A Interviews

Robert Ruano

Education (Degrees and Certificates)

Management Certificate, Center for Strategic Mgmt., Florida International University, FL
BS in Mass Communications, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Experience

Director of Grants and Sustainable Initiatives, City of Miami	2003 – Present
Executive Director, Regis House Inc. Miami FL	2000 – 2003
Financial Advisor, AXA Advisors, Inc. Miami FL	1997 – 2000

Background

The City of Miami, FL, has a population of 360,000 and 4,000 employees, 15 of whom reported directly to Mr. Ruano as Director of Grants and Sustainable Initiatives. The City has a total funds budget of $500 million, $800,000 of which is the budgetary responsibility of Mr. Ruano. The most important issues facing the City of Miami are:

- The decline in property values resulting in a decline in ad valorem tax revenues;
- Increased demand for services; and
- The viability of city pension programs.

Interview Comments

From a professional point of view, Mr. Ruano is interested in the Coral Gables position because, not only is it home to his family, but also he is aware of the issues and believes it to be a great city, full of opportunity and potential. He is at the point in his career where his experience and background have prepared him for such a challenge. To properly manage a municipality such as Coral Gables, his philosophy is one must pay close attention to the future implications of current actions, if you want to ensure the City remains the great place it is.

Mr. Ruano has a very open and approachable management style. He likes to listen and learn. He is not a micromanager. Instead, he believes in hiring good people, holding them accountable for their performance, and letting them do their jobs. It is important to identify and understand the skills and talents of staff and use them appropriately. This said, he does not abdicate his responsibility for overseeing the quality of work. Rather he observes, guides and supports his employees. His goal is to create a culture of trust and pride. Mr. Ruano is very "results" oriented and is always looking for ways to improve the efficiency and long-term viability of the organization.

Staff who report directly to Mr. Ruano would say he is tough but fair and his heart is in the right place. He wants results and will not tolerate people who do not pull their own weight. They would say he is very customer service oriented and considers not only the citizens but also other city departments to be his customers. Elected officials would say he is responsive and treats customers well. They are also pleased with the way he gets money for the City through grants and other programs.

Mr. Ruano's strengths are his ability to be persistent, develop good teams, and determine goals. He is an optimist and would never say something cannot be done. He is a good manager with a strong ethical foundation. His creed is to always do your very best.

Concerning weaknesses, Mr. Ruano says he frequently takes his work home with him. While this ensures that work gets done, it means he is not spending the time he should with his family and re-energizing himself.

Mr. Ruano's greatest career successes involved his work as the director of Regis House in Miami. The House was a not-for-profit organization which provided mental health services to children in the community. When he accepted his position, the facility was about to shut down due to financial mismanagement. He was able to restructure the organization, work with the board to develop realistic, sustainable goals, and hire a chief financial officer. Regardless of the fact that he did not have a clinical background, his efforts were successful. The organization still exists and is stronger today. Another achievement he is particularly proud of was using special state and federal programs to acquire 6-acres of land and convert it into a city park.

Mr. Ruano's biggest failure occurred during his college years while working as the manager of a gym. He did not take pride in his job nor did he perform his tasks seriously. This resulted in his employment being terminated. He was embarrassed, and the experience changed his life. He subsequently realized how extraordinarily important it is to take pride in your work, because how you do your job reflects on who you are.

In the City of Miami, Mr. Ruano has been embarrassed only once. Early in his tenure, when he had just assumed management of the Grants Department, the Parks Department did not provide all the documentation required to the grants writer, and an application deadline was missed. As a result, the City missed an opportunity to obtain about $400,000 worth of funding. Not one to wallow in mistakes, Mr. Ruano used this opportunity to initiate departmental reorganization and develop templates and timelines for all City work related to securing and administering grants. Because of this, the City has not missed one application deadline and the department runs well.

Mr. Ruano has worked in a managerial position most of his adult life and unfortunately has had to fire people. It is not a good thing to take away someone's livelihood, and it can be quite upsetting for all involved. He believes that, when you fire a person, it should never be a surprise. Rather, it is the last resort, to be used only after every other means of correcting the problem has been tried and failed. Such steps often take the form of evaluations and reviews where the problems are identified, addressed, and solutions sought. This may include oral and written

warnings, and suspensions. Finally, if the problem cannot be corrected and no other solutions are available, the individual's employment must be terminated for the benefit of the organization. Firing needs to be done humanely and within relevant regulations, but it needs to be done.

Mr. Ruano feels the primary issues and challenges facing Coral Gables next City Manager are:

- Addressing the demands for maintaining or increasing municipal services while City revenues decline due to depressed property values;
- Dealing with pension issues;
- Improving the morale of City staff; and
- Repairing and replacing infrastructure.

If he is chosen to be the next Coral Gables Manager, in the first six months Mr. Ruano would:

- Meet with elected officials to determine their concerns and priorities;
- Meet with all department heads and get a sense of the talent and potential available;
- Find out which programs and departments are working well and which are not;
- Do his homework on the budget and financial situation; and
- Develop teams and work with the elected officials and the community to achieve the best for the City.

There is nothing controversial in Mr. Ruano's past and no one, of whom he is aware, who might come forward and try to embarrass him once his candidacy has been announced.

Mr. Ruano has a very good relationship with the media, frequently appearing on TV and radio, and often quoted in print. To be able to work affectively with the media, their needs must be understood. They must be treated fairly, given correct information and just the right amount of information.

When he is not working, Mr. Ruano enjoys spending time with his wife and young son. His career and his family are the priorities in his life.

Adjectives or Phrases to Describe Himself:

- Driven,
- Open,
- Self Starter,
- Intelligent,
- Genuine,
- Dedicated to the community and his family, and
- Does not take himself too seriously.

Reason for Wanting To Leave Current Position:

Mr. Ruano is not actively looking to leave his current position but is excited about the prospect of working in Coral Gables because it is the City he lives in and loves. He feels his education and experiences have prepared him well for the responsibilities of a City Manager.

Current/Most Recent Salary

$139,000

Interview's Impressions:

Very professional, friendly, and articulate. Very dedicated to his family and to his career. Knowledgeable, with excellent management instincts.

Prepared by:

Emmett Wainwright
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Reference Notes
Robert Ruano

Jason Walker - Village Manager, El Portal, Florida 305-795-7880

Mr. Walker has known Mr. Ruano since 2003. They first met when Mr. Walker was the Senior Staff assistant for Miami Commissioner Johnny Winton.

Mr. Ruano has done a good job in his position as Director of Grants and Sustainable Initiatives. He gets along with elected officials and has an especially good relationship with the Mayor. In fact the Mayor asked Mr. Ruano to spearhead Sustainable Initiatives to make the City of Miami a greener city. Based on some information and tools he gave Mr. Walker, the City of El Portal was able to get grant money, something that had not happened before. Mr. Ruano also arranged to get money to build a youth center in Miami.

Mr. Ruano has not been involved in anything controversial. He is simply a good man who lives a good, clean life.

Mr. Walker thinks Mr. Ruano would make a good City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Friendly,
- Personable,
- Hardworking,
- Honest,
- Upfront, and
- Nice.

Strengths: He brings in new ideas and money for the City of Miami.

Weaknesses: None.

Julie Bru - City Attorney, Miami, Florida 305-416-1800

Ms. Bru has worked with Mr. Ruano for since 2003. Mr. Ruano does a good job for the City of Miami.

Mr. Ruano gets along with the City Council and is a good consensus builder. He keeps everyone well informed, gives good presentations to Commission and at staff meetings, and his focus is on the community. He is customer service oriented and does his best to deliver high quality customer service to both internal and external customers.

Mr. Ruano is a good communicator and always keeps Ms. Bru informed. Together they have worked on obtaining, implementing and monitoring grants. One example was a grant from the Federal government that was very convoluted and had strict guidelines of how it needed to be implemented. If guidelines were not followed or deadlines not met, the City would lose money.

Mr. Ruano coordinated with the people responsible for implementation and was successful in getting all of the money from the grant spent.

According to Ms. Bru, Mr. Ruano has had diverse assignments, has good administration skills, and a good personality, all of which would make him a good City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Committed,
- Capable,
- Intelligent,
- Professional,
- Hardworking, and
- Astute.

Strengths: He is articulate, astute, and a consensus builder.

Weaknesses: None.

Yudislaidy Fernandez - Reporter, Miami Today News, 305-358-2663

Ms. Fernandez has known Mr. Ruano since mid-2008.

Mr. Ruano has done a good job for Miami. He has a good relationship with elected officials, especially the Mayor. He gives thorough reports and works well with the media.

One part of Mr. Ruano's job is overseeing sustainable initiatives. He has looked at several ideas to help make the city greener and save money. Some of those ideas he promoted include going to a four day work week, purchasing a fleet of hybrid cars, placing solar panels on city buildings, and promoting the use of bicycles and public transportation.

Currently the City has bought some hybrid cars, and the Commission is deciding on the proposal for solar panels. Mr. Ruano has been put in charge of Bike Miami, which closes some city roads to allow bikers or skaters to use them. In addition, he is working on getting new zoning and construction codes put in place to ensure that future development will be greener.

Ms. Fernandez feels that because Mr. Ruano has been successful in a City the size of Miami, he would make a good City Manager in a smaller jurisdiction.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Helpful,
- Personable,
- Accessible,

- Respectful,
- Professional, and
- Qualified.

Strengths: Knowledgeable - he is able to answer most questions, and if he does not have the answer he knows who does. He is also a good policy maker.

Weaknesses: None.

Willy Gort - Former Board Member, Regis House, Inc. 305-798-0747

Mr. Gort has known Mr. Ruano since 2000 when both were connected with Regis House. After Mr. Gort left Regis House, he became a member of the Miami City Council. They did not, however, work together at the City of Miami. Mr. Ruano started there after Mr. Gort's tenure ended.

Mr. Ruano did a good job as Executive Director at Regis House, Inc. He got along with the Board members and kept them abreast on all important issues. He worked well with customers and answered questions in a friendly manner. He hired good personnel and completed tasks on time. He understood the needs of the community and did his best to satisfy them.

Mr. Ruano has not been involved in anything controversial. Quite the contrary, he easily recognizes situations where possible actions might not be ethical and points them out diplomatically to others. For example, at one point the Chairman of the Board at Regis House wanted to take an action which was potentially not ethical. Mr. Ruano told the Board it would be wrong to go forward with that idea. The Board ultimately took Mr. Ruano's advice and voted it down.

Mr. Gort thinks Mr. Ruano would make a good City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Knowledgeable,
- Gives good answers,
- Good communicator,
- Nice,
- Honest, and
- Integrity.

Strengths: He is intelligent and when the Board gave him instructions, he followed through and completed the task.

Weaknesses: None.

Steve Leifman - Administrative Judge, Miami, Florida 305-548-5394

Judge Leifman has known Mr. Ruano since 1998. They met as part of Leadership Miami, which is a group selected by the Chamber of Commerce whose members learn about the City and come together to identify problems in the community and explore solutions.

Mr. Ruano does a good job on the Leadership Miami team and in his position as a City of Miami employee. He has the confidence of the Miami City Council. He has considerable experience working with the public and is customer service oriented.

One of the problems Mr. Ruano has worked is solving problems relating to the release of prison inmates with mental illnesses. Another is renovating a historically black court house.

As a judge, Judge Leifman is not often allowed to recommend individuals for positions in his jurisdiction. However, because he thinks so highly of Mr. Ruano, he feels comfortable stating that Mr. Ruano would make a very good City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Non-Abrasive,
- Bright,
- Objective,
- Respected, and
- Friendly.

Strengths: He is a consensus builder and a good listener.

Weaknesses: None.

Aina Juliol - Community Activist, Miami, Florida 305-720-0351

Ms. Juliol has worked with Mr. Ruano for since 2004, primarily as part of the Green Commission.

Mr. Ruano has done a great job for the city of Miami. He is easy to work with, gives eloquent and well structured speeches. He is innovative and good with the public. As a resident Mr. Juliol also knows he is customer service oriented. The staff in the Grant and Sustainable Initiatives Department work well together and also well with Ms. Juliol.

As part of the Green Commission, Ms. Juliol and Mr. Ruano have worked on preparing green proposals for the City Council to approve. The Mayor of Miami is especially involved in promoting sustainable initiatives. One project the Green Commission is working is renovating

City Hall to make it greener. One idea they have worked on together is putting solar panels on public buildings to reduce the amount of electricity the city uses.

Mr. Ruano has not been involved in anything controversial Ms. Juliol is aware of. Ms. Juliol thinks Mr. Ruano would make a good City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Committed,
- Professional,
- Responsible,
- Positive attitude,
- Hardworking, and
- Personable.

Strengths: He is a good communicator and very organized.

Weaknesses: None.

Elizabeth Albo-Gonzalez - Administrative Assistant, Miami, Florida 305-416-1509

Ms. Albo-Gonzalez has worked for Mr. Ruano since 2005.

Mr. Ruano is an excellent Director. He works well with the City Council as well as the directors of the other departments. During his career, he has frequently worked directly with the public, and is open and willing to answer the residents' many questions.

As a manager Mr. Ruano provides good direction, explains things well, and expects assignments to be completed on time. With his desire to stay involved and be well informed on everything in his department, he has a slight tendency to micromanage.

Mr. Ruano has been instrumental initiating and implementing several community events. For example, the Arbor Day event includes getting the Public Works Department to determine where trees will be planted, coordinating with the City Council to attend, and ensuring that all other details are covered.

Bike Miami is another monthly event he organizes. This event communicates to the community the importance of being environmentally friendly while demonstrating other alternatives to consuming gas. On this day people are encouraged to ride bikes or take public transit.

Mr. Ruano would do an excellent job as a City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Organized,
- Concerned about employees,
- Courteous,
- Straightforward,
- Innovative, and
- Hands-on.

Strengths: He has a great relationship with his employees and is a good communicator.

Weaknesses: None.

Julio Robaina - Former Mayor, Miami, Florida 305-343-0776

Mayor Robaina has known Mr. Ruano since 1996.

Mr. Ruano is an excellent Director. Mayor Robaina was always pleased with Mr. Ruano's communications with constituents and the City Council. Mr. Ruano represents the city positively and does not create controversy. He is very customer service oriented. He makes it not just a priority but a high priority, and he excels at it.

Mr. Ruano is a problem solver and was always willing to do assignments outside of his job description to help out the organization. Mr. Ruano possesses the necessary qualities to be a good City Manager.

Adjectives or Phrases Used to Describe Mr. Ruano:

- Personable,
- Humble,
- Down to earth,
- Trouble shooter,
- Professional, and
- Gets the job done.

Strengths: He is a good communicator; has a great personality; and gives good presentations.

Weaknesses: None.

Completed by:

Emilee Anderson
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for ROBERT RUANO

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Miami-Dade County, FL	No Records Found
Broward County, FL	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Miami-Dade County, FL	*Record Found January 1992 – Defendant Contract Indebtedness **Disposition** = April 1993 - Judgment
Broward County, FL	Results Pending
Federal	
Florida	No Records Found
Motor Vehicle	
Florida	No Records Found
Credit	Very Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

*See Candidate Explanation for Records found on Page 2.

From: rjruano@aol.com [mailto:rjruano@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2009 10:19 PM
To: kknutson@cb-asso.com
Subject: RE: Coral Gables Background Report Findings that Require an Explanation

From what I see here, this is from a report that is over 10 years old and was paid. When I moved to Virginia for school, I lost track of this account. From what I understand, it was paid in full.

Please let me know if you need anything further.

Robert

*See Candidate Explanation for Records found on Page 2.

Internet Research

Miami Today News
October 2, 2008

Miami looking to go green to save energy, help prevent rising seas
By Yudislaidy Fernandez

With a big chuck of Miami at risk if continuous climate change causes a rising sea level, the city is targeting reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and other energy-reducing measures.

Miami commissioners approved last week MiPlan, Miami's first climate action plan that targets areas in which the city can make substantial reductions and work toward a more sustainable city, Miami officials said.

The plan was crafted by an action climate committee with ideas and suggestions from city directors, employees and a private energy and sustainability consultant.

Miami is most at risk of the rising sea level, said **Robert Ruano**, city director of sustainable initiatives. "We need to lead by example and make a difference."

Mr. **Ruano** said the city's areas of biggest consumption are utilities and fuel, both expected to increase by $5 million this fiscal year.

To address the consumption, Miami is targeting a 25% reduction of 2006 levels of greenhouse emissions by 2020 citywide and a 25% reduction in its government operations by 2015.

Mayor Manny Diaz, a big promoter of Miami's green direction, said MiPlan is an "evolving document," which the administration and staff need to continue working on to achieve its goals.

"The rest of the world is looking at what we are doing," Mr. Diaz said. "...Miami should be a leader in this effort because we are most at risk."

To reduce the gas consumption and emissions of its car fleet, the city is making it easier for people to carpool by getting employees who live in the same areas to ride together to work, he said.

Commissioner Marc Sarnoff, a supporter of green initiatives, asked the administration to consider hiring people who live within the city to reduce the city-incurred expenses of workers who drive city vehicles and live far from Miami.

"Some of the low-hanging fruit is hiring employees from the city when possible," Mr. Sarnoff said.

That's an option City Manager Pete Hernandez said the city has yet to explore as part of the criteria for city jobs.

Mr. **Ruano** said employees are also encouraged to use mass transit by buying monthly passes through the city at a discount rate of $66 pre tax.

In June, the city commission approved a green fleet ordinance that binds the city to buy more fuel-efficient cars and reduce gas consumption by 5% on all city vehicles.

Police, fire and code enforcement departments consume the most fuel. To ease consumption, the city is prohibiting departments from leaving cars idling, he said.

The city had 15 hybrid vehicles and recently bought 10 more. It has an inventory of 150 flex fuel vehicles and is buying more fuel-efficient cars.

For example, the police department is trading Ford Crown Victoria cars for Chevy Impalas to save fuel, he said. Some commissioners also use hybrid SUVs for city-related business.

Fleets are using a biodiesel blend of 10%, which Mr. **Ruano** said is set to increase to 20% in the next year. He said that's the biggest savings, because fewer emissions equal a cleaner city.

But with Miami's buildings including Miami Riverside Center, Miami's administrative hub, and City Hall responsible for 40% of city government's greenhouse emissions, the plan is to focus on making some reductions.

The city is going to audit the operations and energy management of its buildings to find ways to run them more efficiently. The next step after that is to renovate the buildings based on the findings, Mr. **Ruano** said.

The city is also considering an alliance with other entities to gets its wishes with the Florida Power & Light Co. For example, he said if Miami, the University of Miami and Miami-Dade County team up, they could leverage with the utilities company to change rules limiting the use of renewable sources.

Miami is exploring future legislation that would require new city buildings to attain silver certification from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), which requires using building products from recycled materials.

The green plan also highlights land-use changes that would encourage construction around Metrorail stations and other transit stations and support building mixed-use projects that bring an array of services to residents' doorsteps, Mr. **Ruano** said.

Another aspect of MiPlan is a bicycle action plan aimed at improving city infrastructure to make it more bike-friendly.

Under the bike plan, the city looks to add bike lanes on some neighborhood streets, set up more bike parking and educate drivers about sharing roads with cyclists.

City commissioners are to vote on the plan Oct. 16. An educational event, Bike Miami, is set for Nov. 9.

Mayor Diaz said the biggest challenge is the struggle among traffic engineers, city public works and county public works, which he said for years have only focused on designing streets for cars alone.

But now the mentality is changing, Mr. Diaz said. "If we can change that mentality, there will be a paramount shift in urban planning."

Details at: www.miamigov.com/MiPlan.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
September 27, 2007

UPPER EASTSIDE: City, county leaders say more trees
Author: *LAURA MORALES, llmorales@MiamiHerald.com*

If Miami-Dade had more foliage between ground and sky, people could leave their air-conditioned caverns more often and walk around without sweating half to death.
With more native trees, hurricanes would have a tougher time pushing them over onto people's homes and cars.

These were the ideas expounded by city and county officials Monday in a meeting hosted by the Upper Eastside Miami Council at Legion Hall. They were there to explain why the area needs a tree master plan or two.

"When it comes to park space, Miami is 55th out of 55 in cities of our size," City Commissioner Marc Sarnoff told attendees, adding that "we have less than 8 percent tree canopy."

County tree expert Alyce Robertson outlined the county's plan while **Robert Ruano**, the city's director of Grants and Sustainable Initiatives, showcased Miami's plan.

"The county's guesstimate is that we lost about 20 percent of our trees in 2005,"

Robertson said of the damage to Miami-Dade's canopy by hurricanes Katrina and Wilma, adding that hundreds of thousands of trees also have been lost to citrus canker.

Much canopy also has been lost to development countywide.

She added that the master plan to replace lost trees can give the county "a do-over from bad planting practices of the past." She asked residents to never plant another ficus benjamina, which cracks sidewalks and topples easily.

Ruano said the city's goal is to increase canopy to 30 percent by 2017, aided by a tree trust fund which now stands at about $700,000. The fund is fed by fines levied against illegal tree-topplers. "There's lots of momentum for reforesting our city and being more systematic about it," he said.

Ruano also said the city is compiling information from resident phone calls and e-mail to identify spots where trees are needed.

Sarnoff, who has long fought to raise fines for illegal tree removal, held up a card which is being mailed to all city of Miami property owners advising them of the higher fines they would have to pay for illegally removing trees.

The fines were previously $500 across the board. Under the new rates, a first-time offender who lives in the city will pay $500 per tree, while one who lives elsewhere -- such as a commercial

property owner -- will pay $1,000. Repeat offenders among city residents now will pay $1,000 per tree, as will nonresidents. If a tree is permanently damaged, fines could go as high as $15,000.

The city's tree master plan can be viewed at the website for the Office of Sustainable Initiatives, www.miamigov.com/msi/pages/Trees/default.asp.

The county's Street Tree Master Plan can be found on the website of the Community Image Advisory Board, www.miamidade.gov/image/reports.asp.

Information on tree care and appropriate native species for planting is available through both websites.

Before leaving, Sarnoff suggested that attendees to ask themselves the following daily question: "did I do something green today?"

Resume

PATRICK G. SALERNO

(954) 616-9104 (c) – (954) 846-8164 (h)
PGSalerno@aol.com

SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND

Experience in various positions with increasing management, planning, financial problem solving and decision-making responsibilities: City Manager, City of Sunrise, Florida, from 1990-2008. County Manager, Cobb County, Marietta, Georgia, from 1987-1989. County Manager, Chatham County, Savannah, Georgia, from 1985-1987. Assistant County Manager, Volusia County, DeLand, Florida, from 1980-1985. Progressively responsible management positions with the City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, from 1975-1980. Master's Degree from the University of Oklahoma (MPA) in 1976.

EXPERIENCE 12/90 – 01/08

***CITY MANAGER*, City of Sunrise, Florida, (pop. 90,000)** Served under a five-member city commission elected at large for overlapping four-year terms. The City Manager is the chief administrative officer and accountable to the Mayor and Commissioners for the proper administration of the City's affairs. The City of Sunrise is a growing full-service city with approximately 1,300 employees and an annual budget of approximately $380 million. Served as Acting City Manager for several months prior to permanent appointment. Listed below are a few of the major programs/projects that I have implemented or overseen:

- Through prudent fiscal policy and management, the City has reduced the property tax rate for the last 13 consecutive years.

- Developed and proposed a comprehensive plan that demonstrated the financial feasibility of building a "*world class*" arena in Broward County and then successfully competed against several other cities that were intensely vying to be the site for the BankAtlantic Center. This $225-million multi-purpose venue was funded by the county and hosts 100+ events per year. The Center has 20,000+ seats, 74 private suites and three private clubs. Since opening in 1998, the Center has been the home of the National Hockey League's Florida Panthers and has hosted such performers as Celine Dion, Madonna, the Rolling Stones, Barbara Streisand, Luciano Pavarotti and Paul McCartney. Adjacent to the arena, a 250-room hotel is being planned and a 330,000 square foot entertainment/restaurant complex, known as *The Oasis*, has opened. The Center is projected to have an economic impact of $4.4 billion over 25 years.

- Conceived the idea for creation of an urban center on 27 acres near the BankAtlantic Center. Convinced the landowner to abandon plans for a traditional strip center and to pursue an upscale mixed-use project. The approximately $250-million project, known as "Metropica," is to include four high-quality office buildings of six and seven stories (totaling 500,000 sq. ft.) with upscale retail, five to seven restaurants and more than 360 luxury condominiums in two buildings of eight stories or more. Parking for the office buildings would primarily consist of structured parking (2,125 spaces) and on-street parking. The development also would include a central park and tree-lined promenade connecting smaller thematic plazas. Negotiated an agreement that committed the landowner to the project, which would generate an estimated total annual economic output of approximately $365 million, in exchange for certain incentives.

- Developed an unprecedented course of action called the Community Enrichment Program (CEP) after nearly a year of research. This plan called for the revitalization of City facilities and services over five+ years. Improvements included the construction of a civic center, senior center, library, tennis center, four fire/rescue stations, two community centers, a new park and expansion of two parks, 23 miles of median improvements, as well as the renovation of a community center, two parks, and replacement of water lines and resurfacing of all public streets in the older portion of the City. These improvements, totaling $75+ million have been completed. These enhancements have enriched the quality of life for every resident and were accomplished without an increase in taxes or fees. Based upon the success of the CEP, the City initiated a new, $40+ million, three-year program called the Neighborhood Renaissance Program (NRP), which consists of 30 projects focusing on neighborhood recreation, streetscape improvements and redevelopment. In addition, the City has made other substantial capital investments, ranging from infrastructure improvements, to open space acquisition. When combined with the CEP and NRP, these improvements represent approximately $325 million in investments completed or funded over the past 10+ years.

- In the course of the last 10 years, Sunrise has emerged as the destination of choice for corporate business in Broward County (the County with the second largest population in Florida). Over the past 5+ years, Sunrise set the pace among Broward County cities, including Fort Lauderdale, in terms of job growth.

- Working in partnership with a major national developer, directed the City's efforts to bring about a mixed-use project that integrates a 250,000 sq. ft. office building and a 10-story, 250-room Crowne Plaza Hotel with a 1,250 space parking structure. The complex was recognized by the *South Florida Business Journal* as the "Best Real Estate Deal of the Year" in the new development - suburban office category for 2000.

- Developed a comprehensive incentive package that successfully attracted NORTEL, a leading global manufacturer of telecommunications equipment to build a regional world headquarters in Sunrise. This highly sought after project brought 750 jobs to an 185,000 sq. ft. corporate office complex, from which they serve 47 countries in the Caribbean and Latin America. Other regional headquarters are located in London, Hong Kong, and Toronto. This project was selected as South Florida's "Best Real Estate Deal of the Year" in the new development - office building category by the *South Florida Business Journal* for 1994.

RECENT AWARDS/ RECOGNITION

Named to a list of "The 50 Most Powerful People in Broward County" (pop. 1,650,000) published by *Gold Coast Magazine* (May/June 2002 edition). This survey considered an individual's "ability to influence political, social, charitable, educational and business decisions as they shape Broward County." I was honored to be the only city manager out of 26 in the County named to the list. This recognition is a reflection of the commitment by the Mayor and Commissioners to the ongoing success of the City.

Recipient of the Sunrise Chamber of Commerce's, first-ever, "Man of the Decade" award for achievements in improving the City's quality of life, in October 2000.

Recipient of an award in appreciation for my contributions and dedication to the City from a civic organization called, "ACTION" (Active Citizens Taking Issues on Now), in May 1998.

Recognized by the City Commission for making the BankAtlantic Center a reality by naming a major roadway that connects an expressway to the arena, "Pat Salerno Drive," in April 1998.

Recipient of a Proclamation expressing the City Commission's appreciation for my hard work and leadership provided to the community over the past seven years, in November 1997.

Recipient of an award for "Visionary Leadership" from the Sunrise Chamber of Commerce, in November 1997.

Desired salary is negotiable.

5/90 - 11/90 ***ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER*, City of Sunrise, Florida** Assisted and advised the City Manager on all matters relating to his duties and responsibilities, especially those pertaining to operational and financial activities, productivity improvement, program development and analysis, economic development, and growth management. Served as Acting City Manager in the Manager's absence.

8/87 - 12/89 ***COUNTY MANAGER*, Cobb County, Marietta, Georgia (pop. 450,000)**
Served under a five-member Board of Commissioners; the Chairman is elected County-wide and four commissioners are elected from districts. The County Manager is the chief executive officer and accountable to the Board for the proper administration of the County's affairs. Cobb County was the 10th fastest growing large County in the country and fortunate to be a thriving part of the metro-Atlanta region, located just north of the City of Atlanta. Within its borders, Cobb had six municipalities ranging in size from 4,000 to 40,000. Nearly 80% of the County's total population lived in unincorporated areas. The County offered a full range of municipal-type services with 4,000+ employees, an annual budget of $475 million and a capital improvement program of $2 billion through the year 2000. Listed below are a few of the major programs/projects that I have implemented or overseen:

- Implemented the first transit system in the County which will include both commuter and local fixed route service. Service will be provided through a contract with a private corporation, and the system will be the first in the country to obtain buses and facilities on a leased basis under a federal privatization initiative.

- Developed an implementation plan for the development of a 950 acre lakefront golf course, amphitheater, and a recreation complex on property leased to the County from the Army Corps of Engineers.

- Developed funding and implementation strategy for overhauling the County's data processing hardware and software systems, as well as replacing the County's multi-band radio operations with an 800 MHz communications system.

- Developed several enterprising communication programs to help keep citizens informed about their government, build awareness of its programs and services and improve responsiveness. Based in part on the marketing theme "*Take Stock in Cobb*," these programs capitalize on the community as a center for corporate headquarters and remind citizens that just as stockholders invest in a business, they have an investment in county government.

- Implemented the first Community Improvement District in the State, which allows an additional property tax millage up to five mills, per year, to be levied exclusively on commercial property owners in the District for infrastructure improvements - generating $2.5 million annually.

3/85 - 7/87

***COUNTY MANAGER*, Chatham County, Savannah, Georgia (pop. 220,000)** Served under a nine-member Board of Commissioners; the chairman is elected county-wide and eight commissioners are elected from single-member districts. The County Manager is the chief administrative officer and accountable to the Board for the proper administration of the County's affairs. Chatham County was a growing urban-suburban coastal community with the 10th busiest seaport and the largest historic district in the country. The County provided a full range of services with an annual budget of approximately $108,000 million and over 1,200 employees, in addition to a five-year capital improvement program of over $200 million. County-wide services included: Police, Public Works, EMS, Libraries, Civil Defense, Animal Control, Corrections, Mosquito Control, Solid Waste Disposal, Parks and Recreation, Health, Courts, Elections, Property Tax Appraisal/Collection, Mass Transit and Harbor Construction/Maintenance. Listed below are a few of the major programs/projects that I have implemented or overseen:

- Implemented a new administrative structure. Raised employee morale and developed an effective management team through forceful and diplomatic leadership, constant counseling, and a clear interest in the employees' needs and opinions.

- Directed staff efforts in support of an additional one-percent (1%) sales tax referendum that resulted in an affirmative vote (70%) and $20 million annually for right-of-way acquisition and road/bridge construction.

- Development of a new structure for providing mass transit that combines the efficiencies of a private enterprise with a dedicated source of local funding and a policy board directly responsible to the voters.

- Development of a model cost sharing agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers to widen Savannah Harbor at a cost of $15 million in order to expand an economically important industry.

- Development of an innovative County indigent health care program. The primary purpose of this program is to shift the cost of care to the State Medicaid program. Without sacrificing the level and quality of medical care, this program resulted in savings to the County of $4 million annually.

8/80 - 2/85

***ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER*, Volusia County, DeLand, Florida (pop. 330,000)** Assisted and advised the County Manager on all matters relating to his duties and responsibilities, especially those pertaining to operational and financial activities, productivity improvement, program development and analysis, and growth management. County government is structured according to the Council-Manager Plan established by Charter. Direct responsibility for coordinating the operations of the following line and staff departments: Public Works, Sheriff, Corrections, Finance, Personnel, Data Processing, Medical Examiner, Civil Defense and Port/Marina. Volusia County was a full service county comprised of 2,000 employees and an operating budget of approximately $90 million, in addition to the capital improvement program of $249 million. Served as Acting County Manager in the Manager's absence. Listed below are several of the major programs/projects that I have implemented or overseen:

- Development of a Civic/Convention Center (Ocean Center) with a seating capacity of 10,000, at a cost of $38 million; a $22 million, 600-bed pretrial detention facility (jail); and a $17 million County Government Administration Center.

- Successfully negotiated an out-of-court resolution of dual taxation concerns between the County and seven municipalities.

- Co-sponsored the County's Quality Circles program, called "Quest for Quality" (Q2). Q2 offers unlimited possibilities to identify problems, study their causes and work to solve them in a team environment.

- Development of a non-profit corporation approach to provide County-wide economic development activities and emergency medical transportation services (EVAC).

- Coordinated staff efforts in support of an additional one-cent per gallon gasoline tax referendum that resulted in an affirmative vote and an additional $1.5 million annually in road construction/maintenance revenue.

9/75 - 7/80 ***VARIOUS MANAGEMENT POSITIONS,*** **City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, (pop. 420,000)** Began as a Management Intern and progressed to hold various senior management positions for the City's operations related to budget (approx. 3 years), police (approx. 1 year) and public works (approx. 1 year).

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, Norman, Oklahoma. Master's Degree in Public Administration, 1976.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI, Coral Gables, Florida. B.G.S. Degree, 1973, major in Politics and Public Affairs.

ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

International City/County Management Association (ICMA).
Florida City and County Management Association (FCCMA).

PERSONAL DATA

Born: 1951
Marital Status: Married
Children: One daughter & son

REFERENCES Available Upon Request.

December 17, 2008

Patrick G. Salerno
1373 NW 129th Way
Sunrise, FL 33323
(954) 616-9104 (cell)
PGSalerno@aol.com

Mr. Colin Baenziger
Colin Baenziger & Associates
12970 Dartford Trail, Suite 8
Wellington, FL 33414

Dear Colin:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my letter of interest and resume for the position of city manager for the City of Coral Gables. Ever since I was a student at the University of Miami, I have been a strong admirer of the City. Until recently, I held the position of city manager for the City of Sunrise, a growing, full-service South Florida community of 90,000+ residents. During my 17+ very successful years as city manager, Sunrise has become a major entertainment-corporate-retail destination in the State, while maintaining the heart and soul of a small town.

The City has become the premier corporate office and retail location in Broward County. Its major corporate park is the largest in South Florida and the sixth largest in the State of Florida. The City has been recognized twice by the *South Florida Business Journal* for having the Best Real Estate Deal of the Year for an office project (1994 and 2000) in the tri-county (Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach) region, in large part, due to the City's efforts in facilitating these projects and creating an attractive environment for them to locate.

The City also hosts a large number of visitors, who visit the fourth largest shopping mecca in the country and attend events at the BankAtlantic Center, the second largest arena in the country – home to the Florida Panthers of the National Hockey League - and consistently a top 15 worldwide venue in ticket sales. Sunrise continues to be a growth area with $3.5 billion in new projects in various stages of planning and development, including approximately 4,500 condominium units; 2.3 million square feet of Class A office, and one million square feet of quality retail, much of it in a mid-rise and high-rise, mixed-use environment.

The City has developed a reputation for progressive management, strong financial stewardship and planning that has become a model in the South Florida region, as more fully outlined in my resume. This includes planning for the community's interdependent needs in a sustainable way such that future generations benefit from the actions taken now. *Business Week* magazine recently ranked Sunrise among Florida's top three cities for families. During my tenure in Sunrise, I have been accessible to residents, participated in community activities and developed successful partnerships with other local governments and the business community. A key to my success as a manager has been my ability to bring a results-oriented and an entrepreneurial spirit to public sector operations. I wish to bring the same spirit of service to Coral Gables.

In addition, during my tenure, the City has been able to establish healthy fund balances in its various funds. For example, the unreserved and undesignated fund balance in the general fund has been significant, averaging 40% of expenditures over the past 10 years alone. In the past two years, the percentage has increased to 50% or $45 million. To put the City's financial condition in perspective, Sunrise has no general obligation debt, a $92 million general fund budget and a total budget of approximately $380 million. Sunrise has distinguished itself in providing facilities and programs that have enhanced and protected the quality of life of its residents. In the past 10+ years, the City has completed or funded approximately $325 million in capital improvements to address the City's current and future needs. In addition, we have been able to reduce the property tax rate for the last 13 consecutive years. I also have significantly improved the financial condition of each of the communities I have served.

The new realities of municipal finance and budgeting, in Florida, caused by the economy and the recent decisions of the Florida Legislature will require a city manager who, like myself, understands the complexities and nuances of Florida's municipal finance laws and who also has a proven track record of fiscal responsibility. It will also require an innovative and strategic thinker who is experienced in navigating Florida's unique growth management system and changing financial landscape. We must continue to explore new ideas, strategies and solutions, which can be used to confront the new financial realities and to prosper in spite of the recast fiscal environment.

Earlier in my career, I managed a county known for its broad economic base. My experience in Cobb County, Georgia, furthered my working knowledge of the importance of economic development in maximizing a community's standard of living. Cobb County (pop. 450,000) located immediately adjacent to the City of Atlanta was the 10th fastest growing county in the country during my tenure and home to more than 400 national and international headquarters. The challenge, in part, became marshalling such growth to avoid a decline in the quality of life that first attracted corporations to it. Few could doubt that developing Cobb County's economic development partnerships between the public and private sectors (which are critical to creating that "can't lose" feeling of entrepreneurship) was one of the most challenging jobs in the nation. The *Wall Street Journal* predicted that the area would rank No. 1 in the country for job growth in the 1990's.

I have also managed communities with a distinctive character, including one that – like Coral Gables – is rich in history and natural beauty. My experience in Savannah, Georgia, a community with the largest urban historic district in the nation, gives me a working knowledge of the importance of a community's heritage in making decisions about its future. Because of its history, beauty and abundance of architecturally significant buildings, set under giant live oaks hung with Spanish moss, the Savannah area attracts tourists from around the country and from around the world.

In closing, the Coral Gables city manager's position offers me the fresh challenge of making a meaningful contribution to a special community that continues to have tremendous potential. I am goal-oriented, self-motivated and the consummate team player. I will bring my enthusiasm, energy and commitment, along with my record of accomplishment, fiscal restraint and accountability to the position. My accomplishments as a manager give me the confidence that I could make a lasting contribution to the community.

Your consideration of my resume is most appreciated. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and the Mayor and Commissioners to discuss the position and my ability to meet the needs of the City. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Patrick G. Salerno

Attachment

CB & A Interviews

Patrick G. Salerno

Education

B.G.S., Politics and Public Affairs, University of Miami, Miami, FL
M.P.A., Master of Public Administration, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Experience

City of Sunrise, Fl	1990 – 2008
City Manager (17 years) and Assistant City Manager (seven months)	
County Manager, Cobb County, Marietta, GA	1997 – 1989
County Manager, Chatham County, Savannah, GA	1985 – 1987
Assistant County Manager, Volusia County, Daytona Beach, FL	1980 – 1985
Oklahoma City, OK	
Management Intern, Budget (3 years), Police (1 year), Public Works (1 year)	1975 – 1980

Background

Mr. Salerno's most recent employer was the City of Sunrise. Located in southeast Florida, it has a population of over 90,000 with 1000 full-time employees and 300 part-time employees. Twelve employees reported directly to Mr. Salerno. The total funds budget is approximately $380 million with a general fund budget of $87 million. The three most important issues facing Sunrise are:

- Continuing to promote smart growth, with a mix of commercial and residential uses;
- Dealing with infrastructure issues; and
- Making the organization more efficient in the face of state required budget cuts.

Interview Comments

Mr. Salerno is very interested in the City Manager position in Coral Gables. It would offer him a fresh opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to Florida's finest urban village – a community rich in history and natural beauty, but one which nonetheless faces challenges. Coral Gables is a special place, an "oasis." Ever since he was a student at the University of Miami, Mr. Salerno admired the quality of life found in Coral Gables. He has seen the community grow from, in large part, a University town in the early 70's to the cosmopolitan city it is today. He would love to be part of efforts to preserve, protect and nurture the city, duly "world-renowned" for its quality of life. Mr. Salerno is excited about the possibility of applying his years of professional experiences to a city like Coral Gables. With thirty plus years of local government experience – twenty-two in Florida – he can recommend to the Commission a dynamic course of action which would address its needs at the pace the City chooses. He has been a proactive manager and gets things done.

The new realities of municipal finance in Florida, caused by the economy and recent actions of the Florida legislature, will require the attention of a manager who understands the complexities and nuances of Florida's municipal finance laws, who has a record of fiscal responsibility, and who is experienced at navigating the Florida growth management system. Fortunately, the City of Coral Gables has been actively planning for its future and the Commission has a clear vision for the City. To maintain its image, the City will require a manager who is a vigilant "vision cop", constantly seeks to protect the city's "brand", and is always on the lookout for "vision killers". Tradition, fear of ridicule, stereotypes, complacency, short-term thinking, and naysayers are all potential threats. Mr. Salerno believes the City needs someone who will pledge to keep the Athenian Oaths commitment, "to transmit the City not only not less, but greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us". He would encourage residents to feel they have a stake in their city government, they are connected to their neighborhoods, and they can influence the city and its actions.

Mr. Salerno characterizes his management style as one based on several management theories (such as Deming, Theory X, Theory Y, and Peters) but merged into one, tempered by his own experience. He wants employees to accomplish their goals and be recognized for their efforts. He rewards teamwork and seeks feedback from front-line employees. He tries to discover what is working and what is not. He is always striving to improve systems and the organization's culture. He allows employees autonomy, if they can handle it, but gives more direction when they cannot. He works hard to achieve consensus within the City work force.

Mr. Salerno's employees in Sunrise would say he was driven, fair, makes good decisions, and accomplishes his objectives. They would also say he was good at creating plans based on the elected officials' vision and what is realistically achievable. Elected officials would say he has accomplished a great deal in Sunrise. The City is now financially sound, and the tax rate has been reduced for each of the last twelve years. As one example of the benefits from this stability, the City was able to provide cash payments to residents who were victims of Hurricane Wilma.

Mr. Salerno is goal-oriented and self-motivated, and will bring to this position his enthusiasm, energy, and commitment, along with his record of accomplishments, fiscal restraint, and accountability. He would ensure a well-run organization that is citizen-focused, customer service oriented, responsive, and accountable. He is fair, trustworthy, and hardworking. He feels he is a leader and has good administrative skills.

Concerning weaknesses, some in the media perceives him as tight-lipped and holding his cards close to the vest. In Sunrise, he felt the need to be somewhat secretive because of an active economic development program. When a prospective company was evaluating the City as a potential headquarters, confidentiality was required. Overall, he prefers to stay in the background and let elected officials take both the lead and the credit.

Mr. Salerno has had several great successes in Sunrise. He is very proud of the world-class arena which was built, now known as the BankAtlantic Center. It has been the home of the National Hockey League's Florida Panthers since 1998 and is the venue for numerous concerts by world-

renowned performers. Adjacent to the arena, plans call for the construction of a 250-room hotel as part of an entertainment and restaurant complex known as The Oasis. The Center is projected to have an economic impact of $4.4 billion dollars over 25 years. Sunrise has also become a premier location for regional and national headquarters, as well as the regional headquarters for some foreign firms. One company which built a regional headquarters was NORTEL, a leading global manufacturer of telecommunications equipment.

Mr. Salerno's biggest failure was a referendum on a proposed one cent sales tax for road improvements in Cobb County, GA. It failed by a very small margin - only 200 votes. He feels he could have done something more to promote its passage. He could possibly have selected a different firm to help promote the tax increase and provided better information to the public.

Mr. Salerno has occasionally had to fire employees. He does not like to because he views it as a failure of both management and the employee. When job performance is not adequate, he first addresses the employee's weaknesses, develops a plan with them to deal with the relevant concerns, then provides a reasonable amount of time for the employee to improve. If the person does not and termination of employment is necessary, he seeks out the best way for the employee to exit while still maintaining his or her dignity.

Mr. Salerno feels the most pressing challenges facing the Coral Gables City Manager will be:

- Demonstrating to the community that historic preservation is a top priority;
- Significantly improving the financial position of the City;
- Resolving the City's labor contracts (including the need for pension reform;
- The development contract with UM, utilizing an interest-based, problem solving approach;
- Continuing to revitalize the "downtown" and "Miracle Mile";
- Addressing infrastructure needs;
- Continuing to improve the economy and tax base using sustainable development practices;
- Continuing to beautify the community;
- Implementing best management practices; and
- Most importantly, offering the residents an even better quality of life.

If selected as the next City Manager in Coral Gables, Mr. Salerno expects to do the following in the first six months:

- Get to know the Commissioners, the staff, and the community;
- Learn the mode and frequency of communications the Commission members prefer;
- Determine the community's goals;
- Find out what the elected officials and community members liked and/or did not like about the previous City Manager. By so doing, Mr. Salerno can modify his personal management style to adapt to the Coral Gables community;
- Work with elected officials to create a vision and an agenda;

- Assess the organization and its capabilities;
- Develop a relationship with the media;
- Determine how he can make the Commissioners' jobs more rewarding and easier; and
- Meet with community groups representing neighborhoods, the business community, environmental interests, and other special interest groups.

Despite some reporters feeling that he is tight lipped, he has generally related very well with the media over his 30-year career. If reporters are genuinely interested in facts and good reporting, he usually develops a good relationship with them.

Mr. Salerno considers himself trustworthy and fair, and there is nothing embarrassing or controversial in his background. In his spare time, Mr. Salerno enjoys cultural and sporting events, and travel.

Six Adjectives/Phrases that Describe Him:

- Sense of humor,
- Gets along well with people,
- Easy to talk with,
- Trustworthy,
- Hardworking, and
- Goal-oriented.

Reason for Leaving His Most Recent Position

The last election in Sunrise created significant change in the political landscape and, after accomplishing a great deal during his 17 year tenure, Mr. Salerno resigned. He is now seeking the opportunity to tackle the types of challenges offered by a City like Coral Gables.

Current/Most Recent Salary

$220,000

Interviewer's Impressions

Articulate, experienced, and driven. Very intelligent and thoroughly weighs the consequences of any action before taking it. Understands (but stays out of) politics.

Prepared by: Mary Greenwood
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Reference Notes
Patrick Salerno

Steven Feren, Mayor, Sunrise, Florida, 954-562-6767

Mayor Feren served as a City Commissioner from 1987-1996. He was then was elected Mayor in 1996 and has held that position ever since. Mayor Feren ranks Mr. Salerno as the best City Manager in the state of Florida.

Mr. Salerno maintained open lines of communication with the Commissioners and kept them were well informed. He was careful and took his time making decisions. That way he got it right the first time. The staff in Sunrise, many of which he hired, is well qualified and has been stable during his tenure. Mr. Salerno was a leader and accomplished his tasks in a timely manner.

In 2007 the residents were surveyed about the city government. Seventy-three percent (73%) were pleased with the way the City was being run. Mr. Salerno still has very positive name recognition in the community. He was customer service oriented and never wanted a resident to feel ignored. After Commission meetings, he assigned a staff member to get the name and phone number of individuals that made complaints or asked questions at the meeting so the City could follow up.

Hurricane Wilma devastated Sunrise, destroyed City Hall, and left about 1,500 people without homes, many of them elderly. At one point, Mr. Salerno discovered the contractor who was rebuilding these homes was not working quickly and the quality of work was substandard. Further, the residents of these homes were being repaired were spending thousands of dollars for temporary living arrangements. Mr. Salerno created the Hurricane Wilma Relief Program that devoted $6 million of the City's reserves to help pay those living expenses. No other city or county in the state implemented that kind of program.

In another case, Mr. Salerno had a study done on the undeveloped land in Sunrise. It also determined the best use of the land to ensure growth and a high quality life for the City's residents and businesses. The result was the largest mall in the Southeast was constructed on this land, along with a corporate center that houses many Fortune 500 companies and the NHL Florida Panthers hockey arena.

Mr. Salerno improved the quality of life in the City by upgrading codes (so that developers have to meet higher standards), redeveloping older areas, and accomplishing projects that were perceived as unattainable. He convinced developers to build the first upscale high-rise condominiums inland, instead of on the beach, and these have proven successful.

Mayor Feren recommends Mr. Salerno for any City/County Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Modest,
- Gives Commission all the credit,
- Hardworking,

- Intelligent,
- Supportive of employees,
- Loyal to employees, and
- Innovative.

Strengths: His ability to market the City to corporate entities. He is good at finance, understands budgetary issues, and is able to run the day-to-day operations while moving major projects forward.

Weaknesses: He could have been more patient with people that presented false information or do not know what they are talking about.

Fran Klauber, Former City Commissioner, Sunrise, Florida, 954-749-0297

Ms. Klauber was on the City Commission from 1989-2001 and works for the Office of Government Relations for the school district. Mr. Salerno is an excellent City Manager.

Mr. Salerno educated the Commission, worked well with them, and promoted consensus. Even if one or two did not agree with the majority, he worked with them to help them understand the project and at least go along with it. He kept the Commissioners well informed because he knew that to make the best decisions, they need to know all of the facts. He also worked at a pace that pleased the Commission.

The residents appreciated Mr. Salerno and even voted to have one of the streets adjacent to the Florida Panther Arena named after him. He was approachable and talked to everyone who came to his office. He made sure complaints were resolved, even if it took six months to do so. He respected his staff, had high expectations for them, and led by example. He asked the employees for their input and held them accountable. He made certain that the second third in command in each department were well trained and able to do the department head's job. Thus, when a department head retired, a replacement was ready to step in without further training and kept the projects moving forward.

Ms. Klauber feels that Sunrise used to be just an ordinary community, but because of Mr. Salerno's hard work, it has now become one of the top areas in Florida. He has made the city financially strong while lowering property taxes. The biggest change to the City's status occurred with the construction of the Florida Panthers Arena. Wayne Huizenga, owner of the Miami Dolphins and the Florida Panthers, worked with Mr. Salerno to put together a deal for the arena. There was competition from larger cities, but Mr. Huizenga stated that Mr. Salerno was the deciding factor in relocating to Sunrise.

Mr. Salerno also helped create a corporate center and redeveloped the east side of Sunrise. The city even paid for some of the storefront reconstruction where owners could not afford the costs. These things have spurred a new pride in the city, and residents have followed this example by taking the initiative to clean up their own yards and neighborhoods.

Ms. Klauber highly recommends Mr. Salerno for any City/County Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Visionary,
- Self-Motivated,
- Hardworking,
- Passionate,
- Energetic, and
- Creative.

Strengths: He understands the Commission's goals and makes them a reality. His management and financial skills are outstanding.

Weaknesses: He does not like to speak outside of city meetings, and prefers that the City Commissioners perform that function.

Jeff Olson, Former City Attorney, Sunrise, Florida, 954-255-1107

Mr. Olson worked with Mr. Salerno from 1989-2003 as the Assistant City Attorney and the City Attorney. Mr. Salerno is a first rate City Manager.

In order to last seventeen years as the City Manager, you must be able to get things done and to be able to work well with the Commission, staff and the public. In fact, all held him in high regard for him. He gave all the credit to the Commissioners and little to himself. He was given awards from different community organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce. He made himself available to the residents and the Commissioners to ensure that everyone was well informed. The city's staff was stable with very little turnover. Mr. Salerno developed a pension plan that improved the retention of employees.

Mr. Salerno was not the most dynamic public speaker, but he is capable and comfortable in that setting. He responds well to questions from Commissioners and residents. Mr. Salerno was constantly dealing with controversial issues but he presented issues well and was able to sell it to the community so effectively that when the decision was made, very few were opposed to it.

When Mr. Salerno started, the city was in financial trouble. He instituted fiscal restraints, was frugal with resources, planned for both the present and the future, found innovative ways to fund general operations, and negotiated lease/purchase agreements to save money. The result was the City became financially sound and quite prosperous after a few years. Due to his efforts, the City was been able to meet the need for capital improvements without incurring debt.

When Mr. Salerno arrived, Sunrise was not particularly well known for anything. Due to his hard work and vision, it is now an entertainment, retail, and corporate focal point for South Florida. One major project was the acquisition of the Florida Panthers Civic Arena. Mr. Salerno

went to the County and the team and convinced them to locate the center in Sunrise. He also helped get the largest shopping mall in the Southeast built in the City. To bring in corporate headquarters, he implemented controls in parts of the City to prevent the building of warehouses and to encourage corporate offices. This effort and his marketing acumen has drawn many Fortune 500 companies to the area.

Mr. Olson feels that the knowledge that Mr. Salerno has, particularly in finance, will be an asset to any community and especially in Florida with the property tax limits.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Modest,
- Financially Creative,
- Thoughtful Decision Maker,
- Dedicated,
- Astute, and
- Innovative.

Strengths: His knowledge of government finance and economic development. Also, he helped the Commission establish a vision, and then put a plan in place to meet that vision.

Weaknesses: None

Irwin Harlem, Former City Commissioner, Sunrise, Florida, 954-846-1101

Mr. Harlem worked with Mr. Salerno from 1993 to 2007. Mr. Salerno is an outstanding City Manager. At meetings of the Broward County League of Cities meetings, other elected officials often commented that they wished they had a City Manager like him. The Sunrise Commissioners have never complained about him until the 2006 election when political dynamic changed.

Everyone in the community was impressed with Mr. Salerno. He accommodated the residents to the degree he could. The residents are proud of their city and what he did to improve it.

Mr. Salerno made good decisions and did his research. He wanted to be sure he had all the he and the elected officials needed to make a good decision. He encouraged his staff, set goals for them, and taught them to have pride in the City and their work.

He is a problem solver. The east side of Sunrise was old, built in the 1960s, and the storefronts were all different. Mr. Salerno took action to redevelop that area. The façades are now greatly improved and uniform. Mr. Salerno is sensitive to blighted or unsightly conditions, so he would drive around the City regularly on weekends to find areas that need improvement.

Mr. Harlem is proud of the work that Mr. Salerno accomplished at Sunrise and felt it was a tremendous loss for the City when the politics changed and Mr. Salerno was forced out. Mr. Harlem would recommend him for a City/County Manager position anywhere.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Hardworking,
- Accommodating,
- Innovative,
- Always thinking of ways to better the community,
- Professional, and
- Keeps up with the finances.

Strengths: Mr. Salerno accomplished any task he is assigned by the Commission. He is also brilliant in finances.

Weaknesses: He works too hard.

Joe Murray Rivers, Former County Commissioner, Chatham County, Georgia, 912-234-5969

Mr. Rivers was a County Commissioner for twenty years and worked his first term with Mr. Salerno from 1985 to 1987. Mr. Salerno was the first County Manager in Chatham County and did an excellent job. The Commission had previously managed the county, and at times, it was a struggle to change over to the manager form of government. However, Mr. Salerno had good rapport with the elected officials, kept them informed, and made sure they got all the credit.

Mr. Salerno is customer service oriented and very adept at dealing with citizens. He makes good decisions and he takes his time to think them through. Most of the lower end positions in the county were inherited personnel, but Mr. Salerno hired the majority of upper management. They were a good, diverse, and qualified group of individuals.

Mr. Salerno started is change-oriented and technologically savvy. When he arrived in Chatham County, there were only one or two computers in the government. Seeing that as an opportunity for productivity gains, he promoted modernization and newer technologies. Unfortunately, some personnel retired because they could not keep up with the changes taking place, but the County was better off for the changes.

At one point, Mr. Rivers suggested to Mr. Salerno that the County assume control of Savannah's transit system. Mr. Salerno oversaw the acquisition of the Transit Authority, and within two years, they were designated as the "Best Transportation System in the United States."

At the time of his arrival, the Finance Department was not functioning very well. Mr. Salerno created an Internal Auditing Department to ensure that processes were being followed properly.

One of the results was the discovery that the county had been paying more into the pension system than actuarially required. Once change, the County saved $500,000 annually.

Mr. Rivers recommends Mr. Salerno for a City/County Manager position without hesitation.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Conscientious,
- Adept,
- Reserved,
- Task-Oriented
- Strong Communication Skills,
- Listener, and
- Brings Issues to the Forefront.

Strengths: He is innovative and multi-tasks well.

Weaknesses: Since he was the first County Manager, there was a power struggle between him and the Commissioners regarding staff issues.

Philip Secrist, Ph.D., Former Chairman, County Commission, Cobb County, Georgia, 770-427-2337

Mr. Salerno worked for Mr. Secrist from 1987-1989. Mr. Salerno was an excellent County Manager. He tried to work with the County Commissioners and kept them informed, but as with most city/county management positions, not all of the Commissioners liked him.

Mr. Salerno loves the challenge of solving problems. He is customer service oriented and makes good, logical recommendations to the Commission. He dealt well with controversial issues.

Mr. Salerno is achievement-oriented. Given Cobb County's proximity to Atlanta, it was and is a high growth area. He was involved in everything from subdivision design to developing a new public bus system.

Mr. Secrist recommends Mr. Salerno for any City/County Manager position.

Adjectives of phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Open,
- Follows Through,
- Attentive to the Desires of the Commission,
- Loyal,
- Focused, and

- Dedicated.

Strengths: He is excellent with finances, innovative and open to ideas.

Weaknesses: He spent too much time in the office. He needed to be out in the community more often.

Harriet Smith, Former County Commissioner, Cobb County, Georgia, 770-428-0731

Ms. Smith was a County Commissioner for Cobb County and worked with County Manager Salerno from 1988-1989. She loved Mr. Salerno's style of management and thought he did a great job.

Mr. Salerno is a wonderful public speaker, is customer service oriented, a problem solver, hires good personnel, and kept her informed at all times. Since it was her first term as a Commissioner, she depended on him to answer her questions.

Prior to Mr. Salerno's arrival, the public had voted for a new bus system, but two Commissioners were opposed to it and stalling it at every turn. He got the project moving despite the controversy.

Cobb County at the time was a bit of a good old boy county. The only negative thing that Ms. Smith heard about Mr. Salerno, and which ultimately caused him to lose his position, was that some on the commission felt he should socialize more. Ms. Smith did not agree with this reasoning, but was unsuccessful in convincing the Commission to keep him.

Ms. Smith recommends Mr. Salerno for any local government CEO level position.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Honest,
- Family-Oriented,
- Knowledgeable,
- Determined,
- Innovative, and
- Customer Service Oriented.

Strengths: He understands the future consequences of a decision made today. He is extremely good at improving processes and saving money.

Weaknesses: None

Reference Notes
Patrick Salerno

Patrick Monahan, Assistant County Manager, Chatham County, Georgia, 912-652-7870

Mr. Salerno hired Mr. Monahan as the Assistant County Manager in April 1985 and they worked together until Mr. Salerno left in July 1987. Mr. Salerno accomplished a great deal and did a very good job as County Manager.

Mr. Salerno was the first County Manager in Chatham County and a power struggle developed between him and the Commissioners. Some members simply did not want to give up the day-today management of the county. Nonetheless, they got along very well and he was respected. Both the Commission and Mr. Salerno were popular with the residents. When speaking in public, he is comfortable, factual, analytical, and straightforward.

Mr. Salerno made half a dozen major staff changes and he always chose good people. He was sometimes was criticized because he went outside the county government to recruit qualified individuals. He also created a more racially diverse staff and that was important in moving the organization forward. He improved the training program for employees, making them customer service oriented. They were trained how to deal with residents in a respectful and cooperative manner. They also became more knowledgeable of county issues so they could be more helpful.

Over and above the typical demands on a County Manager, Mr. Salerno was trying to restructure the county government and its practices. He revised purchasing and personnel manuals, restructured the transit system, composed a five-year Capital Improvement Plan, put in place the first sales tax for roads, and still responded to resident questions and complaints. The overall structure that he created is still in place twenty years later.

Mr. Monahan highly recommends Mr. Salerno for any City/County Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Salerno:

- Tireless,
- Can-Do Attitude,
- Innovative,
- Dedicated,
- Serious At Times,
- Analytical, and
- Funny.

Strengths: His greatest strengths are in economic development, growth management and infrastructure planning and maintenance.

Weaknesses: He took on too many projects at once, and sometimes was not able to focus on the minor issues that can sometimes become major.

Prepared by: Emilee Anderson, Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for
PATRICK G. SALERNO

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County Broward County, FL	No Records Found
State Florida	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County Broward County, FL	**Records Found** May 1999 Temporary / Permanent Injunction against the City of Sunrise including Mr. Salerno **Disposition** = May 2002 Dismissed with Prejudice **Record Found** June 1999 – Civil Suit against the City of Sunrise including Mr. Salerno accused of stealing development concept. **Disposition** = August 1999 Dismissed with Prejudice
Federal	No Records Found.

Motor Vehicle	
Florida	No Citations Listed
Credit	Very Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

Internet Research

Wichita Eagle, The (KS)
November 21, 2008

5-MINUTE EAGLE

Salerno censured for reneging on Wichita

Wichita still doesn't have a detailed explanation for why **Pat Salerno** backed out of his contract to be Wichita's next city manager. But the International City/County Management Association has voted to publicly censure **Salerno** for violating its ethics policy, which says managers should show up for work if they've accepted the job.

Wichita Eagle, The (KS)
July 12, 2008

SALERNO RETRACTED BILL FOR EXPENSES
Author: *BRENT D. WISTROM, The Wichita Eagle*

Pat Salerno asked the city to pay him back for $2,327 he spent while house-hunting in Wichita, according to new correspondence released to The Eagle on Friday.

He sent his expense report to interim City Manager Ed Flentje on July 1, giving yet another indication that his decision to back out of his job commitment was abrupt.

Just seven days later, **Salerno** sent Flentje another e-mail, saying, "Please be advised that I withdraw my request for reimbursement as reflected in my e-mail to you dated July 1, 2008."

That was the same day **Salerno** sent an e-mail to Mayor Carl Brewer, saying he just didn't feel right and wouldn't take the $215,000-a-year job after all.

Salerno has offered no other explanation for his decision, and he could not be reached Friday. He has not responded to calls all week.

Salerno's contract with the city entitled him to as much as $4,000 to spend while he looked for a home here.

It's not clear whether **Salerno** had planned any other trips or if he had found a home.

Here are the things **Salerno** asked to be paid back for before canceling his request, according to city documents:

-- Airfare for two people: $1,221.98
-- Hotel and related expenses: $484.86
-- Car rental: $127.93
-- Fuel for rental: $57.33
-- Mileage: $15.15
-- Meals: $419.50

The new information comes from additional e-mails supplied to The Eagle under a Kansas Open Records request.

Wichita Eagle, The (KS)
July 8, 2008

AT LAST MINUTE, SALERNO REJECTS CITY
Author: *BRENT D. WISTROM, The Wichita Eagle*

Pat Salerno signed the contract, he visited Wichita to hunt for a new home, and he chatted with city officials as recently as last week. But Monday morning the incoming city manager called and said, "'I just don't feel right,' " Mayor Carl Brewer said, recalling the brief conversation.

Now that **Salerno** is out, it looks like the city is the one on the hook - at least until City Council members decide what's next. It could take months and thousands of more dollars to find a long-term manager.

Then there's the money already spent. Up to $4,000 worth of **Salerno**'s trips to Wichita are billable to the city, under the contract he signed June 10.

City Attorney Gary Rebenstorf said he hasn't tallied any expenses yet. But he said he is exploring options to protect taxpayer cash.

The city already has paid $7,000 in fees to a search firm and about $4,100 for food and travel expenses related to **Salerno**'s hiring.

"It was our time that was really wasted on this entire process and the citizen's time wasted on it," Brewer said.

Salerno didn't return The Eagle's call to his cell phone.

Meanwhile, a new interim manager will be needed.

Interim City Manager Ed Flentje's contract runs out Friday, the last business day before **Salerno** was supposed to start. Flentje told The Eagle he is willing to help with the on-going city budget process. But he said he will not extend his contract because he has committed to return to teaching at Wichita State University and has vacation plans.

It's unclear who might fill the void, but three high-ranking city officials applied for the permanent job months ago.

Finding a long-term manager using a national search firm could take four to six months, Brewer said. And city officials, in explaining why they interviewed only **Salerno** out of a pool of more than 30 candidates, have said the pool of qualified people is shallow.

Monday afternoon, Brewer and other City Council members appeared shocked and disappointed about **Salerno**'s decision. "**Pat** gave no indication he had second thoughts about taking the job," Brewer said at a news conference that followed a one-hour, 12-minute closed-door meeting.

Brewer called it an "unfortunate and unprofessional decision." He also said the move violates the ethics guidelines of the International City/County Management Association, the largest professional organization and one in which **Salerno** is a member. Brewer also said **Salerno** told him he had not taken any other jobs.

Brewer said Salerno's move shouldn't cloud the city's hunt for a new manager. "The only probable disadvantage we have is now they have a pretty good idea of what we're willing to offer," he said.

Salerno was to receive $215,000 a year, the largest salary ever offered by the city.

That's about $20,000 more than the national median for managers of cities with 250,000 to 499,999 people, according to a 2007 International City/County Management Association survey of six cities.

Salerno also would have received a $700-a-month car allowance and a $125-a-month cell phone allowance.

Wichita Eagle, The (KS)
June 11, 2008

SALERNO HIRED AT $215,000 A YEAR
Author: *BRENT D. WISTROM AND BECCY TANNER, The Wichita Eagle*

Pat Salerno, who will become Wichita city manager July 14, will make $215,000 a year, the largest salary in the city's history, but $5,000 shy of his previous job. His contract also includes a $700-a-month car allowance and $125 a month for his cell phone, according to the contract approved by City Council members Tuesday. That's enough to lease a 2007 BMW 5 Series and more than enough get Sprint's most robust individual cell phone plan. The city will also cover up to $4,000 in travel expenses for house hunting in Wichita and all other documented moving expenses.

Salerno, 57, now lives in Sunrise, Fla., a suburb of Fort Lauderdale, where he was city manager for about 18 years. If he's ever fired, he'll be entitled to the same deal former City Manager George Kolb had - six months' pay, plus an extra month's pay for each year he works here.

"We think it was a fair wage based on what the market was actually presenting itself, and based on looking at his experience and what he's capable of doing," Mayor Carl Brewer said. "Where we're wanting to go, he's already been there and he's already did it."

When Sunrise city commissioners forced **Salerno** out in January, he made $220,000 a year. His original contract did not specify car or phone allowances, but it provided him a car equipped with a mobile phone and $100 in expenses per month. The contract provided **Salerno** a severance package worth nearly $800,000 in pay and accumulated sick and vacation time.

Wichita City Council members, who approved **Salerno**'s contract in a 6-0 vote, are confident he is the right person for the job, despite warnings from some former Sunrise employees and current city commission members that he is secretive and autocratic.

Many civic leaders in Sunrise say **Salerno** turned the city's ailing budget around, lured a professional sports arena and attracted a flurry of new corporate headquarters to the growing suburb. Some also praise him for redeveloping the city's older and more deteriorated neighborhoods - although others say they think the focus was always on the newly annexed parts of town.

"Sunrise was transformed into a vibrant, attractive destination city," said Brewer, who visited the city late last month with Vice Mayor Sue Schlapp. "Many of the challenges that we face here in Wichita are similar to those Pat resolved in Sunrise."

One and only

Salerno was the only candidate the City Council interviewed and the only one recommended by a 17-member committee that examined resumes.

Interim City Manager Ed Flentje said there are few available candidates nationwide who have experience managing large cities. Some are reluctant to leave their home cities because of family ties, and others opt for a career change or retirement to avoid the pressure of being a city manager, he said. "This is a big job," Flentje said. "A big, time-consuming job." Flentje's contract with the city ends July 1, but he said he has agreed to stay on during a transition period. He will talk with council members and **Salerno** before deciding how long he'll stay.

Rickie Coleman, president and leader of the community group Sunflower Community Action, is among several in the community who criticize the city for hiring the only candidate it interviewed. But she said Sunflower, which had repeated run-ins with former manager Kolb, hopes to move on. "We definitely hope we have a better response working with him than the last one," she said.

The selection committee, largely made up of high-profile business people and civic leaders, reviewed about 30 resumes. Only nine got a "very serious" look, said Steve Martens, the committee's chairman. "I was particularly impressed with his strong belief of being aggressive with economic development," Martens said.

Sunrise is substantially different than Wichita because it is a densely packed suburb of about 91,000 people that doesn't have a distinct downtown. Much of Sunrise was annexed and developed during **Salerno**'s 18-year tenure. As a result of age and maintenance, it has substantially fewer blighted neighborhoods and far fewer deteriorating streets than Wichita.

Sunrise's rapid growth and rising property values also enriched its city coffers, allowing it to reduce property tax rates 12 years in a row while offering cash incentives to lure new businesses. Between 1990 and 2006, Sunrise's population grew at the same rate - 41 percent - as the state of Florida.

A record of success

Wichita City Council members and search committee members think that **Salerno**'s track record in Sunrise is reason enough to bring him to Wichita.

City Council member Paul Gray said there's no guarantee that **Salerno**'s success in Sunrise will translate here. But he said that track record is important. "If you want someone that can win the championship for you, it's much better to get somebody who's been there and, you know, been kind of branded by fire and hardened by the success of it," he said.

Wess Galyon, a committee member and president and chief executive of the Wichita Area Builders Association, compared **Salerno** to the late city manager Chris Cherches. "Chris had the best interests of the community at heart in terms of beautification, arts and quality of life, and **Salerno** shares that," he said. "We need that. I think we've lost that focus."

Ray Frederick, board chairman of the Wichita Independent Business Association, said he liked **Salerno**'s record of building relationships with the business community. "We talked when he was here how critical it is to build relationships with developers and business owners and corporations. All those ballplayers

need to be at the table and to keep and build on the success and vision we see happening in downtown Wichita now."

In an interview Tuesday afternoon, **Salerno** said he hasn't decided where he will live or when he may visit to look for a house. As for city business, **Salerno** said his first move will be to meet with City Council members, city employees, business groups, grassroots organizations, media and others. "It's an exciting opportunity to help the mayor and council move the community forward and be the best it can be."

Salerno's job perks

-- $215,000 annual salary
-- $700 monthly car allowance
-- $125 monthly cell phone allowance
-- Two house-hunting trips, up to $4,000
-- Severance pay, if needed, of six months' pay plus an extra month's pay for each year worked here.

Wichita Eagle, The (KS)
June 1, 2008

PRAISE, REPROACH FOR SALERNO
Author: *BRENT D. WISTROM, The Wichita Eagle*

SUNRISE, Fla. -No one can say whether city manager candidate **Pat Salerno** could draw the rapid commercial growth that happened in this palm-saturated suburb to larger and more isolated Wichita. And it's hard to say if he would alienate some Wichita City Council members and city employees, as he did here.

But as the Wichita City Council rushes to hire the only candidate it interviewed - going against International City/County Managers Association guidelines that call for at least five finalists - the praise and criticism of Sunrise residents and the paper trail left here may be the only ground-level glimpse of **Salerno** before he becomes city manager. Mayor Carl Brewer and **Salerno** will continue this week to negotiate a contract, the details of which remain private.

Bruce Collins, a retired personnel officer who led training programs for Sunrise from 1993 to 2004, warns that **Salerno** often micromanages projects and kills off proposals he doesn't like.

"If he was an eighth-grader someplace, he'd be the class bully," he said. **Salerno** ran City Hall with a secretive, passive-aggressive style, Collins said, adding that **Salerno** discouraged employees from using e-mail or creating official memos - apparently out of fear that media would scrutinize the city's moves. "We'd write these memos and stamp 'draft' all over them," he said, to let officials say something was not an official document.

But James DePelisi, president of the Greater Sunrise Chamber of Commerce, sees only prosperity for whichever city nabs **Salerno** - and several are trying. **Salerno** engaged the business community on city issues and put Sunrise on the forefront in the highly competitive Miami/Fort Lauderdale metropolitan area - both for business and living, he said. "Very rarely do you find a package where you can have a balance of doing what's right for the community and also keeping economic development progressive," he said. "**Pat** was able to not only juggle both of them, but successfully handle both."

Salerno is not a jokester. He doesn't want to make speeches at annual Chamber of Commerce dinners. And he's not likely to impress anyone with an intriguing story over cocktails. He acknowledges that. But he is astute at cutting deals with corporations that benefit from taxpayer money - and benefit taxpayers by sending millions back into the city coffers through property taxes, franchise fees and new employees who buy houses, groceries and cars.

He also turned around the red-ink budget he started with in 1990 to the point that the city could offer cash incentives to prospective businesses, redevelop ailing neighborhoods and line the city's boulevards with palm trees and vine-covered walls that buffer backyards from traffic. His critics concede that, even if they don't agree with the tactics or spending.

Salerno's master's degree in public administration and 28 years in local government management exceed the education and experience criteria set by the Wichita City Council. Although he meets many of the criteria, it's a matter of opinion whether he has other top qualities Wichita seeks, such as communication skills, transparency and the ability to listen and work with politicians, the community and media.

Supporters, including Sunrise's mayor, say **Salerno** engages the community on key issues and operates openly when it doesn't put the city at risk. The mayor and others point to neighborhood meetings that preceded votes to build new city complexes or major commercial developments.

But three city commissioners threatened to fire **Salerno** in January, in part, because he had not disclosed that some city investments were losing money. Two commissioners have criticized him for not sharing information about developing economic incentive deals until hours before they were to vote. Local newspapers have labeled him "secretive."

Salerno defends himself on all points, but acknowledges he's attracted critics. "No one's going to criticize you if you do nothing," he said.

Rise and resignation

The city of Sunrise began in 1971 but didn't grow rapidly until the 1990s. It is now 18 square miles, home to about 91,000 people.

The robust commercial districts of this bustling Fort Lauderdale suburb probably wouldn't be here without **Salerno**, Mayor Steven Feren said.

Salerno became assistant city manager in 1990, two years after the city voted to switch to a city manager form of government after one corrupt mayor went to prison and another faced charges that he was later acquitted of, Feren said. **Salerno** accepted the job for $64,133, according to personnel documents obtained by The Eagle under an open records request.

Two years later, the commission released its first manager and appointed **Salerno**. Feren negotiated a contract that paid **Salerno** $82,097 a year with increases of 7.5 percent the first year, 6 percent the next and 5 percent each year thereafter. The contract put **Salerno** on track to his final salary of $220,000 and a severance package worth nearly $800,000.

Within a year, **Salerno** had lifted Sunrise out of debt by collecting debts owed to the city, canceling payment on incomplete contract work and instituting a hiring freeze, said Feren, who has been mayor since 1987 except for a stint in the statehouse. **Salerno** increased the city's reserves almost every year, allowing it to start aggressive projects to add parks, improve streets, lure businesses and lower the property tax rate, Feren said. Property values rose dramatically, offsetting some of the tax rate reductions.

Deputy Mayor Roger Wishner, who also has served on the commission since 1987 except for time in the statehouse, said he admires **Salerno** in many ways. "There's no doubt, this is guy is a top-notch negotiator," he said. He said **Salerno** will be able to duplicate Sunrise's success only if he has a similar location, money to lure business and a favorable economic climate.

Wishner said he eventually became frustrated that when he and **Salerno** would discuss an upcoming project, **Salerno** wouldn't tell other commissioners even though Wishner asked him to inform everyone. He said he met with **Salerno** and said **Salerno** would have to improve communication or lose his support. He said **Salerno**'s secrecy on economic development deals and failure to alert commissioners about money lost in an investment pool ultimately led Wishner and two other commissioners to force his resignation in January.

Feren, along with city commissioner Joseph Scuotto, credit **Salerno** for drawing a new, county-owned arena to Sunrise, despite competition from the much larger Fort Lauderdale, which boasts towering hotels, condos and the beach. **Salerno** worked day and night to assemble the winning deal, several officials and news articles say.

The package included free police security service, site improvements, fire inspections, a waiver of up to $1 million in building and inspection fees and a deal to obtain the 150-acre site for the building, according to the 1996 agreement obtained by The Eagle. It won approval from Broward County and the National Hockey League's Florida Panthers team.

Electric growth followed, leading to expansions at the Sawgrass Mills shopping and dining complex, several new corporations that moved into a tree-lined corporate park and more than 12 million visitors a year.

Without **Salerno**'s foresight on the largely undeveloped west edge of the city, which borders the Florida Everglades, his supporters said, the land might be home to car dealerships and other businesses that don't attract the attention, excitement and tax dollars that are now flowing in. Acknowledging his work, Sunrise commissioners voted to name a road near the arena **Pat Salerno** Drive.

Friday night, the Sawgrass shopping area bustled with groups who pushed cloth-lined carts filled with shopping bags along the sidewalks in front of high-end retail stores. Hundreds of young people flooded upscale restaurants like P.F. Chang's and the Grand Lux Cafe.

But the business-meets-tropics flair of this city came at a cost that may be difficult for Wichita, which faces slowing revenue. Some Wichitans have criticized the use of economic incentives for development.

John Todd, a Wichita real estate broker and taxpayer advocate, said economic incentives can be unfair to other businesses that don't receive government assistance. "Most of these incentives are nothing short of corporate welfare," he said. "We need to work on lowering taxes and regulations. Both of those will attract businesses."

Lawrence Szeliga, a longtime Sunrise resident, said he loves how **Salerno** has shaped the city, and he said he's OK with the public money that helped draw some of its marquee developments.
But he blames city commissioners and city staff for failing to properly plan in the city's oldest parts. "The city, to me, is abandoning this part of town," he said. His home is near the border of that change. He points to dying grass in his neighbors' yards and said many of the city's codes aren't enforced, such as

allowing rust streaks to coat the outside walls of buildings. "It just seems to me they're spending money and making plans and no one's a watchdog," he said.

But in the end, he endorses **Salerno**. "He came here and I thought he did a beautiful job."

Moving fast in Wichita

Salerno is the only candidate who has interviewed with Wichita City Council members and met with the community in an open forum.

Brewer and Vice Mayor Sue Schlapp visited Sunrise in May and spoke to Feren, among others. Wishner said they did not talk to him.

Ken Ciboski, a professor of political science at Wichita State University, said he questions the rush to hire **Salerno**; more analysis and public comment should be considered before making such an important hire, he said.

For example, council members have cited the rapid economic development of Sunrise as a primary reason they'd like to hire **Salerno** before another city does. "I'd expect that growth no matter who the city manager is," Ciboski said. Sunrise's 41 percent population growth between 1990 and 2006 mirrors the state of Florida's. "I'm a little perplexed why they're moving so fast," he said. "I really think we need to bring other candidates in."

Brewer and other council members had said they would like to interview more candidates until after meeting with **Salerno** on May 19 and 20. But they said they were impressed with him and his track record and wanted to move before some other city gets him. "We believe that bringing that knowledge and that experience here, we think that he can take us to the next level at a rapid pace," Brewer said after the council's unanimous vote May 22 to negotiate a contract with **Salerno**.

Stacy Ritter, the vice mayor of Broward County, whose district includes Sunrise, said that despite **Salerno**'s dry style, he was easy to work with and never harmed city-county relations. "When I came here, it was a place that older people went to die," she said. "Sunrise would not look like it does today without him."

Wichita Eagle, The (KS)
May 21, 2008

MANAGER CANDIDATE IMPRESSES CITY OFFICIALS
Author: *BRENT D. WISTROM, The Wichita Eagle*

Just after city manager candidate **Pat Salerno** left City Hall on Tuesday, Mayor Carl Brewer said **Salerno** remains a strong candidate but he's not sold yet.

Brewer said he and others will continue to research **Salerno**'s nearly 18-year history as city manager of Sunrise, Fla., and ask more questions. And he and other council members said they still want more candidates brought in for interviews. "It'll be tough to compete with him (**Salerno**), whoever they bring in," Brewer said. "But we've got to get it right."

Salerno left City Hall shortly before noon Tuesday after a closed-door interview with the council and more private one-on-one talks with council members.

That capped a two-day interview, which included meetings with city department heads and the citizens committee that will be recommending candidates, a public forum attended by about 15 non-city employees, and a reception at the Wichita Art Museum.

Several council members said the rapid development of Sunrise is appealing. The city of about 91,000 landed the BankAtlantic Center, home to the Florida Panthers National Hockey League team. And it has seen major developments near the arena. The city has attracted several major companies, including Nortel.

But Wichita council members say they're still trying to gauge how much of the development was **Salerno** and how much was Sunrise sitting as a nice suburb on the fringe of Fort Lauderdale and Miami.

That's an open question, Vice Mayor Sue Schlapp said. "How does that translate?" she asked. "I don't know that we can ever resolve that." Wichita is a different type of city, she said, but it appears Sunrise landed many key economic development projects that other suburbs did not. "Not only does he kind of fit what we like, he also has the track record to go with it," Schlapp said.

Council member Paul Gray liked **Salerno**. He wouldn't say whether he thinks more candidates should be brought in for interviews. Sunrise's economic development also caught Gray's eye. "Everybody should know government doesn't do economic development," he said. "But we have the ability to facilitate it, and some facilitate it better than others."

As he waited for his plane at the airport, **Salerno** said he has a "very favorable impression of Wichita" and still wants the job. He said he couldn't speculate about what he will do if Durham, N.C. -where he is one of three finalists for city manager - or other potential undisclosed employers make a serious offer before Wichita.

"I'll deal with that matter at that time," he said.

Asked to respond to past criticism by some Sunrise commissioners that he wielded too much power and became something of an autocrat, **Salerno** said that's a matter of opinion and misinformation. Any major move in Sunrise required approval from the city commissioners, he said. "I do think we were amazingly successful (in Sunrise), and I do think sometimes people think how we were able to be so successful and that leads to all sorts of speculation," he said.

Meanwhile, a 17-member committee charged with recommending no more than five candidates to the City Council will obtain more potential candidates from recruiting consultant the Mercer Group.

The committee meets Thursday.

The Mercer Group also recommended **Salerno** for the job in Durham, where one of his competitors is former Wichita City Manager George Kolb.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
March 14, 2008

BROWARD COUNTY HALL: Commission budgets $100K to recruit administrator candidates Headhunters have lined up to conduct a pricey search to help find a Broward administrator, but some commissioners have other ideas.
Author: *DAN CHRISTENSEN, dchristensen@MiamiHerald.com*

Here we go again.

Two years after spending thousands of dollars on an executive search for a new county administrator they later forced out, Broward commissioners have budgeted up to $100,000 to find her replacement.

Five recruitment firms from around the country have applied for the assignment. And the commission is expected to award the contract to one of the headhunters by the end of April. Yet even before the nationwide search begins, commissioners are floating the names of local favorites for the post.

Commissioner John Rodstrom likes **Pat Salerno** -- the aggressive, business-oriented former Sunrise city manager who became available recently when shifting political winds forced his departure after 18 years. "I don't know if my colleagues would embrace him, but he's the kind of guy who's a leader," said Rodstrom, who wants someone with the ability to oversee a bustling airport and seaport. "He's got goals, vision. He's a tireless worker who knows what's going on all the time in all departments."

[Article shortened as the rest did not deal with Mr. Salerno.]

Miami Herald, The (FL)
January 24, 2008

SUNRISE: Sun sets on longtime, controversial leader - City Manager Pat Salerno will leave behind a Sunrise very different from the one he came to in 1990.
Author: *NATALIE P. McNEAL, nmcneal@MiamiHerald.com*

When Mayor "Big John" Lomelo went to federal prison in 1984, it wasn't long before Sunrise residents decided to ditch the strong-mayor system in favor of a professional city manager. And it wasn't long after that when **Pat Salerno** came to town. In 1990, after a six-month stint as an assistant to Sunrise's first city manager, **Salerno** took over the reins of this West Broward suburb, and he hasn't let go since.

That all ends Friday.

City commissioners voted 3-2 Tuesday to ask **Salerno** to resign by the end of the week -- or be fired. He had not yet turned in a resignation letter Wednesday night.

"It's time for a new Sunrise," said City Commissioner Sheila Alu at the meeting where **Salerno** was asked to step down.

Indeed, love **Salerno** or hate him -- and people seem to fall squarely in one camp or the other -- a new Sunrise is exactly what he built. When he took office, Sunrise was a sleepy enclave of retired New Yorkers, best known for its abundance of neighborhood bagel shops and pizza places. But **Salerno** will leave behind a huge sports-and-concert arena, the BankAtlantic Center. Next to it is Sawgrass Mills, a mall that, while planned before he got here, has grown into one of the state's busiest tourist attractions.

The arena is home to the Florida Panthers hockey team. And surrounding all this are condos and offices that supporters credit **Salerno** with bringing in. And in the midst of all this? The road many visitors use to get there? **Pat Salerno** Drive.

Known as a controlling leader, **Salerno,** 56, also leaves behind no assistant city managers to take over the helm, leaving the City Commission to initially put the fire chief in charge.

When then-Pembroke Pines Mayor Alex Fekete was asked a few years ago whether his city manager was too powerful, Fekete said: "This is not a **Pat Salerno** form of government where the city manager runs the commission."

And for years, **Salerno** maintained popularity with his five bosses on the City Commission.

JOB SEARCHES

But his recent efforts to secure jobs in other cities -- only to decline when he was offered the jobs -- combined with backlash over financial losses in a statewide investment pool and an election last year that changed the chemistry of the commission, brought **Salerno**'s tenure to an end this week.

Commissioners said they were surprised to learn from media reports last year that the city had more than $270 million in a state-run pool partly invested in mortgage-backed securities whose rating had been downgraded. State officials last month restricted withdrawals from the pool, which holds surplus money invested by more than 1,000 counties, cities, school districts and other government agencies.

Deputy Mayor Roger Wishner, who took office last year after serving in the state Legislature, motioned for the vote for **Salerno**'s resignation. Wishner said he "wanted to work things out" with **Salerno,** but couldn't. "You have to make a decision which is in the best interest of the people," Wishner said. Alu and Commissioner Don Rosen joined Wishner in voting to ask for the resignation.

CLASH OF STYLES

Wishner said **Salerno**'s management style didn't work for him. Wishner said what really irked him was that he read in the news that Sunrise has more than $200 million tied up in a state-run investment pool that's performing badly. "We should have known what's going on," Wishner said.

Also, **Salerno** treated local news reporters "like the devil," often ignoring their requests for information or interviews. "He won't even return phone calls," Wishner said. Wishner also said he was vexed that the city's building inspectors didn't have laptop computers and that residents couldn't pay utility bills online.

Commissioner Rosen said he likes **Salerno** as a person, but thought that his closeted style of leadership didn't work for him anymore. "I don't like surprises," said Rosen, who was also upset about the investments.

But others on the dais didn't agree with letting **Salerno** go.

"Some commissioners feel they have to operate a city to feel important," said Commissioner Joseph Scuotto, who joined Mayor Steve Feren in opposing the move to oust **Salerno.** "They have to control the city and just want to put who they want in there."

Scuotto said by letting **Salerno** go, giving him only until Friday to leave, the city loses "a lot of institutional knowledge." "He's been a great city manager for the city of Sunrise for the last 18 years," Scuotto said. "He turned the city around, brought in a lot of development and a lot of businesses."

A fierce competitor, **Salerno** often competed with Miramar to lure businesses to the city. Sometimes, he would file public records requests in Miramar to find out the financial packages Miramar had arranged to attract businesses. "He didn't take kindly to being No. 2 to Miramar," Miramar City Manager Bob Payton said Wednesday.

$700,000 PACKAGE

Wishner said that under **Salerno**'s contract, the city will have to pay him 13 months of salary, vacation time and sick leave. He said the total could come to $700,000.

Salerno could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

The city plans to do a national search for a city manager, but in the meantime, Fire Chief Bruce Moeller will lead the city in transition. "This is a challenge for me, but one that I am prepared for. I've been a member of city's management staff, and a Sunrise resident, for 10 years," Moeller said Wednesday in a written statement. "I understand the people and dynamics of the city and look forward to continuing my service in a new role."

News-Press, The (Fort Myers, FL)
June 6, 2007

FM council selects new city manager
Author: *JOEL MORONEY*

Patrick G. Salerno, 56, longtime manager of the City of Sunrise just across Alligator Alley, was selected to become the first professional city manager of Fort Myers.

If he accepts, **Salerno** will be charged with overseeing a growing city of 63,000, a budget of $80 million and a payroll that includes more than 800 city employees.

The city cannot pay **Salerno's** current $210,000 salary -- the job will pay about $150,000.

But **Salerno** said he is eligible for retirement benefits from his current position, where he has been since 1990.

Council hopes to have a signed contract yet this week with a start date of July 1.

William P. Mitchell, an assistant city manager of Newport News, Va., collected four of council's seven votes and will be the alternate candidate if a deal cannot be struck with **Salerno.**

Election results threaten domineering city manager in Sunrise

By Jennifer Gollan
South Florida Sun-Sentinel
Posted March 15 2007

Sunrise – Support from voters in the eastern and central neighborhoods ferried former state Rep. Roger Wishner to a decisive victory Tuesday over 14-year incumbent Irwin Harlem.

Wishner's triumph over Harlem and political novice James DePelisi in the race for a seat on the Sunrise City Commission signaled a shift in voting patterns. Some civic leaders say it also portends a move away from the city's centralized power structure to a more open form of government.

"The tide is turning," said Larry Sofield, president of the East Sunrise Residents Association. "Now the working people are voting ... not just the retirees. They are getting more and more involved because they are tired of ... going along with whatever the city manager **[Pat Salerno]** wants."

Wishner, 49, won more votes from the city's central and eastern swaths, largely populated with middle-class families, with a cut-property-taxes-and-government-waste mantra. Harlem, 79, fell short despite a campaign strategy that had proved successful for many of his predecessors: cultivating support from retirees and others in Sunrise Lakes condominiums. DePelisi, 40, snagged the most votes in the city's western precincts.

Wishner, who got about 40 percent of the vote, said he intends to join with Commissioners Sheila Alu and Donald Rosen, who have advocated for open government, to form a majority on key decisions that come before the commission. The shift may pressure **Salerno** to cede more control over city affairs to the commission. "His **[Salerno's]** management style is obviously going to have to be different with a new majority," Wishner said.

Rosen, who has called for **Salerno's** ouster, agreed. "The commission has abdicated its responsibility to **Salerno**," Rosen said. "**Mr. Salerno** needs to be more responsive to the commission and needs to stop working deals and then presenting them to the commission. If he can't stop doing that, it may be time for a change."

Salerno, Mayor Steven Feren and Commissioner Joseph Scuotto could not be reached Wednesday, despite two messages left for each.

Salerno congratulated Wishner on his win in a brief telephone conversation Wednesday, Wishner said. The two are to meet by the end of the week. Wishner served as a Sunrise commissioner from 1987 to 1999 and a state representative from 2000 to 2004.

Wishner said he intends to ask **Salerno** to set a timeline for construction of a new public safety complex, search for auditors to scrutinize the city's finances and help Sunrise Lakes residents displaced by Hurricane Wilma return to their homes. As an added measure of accountability, Wishner said, he will ask **Salerno** to document his business affairs in writing.

No thanks, Florida city manager tells Surrey

Surrey Leader, Surrey, Canada
By Kevin Diakiw, Staff Reporter
Feb 09 2007

A new city manager being sought from Florida withdrew his application four days before the deal was to be finalized, The Leader has learned.

Patrick Salerno was expected to tell Commission (elected politicians) in Sunrise, Florida Tuesday he was leaving for Surrey. He's been top manager in Sunrise for 17 years.

Surrey council was to give final approval to his hire on Monday after a fairly long process that was often hung up on visa approvals. In a surprise development Thursday morning, **Salerno**, 55, withdrew from the job "for personal and family reasons," said Mayor Dianne Watts. He was to fill the position vacated by Umendra Mital, who resigned early last year.

Watts said in an interview from Ottawa Thursday she's upset with the latest development. "I'm disappointed," Watts said. "There's a lot of expertise and knowledge he would have helped us with."

Sources say Surrey was offering **Salerno** more than $200,000 annually, a figure described as on par with Mital's former salary.

Salerno was to be huge coup for this city. In 1998, he put Sunrise on the map when he secured a venue for the Florida Panthers, convincing a group of public and private partners to build a $212 million hockey arena in the city. To sweeten the deal, **Salerno** and Commission offered $26 million worth of municipal incentives, including land, police, fire and paramedic services. Salerno was praised lavishly for the stick-handling, with an off-ramp to the stadium named "**Pat Salerno** Drive."

Sunrise Mayor Steve Feren said in one Florida newspaper "Sunrise is the envy of every other city – the city manager is responsible for a lot of that."

Salerno has the reputation as a hard worker and the person to go to when a deal needs to be sealed.

It's those qualities Surrey council was seeking for this city.

Salerno has been short-listed for several other city manager positions in the U.S. over the past decade, and also dropped out of the running for some of those spots. Watts said council will meet at an in-camera meeting Monday to determine the next steps necessary in securing a city manager.

SUNRISE SET TO END STAFF'S POST-WILMA POWERS

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jennifer Gollan
Jan 21, 2007

After Hurricane Wilma hit in 2005, city officials immediately called a state of emergency and handed extraordinary power to the city's top brass to clean up the debris left behind.

The emergency order instated that October extended decision- making powers -- on issues such as hiring and spending related to hurricane cleanup and restoration work -- to City Manager **Pat Salerno**; Marcia Peterson, who directs the Purchasing Division of the city's Central Services Department; and Laura Toebe, the finance director.

But now, more than 14 months later, city commissioners are ready to retake control.

The City Commission on Jan. 8 unanimously voted to retake authority over hiring and spending decisions related to the hurricane. Final approval of the decision is expected at the meeting on Tuesday.

Commissioner Sheila Alu also publicly requested that city staff provide her with a tab for the cleanup, estimated to have crept into the millions. "I'm not saying I have a problem giving this power to staff, but it's now many months later," Alu said at the Jan. 8 meeting. "I want to know what we've spent; we [commissioners] have no idea."

Salerno said the cleanup tally is in flux and won't be ready until February. Early estimates indicate that "we've spent millions on debris removal alone," **Salerno** said.

Sunrise paid $7.5 million to AshBritt Inc. of Pompano Beach to collect debris after Hurricane Wilma, according to financial records provided by the city. AshBritt was one of a handful of companies hired for that type of work.

Salerno said he favored keeping the emergency ordinance unchanged to expedite the city's recovery. The city still isn't completely back to normal, he said.

For example, city officials -- scattered to temporary offices after Hurricane Wilma ripped off part of the roof at City Hall -- returned just several weeks ago to their newly repaired offices on Oakland Park Boulevard. And the city continues to plant trees in areas stripped bare by the hurricane, **Salerno** said.

"You gave authority to deal with the worst disaster in the city's history, and we are still not complete with all that work," **Salerno** said. "... It will be years before we're finished."

According to the emergency ordinance, Peterson was permitted to approve contracts for

amounts of more than $25,000; and **Salerno,** together with Toebe, was permitted to shift funds between departments and offices to secure contracts and services. **Salerno** also was allowed to approve expenditures for facilities and operations.

If final approval is granted Tuesday, city commissioners would take back control of those powers.

SIGNS POINT TO SUNRISE ELECTION FIGHT
South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jennifer Gollan
Jan 20, 2007

New signs announcing capital projects throughout the city have ignited a political debate about their underlying message.

Are they intended to promote the city's $75 million overhaul of parks and roads? Or do they have a political undertone because Deputy Mayor Irwin Harlem's name is listed for all to see? The city says the former. Harlem's challengers in the March 13 election, Roger Wishner and James DePelisi, contend the latter.

Next week, the city will post the last of 50 signs costing $68,150 in parks and along median strips announcing the city's raft of renovations. The bulk of the signs were installed in the past three months, said Dan Fullen, manager of Signs Studios Inc.

City commissioners unanimously approved a contract with the Fort Lauderdale company on Sept. 26, records show.

Almost all of the white placards measure 8 feet by 8 feet and list the name of the project-to-be and city commissioners' names. Harlem and Commissioner Sheila Alu are both up for re-election in March, but Alu has no opponent.

The signs are designed to alert residents to upcoming projects, said Kathleen Castro, a city spokeswoman who is overseeing the installation. "It also provides residents the opportunity to provide input before the projects are done," Castro said.

But some of the promoted projects are years away from being designed, let alone constructed, some say.

"I think it's marketing brilliance," said David Lokaj, president of the Fraternal Order of Police's Sunrise chapter, locked in negotiation with the city over the its employee contract. "Put up the signs when it counts -- right before an election."

Wishner criticized the signs as a waste of tax dollars. "Clearly the signs are to promote the elected officials," Wishner said, "and the projects may not see the light of day in some cases." DePelisi agreed. "That's one of the ways that [City Manager] **Pat Salerno** keeps the commissioners happy," DePelisi said. "He gives them excellent benefit plans and lets them soak up all the glory through signs like that."

Salerno did not return two messages left with his assistant requesting comment.
Harlem dismissed his opponents' complaints as a ploy to "get press." "I don't think I have a comment on that thing," Harlem said of the sign flap. "I just think it's ridiculous."

One sign announces a children's park that may not happen for several years. The park is supposed to replace City Hall at 10770 W. Oakland Park Blvd. But first, the city plans to build a $28.9 million city hall and plaza on Panther Parkway in western Sunrise. Construction is scheduled to begin late this year or early 2008, Sunrise officials say.

Lokaj pointed to a sign at the city's public safety complex -- shuttered with water damage more than a year ago -- which he said could take three to four years to build. "I am not sure ... if they will even be done with the building before I'm even retired," Lokaj said.

Castro declined to provide a list of expected start dates for the projects where the signs are posted

SUNRISE INTENDS TO ERECT NEW CITY HALL BUILDING TO GO ON LAND NEAR SAWGRASS MILLS MALL

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jennifer Gollan Staff Writer
Sep 17, 2006

Commissioners last year tucked away almost $29 million in the city's budget for a new City Hall and plaza.

Now, after lining up a coveted plot of land near the Sawgrass Mills outlet mall last month, officials are ready to move ahead with City Hall's construction.

Sort of.

Commissioner Sheila Alu, at a recent review of the city's proposed 2006-2007 budget, expressed concern that the city's estimate for the project was too vague. "At what point will we actually know what we're going to spend on City Hall?" Alu asked.

"These are just estimates right now," City Manager **Pat Salerno** replied. "You have approved a budget in prior years for the project and you authorized a land swap."

Sunrise Mayor Steven Feren, in a recent interview, appeared to have forgotten how the city would finance the building. He explained that a "very small millage (property tax) rate" on a bond measure approved in the 1980s would partly finance the City Hall. Feren could not be reached for comment on the apparent discrepancy, despite messages left with his assistant.

But in a telephone interview, **Salerno** said city commissioners approved $28.9 million in October for the new City Hall and plaza, paid for mostly with $20 million in revenue bonds The new building will include offices for commissioners and city employees, who have outgrown Sunrise's City Hall on Oakland Park Boulevard, **Salerno** said.

Many city employees were temporarily displaced to other buildings when Hurricane Wilma last year damaged City Hall. Repairs costing $1.5 million are to be finished in mid-October.

Last month, the city struck a deal with an investment group for 6.5 acres of land on Panther Parkway to build the new City Hall. With 100,000 square feet of office space, along with an outdoor plaza, it will be wedged between the BankAtlantic Center to the north, and Metropica, composed of condominiums, shops and offices being constructed to the south.

In exchange for the new land, Sawgrass 17 Acres Partnership, which includes Joseph Kavana, chairman and chief executive officer of Miami-based K-Group Holdings Inc. (owns Metropica), received 6.9 acres of property on the west side of Panther Parkway at Northwest 21st Street. Kavana did not return calls requesting comment. Kavana's land was worth $8.7 million, while

the city's property was worth $6.5 million, according to a city report.

A few years ago, Sunrise offered K-Group $15.8 million in tax incentives until 2025 as Metropica is completed.

Kavana met or spoke on the telephone with **Salerno** on 29 occasions from January 2005 through August of this year, making him **Salerno's** most frequent appointment outside of city employees, according to copies of **Salerno's** meeting calendars.

"We have been talking with them about the northern parcel [near Metropica]," Feren said. "It is one of the things that the city used to help convince them to build the project, because having a brand- new City Hall, connecting their building to the Sawgrass Mills area, makes it more worthwhile for them to build there."

Estimates for the new city hall and plaza were based on the scope of the projects and the cost of construction materials, **Salerno** said.

"That was just a figure that [City Manager] Pat [**Salerno**] told us was his best guesstimate at the time," Feren said, referring to the estimate for the new city hall in the back of the city's 2005-2006 budget. "It is just a number on the page in the book."

The city intends to hire an architect for the new City Hall before summer 2007, Feren said. Construction could begin in late 2007 or early 2008

BUILDINGS TO GO UP, TAX RATE DOWN SUNRISE OKS PLAN FOR ITS NEW CITY HALL

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Kevin Smith Staff Writer
Aug 3, 2005

New buildings will go up and the tax rate will go down under the budget for this city's coming year. The 2005-06 spending plan, released Tuesday, included a very slight reduction in the city's property tax rate.

The budget's capital program includes $26.9 million for a city hall and $8.5 million for a public safety building, plans that please assistant deputy mayor Irwin Harlem. "I haven't gone through it all the way yet, but I really like what's happening with the new city hall and new public safety complex," Harlem said.

The current public safety building has been infected with mold, with the last employees evacuating in late May.

City manager **Pat Salerno** said the older building, 10440 Oakland Park Blvd., was not only overrun with mold but also was more vulnerable to the high winds a South Florida hurricane might bring. "Our public safety operations need a secure environment," **Salerno** said, observing a new structure built specifically for public safety could include training simulators, a pistol range, a larger dispatch center and an expanded crime lab. "These investments, you don't want to make in a building that isn't structurally sound," **Salerno** said.

Salerno said he expected the new public safety building would be constructed at the same location as the existing building. While he hoped the construction could be expedited once the budget is approved by the city commission next month, he doubted the building would be complete before next fall.

The city commission last week approved a maximum city property tax rate of $6.22 per $1,000 of assessed valuation, the same rate used for the 2004-05 budget year. But the tax rate built into the proposed budget was a hair lower at $6.21 per $1,000 of assessed value.

Under the new rate, an owner of a $300,000 home, taking the $25,000 homestead deduction, will pay the city almost $1,708.

The city will collect $1.35 million less in taxes compared to the slightly higher rate, but with the 14 percent increase in the value of the city's taxable property, most city residents likely will still pay more in taxes.

SUNRISE OKS CONTRACT WITH EX-OFFICIAL FORMER FINANCE DIRECTOR TO EARN $80 AN HOUR AS A CONSULTANT

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jeremy Milarsky Staff Writer
Nov 28, 2004

Facing the Oct. 29 retirement of city Finance Director Ruth Castellon, City Manager **Pat Salerno** asked Sunrise city commissioners to hire Castellon for one year as an outside consultant, paying her at a rate of $80 an hour. **Salerno** said hiring Castellon, 57, on a contractual basis would make the transition easier.

Commissioners agreed, voting 4-1 to approve the contract at a meeting last month. Commissioner Don Rosen dissented.

Before her retirement, Castellon worked for the city for 16 years, 11 of them as finance director. She earned an annual salary of $121,100 at the time she left, according to city records. Her former department is key in city politics, because Sunrise's finance workers help put together the city's budget annually, and that budget plays a major part in the decision on how much property owners pay in annual taxes.

Commissioners, for example, have touted the fact that Sunrise's property tax rate has decreased for the last 10 years. Many property owners have paid more to the city, however, because of rising property values.

Rosen said he voted against the contract because, to him, it doesn't make sense to pay an outside consultant to help run the finance department when that department already has a director. Former assistant finance director Laura Toebe has been acting director in Castellon's place since Nov. 1.

"I find it against what I consider to be normal policy," Rosen said. **Salerno** said keeping Castellon as a consultant is necessary, given the financial complexity of the city -- Sunrise has a $76 million annual budget and at least two special-taxing districts.

Also, Castellon retired two years before city officials originally expected her to do so, **Salerno** said. "The finance director has a significant role in the health of the city," he said. "And we didn't have that extra two years to go on."

SUNRISE COMMISSION TO VOTE ON SETTLEMENT WITH POLICE UNION

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jeremy Milarsky Staff Writer
Sep 1, 2004

A lengthy and heated political battle between Sunrise officials and the city's police labor union may come to an end this week.

City commissioners Thursday evening will be asked to approve a three-year contract with the union. The proposed agreement calls for improved wages and a more generous pension plan for more than 150 members of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 80, which represents Sunrise police officers. "I thought it was a very fair increase [to the pension plan]," said police Officer David Lokaj, president of the union.

The union's current contract with the city expired Oct. 1, 2003. Negotiations between union officials and representatives of the city administration dragged for almost a year.

A major sticking point was Sunrise's so-called pension "cap" system, which limited the amount of money city officials poured into an officers' pension fund if the stock market performed poorly.

Sunrise offers its employees a pension plan in which both the city government and the individual employee contribute to the investment fund. But if the city's share of the cost for maintaining that fund exceeds 10 percent of the employees' total payroll, the remaining cost is split 50-50 with public safety employees.

The proposed agreement raises that "cap" to 18 percent, so the city would absorb more of the cost of maintaining the pension fund, City Manager **Pat Salerno** said. Union members approved the contract proposal on Friday by a 3-1 margin, Lokaj said. "I think [union representatives] got an outstanding contract for their members," **Salerno** said.

After voting on the contract during a first reading, commissioners also will discuss **Salerno's** budget proposal for the next fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1.

Under **Salerno's** proposal, Sunrise property owners will pay the city about $6.23 per $1,000 of taxable property value next year, a decrease from the city's current tax rate.

Commissioners plan to meet at 5 p.m. Thursday at City Hall, 10770 W. Oakland Park Blvd.

SUNRISE OFFICIALS EXPECT DROP IN FIRE TAX REVENUES

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jeremy Milarsky Staff Writer
Aug 6, 2004

Despite more than $48 million in new construction over the past year, City Manager **Pat Salerno** expects the city's special property tax for fire protection to bring in less money next year, according to a budget proposal released this week.

That's because more businesses are successfully applying for exemptions to the tax, **Salerno** said. The tax costs homeowners $89.50 annually. Businesses pay a higher fee based on the physical size of their property, but some nonprofit businesses can avoid the tax by asking for an exemption.

Sunrise officials collected $4.8 million in fire taxes this year. During the next fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, **Salerno** expects the city to collect only $4.6 million, according to his proposed budget for fiscal year 2005.

Reduced revenue from the flat fire tax was one of many challenges city staff members faced when drafting the $75.8 million budget proposal last month, **Salerno** said.

That proposal calls for the same property tax rate as the current year's: $6.24 per $1,000 of taxable value. Under the proposed rate, the owner of a $150,000 home who claims the state's $25,000 homestead exemption would pay $779.63 in taxes next year.

Commissioners have planned a public hearing to discuss the budget for Sept. 13.

"Everybody goes through each page, line by line," Commissioner Sheila Alu said.

Salerno said drafting this year's budget was especially difficult because of rising costs associated with employees. According to the budget proposal, Sunrise salary costs will increase an average of 6 percent next year. The city will cut two full-time positions and add 13 part-time positions.

PAY RAISES ON SUNRISE AGENDA OFFICIAL OBJECTS TO THE TIMING OF PROPOSAL

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Jeremy Milarsky Staff Writer
Mar 23, 2004

What would normally be a routine decision to reward the city's highest-level managers may turn into a political debate this evening, as city commissioners decide whether to grant 115 supervisors in City Hall a 2.5 percent pay raise next year.

City Manager **Pat Salerno** proposed the raise as an annual "merit increase," a salary increase granted to the employee for doing a good job. But at least one city commissioner has questioned the timing of the pay raise since city officials are in the midst of tense contract negotiations with Sunrise's police union.

Members of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 80 are asking for a salary hike of at least 5 percent annually to cover the cost of living during the next three years. The union's contract with the city expired Oct. 1. Officers and sergeants in the union also receive a merit increase each year. Mayor Steve Feren pointed out that the police officers usually receive a more generous merit raise than the city's supervisors. "Their merit pay is more than the supervisory employees'," he said.

Salerno's proposal is a routine decision that, by city law, must be considered by commissioners annually, Feren said. Usually, it is approved with little or no controversy.

But city commissioner Sheila Alu, who said she thinks the city's administrators deserve raises, questioned the timing of **Salerno's** proposal. She wondered whether it sent the wrong message to union members in the midst of contract talks. "I just don't think this is a good time," she said last week.

Salerno, who is not among the group of employees included in the proposal, could not be reached for comment.

Like Alu, police Officer David Lokaj, president of the police union, did not object to the city's supervisors and department heads getting a raise, but he said he hopes some of the city's wealth will be spread to union members as well. "I don't understand the reason why they're doing it now," he said. Employees affected by the proposal include Police Chief David Boyett and Fire Chief Bruce Moeller. If approved, the pay raises would become effective on each employee's anniversary date during the current fiscal year.

SUNRISE FIRES LONGTIME ATTORNEY OFFICIAL SAYS HE VIOLATED CONFIDENTIALITY

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Christy McKerney Staff writer
Aug 27, 2003

Sunrise commissioners on Tuesday fired their top legal adviser after two commissioners cited a lack of confidence in City Attorney Jeffrey D. Olson. "I've given this a tremendous amount of thought, but I am increasingly uncomfortable with our city attorney," said Commissioner Sheila Alu, who moved to terminate Olson's employment on the grounds that he had violated her confidentiality.

Commissioners Don Rosen and Irwin Harlem also voted to terminate Olson, who has been city attorney for almost a decade. Rosen said firing Olson was a tough call but said he has had cause recently to question "who he's working for."

Olson, 49, will leave Friday, taking with him 60 days of severance pay, almost six months of sick leave and vacation, and other benefits. Commissioners agreed to ask Assistant City Attorney Kim Register to fill the gap as interim city attorney. Olson acknowledged that Alu was concerned he had violated her confidentiality by talking with the city manager.

"When I was appointed as city attorney, I was directed at that time by the City Commission ... that I should work very closely with the city manager," Olson said on the way out of City Hall. "I have done that." "Obviously, it's a different commission," he said.

City Manager **Pat Salerno** had no comment after the meeting.

Olson was strongly praised by Mayor Steve Feren and Commissioner Joseph Scuotto, who opposed the move.

Scuotto defended the attorney, praising him for his work and ability to work well with the city manager. "I don't think he's ever jeopardized the city in any way," Scuotto said.

The bombshell came minutes after the commission agreed to a proposal by Alu to have the city attorney draft an ordinance that would allow city commissioners to put items directly on the agenda as well as give the majority of commissioners the authority to overrule the mayor on matters of procedure.

Tension has been brewing between **Salerno** and Alu, who wants wider commission involvement. Last month, Alu accused **Salerno** of keeping a series of planned fee increases from commissioners.

Alu also wants elected officials informed of deals **Salerno** is working on behind the scenes.

And, she said, she wants to know how proposed fee increases are decided. "When I ask for all the facts, I want all the facts," Alu said.

During the meeting, when Scuotto tried to instruct Rosen to ask questions on small agenda items off the dais, Alu intervened. "This is what a commissioner is here to do," she said.

SUNRISE LEADERS SEEK TO REDUCE MANAGER'S POWER TWO COMMISSIONERS WANT NEW PROCEDURE.

South Florida Sun - Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Christy McKerney Staff writer
Aug 26, 2003

Shirley Sumner has only to look around to see the results of City Manager **Pat Salerno's** decade-long reign over Sunrise. The Office Depot Center. Sawgrass Corporate Park. Tidy neighborhoods. "I do sometimes wonder why we elect commissioners, because **Pat** seems to have all the good ideas," said the 85-year-old Sunrise Lakes activist, acknowledging how much power **Salerno** has over the city.

Sumner likes it this way.

But for the first time in recent memory, several commissioners are openly complaining the 52-year-old **Salerno** has so much control over city affairs -- particularly over information they need to make decisions -- that elected officials are kept in the dark.

Commissioner Sheila Alu has drafted an ordinance that would allow the commission to put items on their own agenda -- a responsibility that solely rests with the city manager. The proposal, which also gives a majority of commissioners authority to overrule the mayor on how meetings are conducted, is up for discussion tonight.

"As representatives of the people, we need to take a more aggressive stand and say that here's what the people of Sunrise really want and not just look at one person's or one staff member's opinion all the time," said Commissioner Don Rosen. While Alu and Rosen were elected two years ago on a wave of voter dissatisfaction that ousted two incumbents, the proposed changes will likely be symbolic. Veteran commissioners said they don't see a need to change.

Salerno wouldn't comment on the proposal. "The current agenda procedures were established by the commission in the late '80s and were in place when I became city manager. Any consideration of changes is a commission issue," he said in a statement issued through his secretary.

Through times of public accolades, apathy and occasional sharp criticism by business foes and watchdogs over **Salerno's** secretive management style, the commission has embraced **Salerno's** behind-the- scenes deal-making. "No matter what you want to say about **Pat's** management style, whether you're for or against it, the plain fact of the matter is that nobody can argue with his results," said Mayor Steve Feren.

Feren and Commissioners Joseph Scuotto and Irwin Harlem said they don't see a need to change.

With an annual salary of $168,170, **Salerno**, who took the job in 1991, is one of the highest-paid city managers in the county. The city provides him a $1,200 allowance, the unlimited use of a new Lincoln Town car leased by the city, a free cell phone with unlimited business and personal calls and all his accrued sick leave. If he retired today, the city would pay him more than $167,000 for 2,000 hours of sick leave alone.

"We pay him a good price, and we're happy with what he does," Scuotto said. Feren and Scuotto said they know **Salerno** will place their wishes on the commission agenda.

But commissioners shouldn't have to ask the city manager, a non- elected official, Alu and Rosen said. "This was why we were elected," Rosen said. "The commission should stand together to represent the people of Sunrise and say to the manager, we have the right to put things on the agenda, we have the right to override one person saying no, if we honestly believe that it's in the best interest of the people of Sunrise."

Alu's patience with **Salerno's** control over every facet of City Hall snapped recently after she asked the City Clerk for a public document and was told she'd have to get it from the city manager. That type of secrecy, and not getting enough information about proposed fee increases, keep elected officials from doing their job, she said.

After **Salerno** said a summer camp fee increase was necessary, commissioners agreed to raise summer camp fees last month.

Later, after seeing increased fees for fire-rescue and recreation, Alu tried to change her vote against raising the summer camp fees and was told by the mayor that she couldn't. After Alu complained, **Salerno** compromised with smaller increases. But Alu is still not sure whether any increase was necessary. She was told the program for 700 kids costs $959,500, but when asked how the figure was arrived at, she said she never got a satisfactory answer.

Earlier this spring, commissioners increased benefits for themselves and city management.

If she had been told the city was in such a tight budget year, Alu said, she would not have voted for the increases.

JUDGE TOSSES PART OF MALL SUIT CITY ACCUSEDOF NEGOTIATING PRIVATE DEAL

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
CHRISTY McKERNEY Staff Writer
Aug 11, 2000

A Broward Circuit Court judge has cleared the city of allegations it violated the state Government in the Sunshine Law in dealings to bring a $200 million upscale fashion mall next to Sawgrass Mills shopping center.

Judge George A. Brescher this week dismissed portions of a Sawgrass Mills civil lawsuit that the city violated the Sunshine Law when City Manager **Pat Salerno** and city staff negotiated privately with H. Wayne Huizenga's Sunrise Land Group over a nine-month period beginning in 1998.

Sunrise Land Group wants to build a two-story fashion mall on a 150-acre tract of land across the street from Sawgrass Mills and next to the National Car Rental Center. The mall is in the planning stage.

"I believe the order speaks for itself," City Attorney Jeff Olson said. "This does not end the case, although it ends really, I think, the guts of the case." Calls for comment from Sawgrass Mills were not returned.

The city has moved to dismiss Sawgrass Mills' allegations that the city violated its civil rights by treating Sunrise Land Group differently than it treated Sawgrass Mills. The judge's ruling leaves the civil rights portion of the lawsuit intact.

The lawsuit was brought after the city staff and Sunrise Land Group last year negotiated a surprise deal that would include construction of the mall and a 13-acre city linear park surrounding it.

Commissioners, as well as the public, were unaware of the negotiations prior to distribution of the commission meeting's agenda packet, which included the agreement. Commissioners were briefed separately by the city manager after receiving the packet and before approving the document at a public hearing April 27, 1999.

Brescher said the Sunshine Law only applies to meetings of a board or commission, not of an executive staff and a private party, such as the Sawgrass Land Group.

The judge disagreed with Sawgrass Mills' allegation that the city manager and staff delegated decision-making authority to the city manager and staff.

The judge also found that the city gave reasonable notice to the public under the Sunshine Law.

Sawgrass Mills had contended the city failed to give reasonable notice to the public.

Two public hearings regarding the development of regional effect for the proposed mall were put off this week at the request of Sunrise Land Group, the city said.

The agreement between the city and Sunrise Land Group stipulates that three out of four anchor stores must come from a short list including Nordstrom's, Bloomingdales, Saks or Neiman-Marcus. The mall would include exclusive department and specialty stores and hotel and office space.

SUIT AGAINST CITY, HUIZENGA TOSSED OUT

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
STAFF REPORTS
Aug 7, 1999

A Broward circuit judge has thrown out a lawsuit against three Wayne Huizenga entities, two hotel companies, the city of Sunrise and City Manager **Pat Salerno**.

Peter Giant Bowleg, of Margate, was suing the group for $43.2 million, saying they stole his idea to build hotels and other developments in the area near Sawgrass Mills mall, where National Car Rental Center was later built and a hotel and other projects are planned.

On Thursday, the case was dismissed with prejudice, meaning it cannot be amended and refiled. Bowleg said on Friday he will appeal the ruling.

RESIDENTS JOIN CRITICS IN SUNRISE CITY OFFICIALS COME UNDER ATTACK

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN STAFF WRITER STAFF WRITER
Jun 19, 1999

At first, angry executives at corporate giant Sawgrass Mills complained that City Commissioners had abdicated their authority to City Manager **Pat Salerno**.

Now some worried residents are saying the same.

Weeks after the city and **Salerno** were sued by Sawgrass Mills for cutting a secretive deal for a competing mall, residents are starting to take notice. **Salerno** was also secretive in 1996 when he brought National Car Rental Center to town, among other ventures.

It's not an appointed city manager following the lead of an elected commission, residents say, but vice versa.

"Perhaps you need someone to watch him," said Sunrise Lakes resident and condo leader Norm Willner. "But you can't say he's doing a lousy job." It's his bosses -the commissioners - under critical scrutiny. "I'm upset with how this city's being run," Willner said. "The commission is, I think, worthless."

"There is no government in Sunrise," said Commissioner Roger Wishner, often a critic of **Salerno** and commissioners. There is one person in Sunrise that controls everything, 100 percent," he said of **Salerno**. "The other people up on that city commission should just resign and leave their seats vacant, because that's basically what you have up there. You have a vacancy in the city of Sunrise."

A lawsuit filed by Sawgrass Mills/Mills Corp. against the city recently brought attention to **Salerno's** strength and secrecy, after he met privately for six months to bring a rival mall to town.

"And where's the mayor in all this?" asked resident Bill Frazzet to. "What, is it like the Queen of look good and doesn't do anything?"

"You have an army of Sunrise residents building, who are about to go out into the front lines in the fight for openness and fairness in municipal government," said Mills Corp. executive vice president Mark Rivers. "It's not just us anymore."

In a full-page newspaper advertisement, Mills Corp. on Friday made a plea: "Are the Sunrise City Commissioners Listening?" the ad reads. By mid-day, Rivers said about 250 people had called the phone number listed on the ad. About 400 responded to a previous one. The ad attacks

the "secret hasty deal" to bring a rival mall in. "Take Action Now," it reads. "Your City Commissioners are elected to work for you. Are they lately?"

"I've been disturbed by that for a long, long time, " said Sunrise Lakes resident Stan Berman. " (**Salerno**} does what he wants to do and that's the end of it."

As an unelected city manager, **Salerno** has freedoms commissioners don't have. He can approve spending of money and can direct staff efforts toward projects of his liking.

Commissioners allow him to do so and nearly always approve what he puts before them, with little debate or discussion. They also don't give him an annual evaluation.

"I've never heard of this kind of thing, where one person was the nexus of control with so little oversight," Frazzetto said.

Salerno conducted himself similarly as Cobb County, Ga., manager, until he was fired before coming to Sunrise in 1991. In 1996, his secret talks to lure Huizenga's hockey arena were criticized but not by the mayor or commissioners.

To some, the weak commission/strong manager arrangement makes sense and has had good results.

"The city has to go on with progress," said Sunrise Lakes resident and condo leader David Paris, "and if the man has knowledge, let him do it. "

Sunrise Lakes resident Mike Rothman sees some good in it: quick meetings. On the other hand, Rothman said, "the man has so much clout and power. I don't know if it's dangerous or what."

While Mayor Steve Feren declined comment, commissioners Irwin Harlem, Fran Klauber and Joseph Scuotto said they have more input behind the scenes than spectators know.

But that arrangement pushes them into legal gray areas, according to Sunshine Law experts like Pat Gleason of the state Attorney General's Office. Commissioners aren't allowed to hold confabs with the city manager one by one on a particular issue, if the effect is to hold a de facto meeting in private. City attorney Jeffrey Olson has said that's not happening.

Harlem said he keeps checks on **Salerno** by going to City Hall and asking questions. He's just quiet on the dais, he said, out of fear the print media would misquote him.

Scuotto said he keeps some ideas quiet at meetings to avoid controversy, such as an idea he's working with **Salerno** on to require homeowners to have uniform mailboxes. But he said he has plenty of input behind the scenes.

"The problem is maybe there are people who don't feel they've seen enough of a show," Commissioner Fran Klauber said. "Some people who come, they're very negative, and this is

their entertainment. I'm sorry I'm not up there clawing people's eyes out."

If the city wasn't getting so much done, **Salerno** said, his "perceived power" wouldn't be an issue. It's not that commissioners blindly agree to everything he offers them, it's that he only of fers them what he knows they'll want.

"There's one thing that is common among all five of them: They all have the objective of making the city the most it can be for the benefit of its residents, "**Salerno** said.

Rivers, from the Mills Corp., said now that he has a,brigade of concerned citizens, the grassroots campaign can begin. He'll hold meetings with these people interested in making commissioners more responsive.

"Residents have sort of had this lingering, building concern about Sunrise government," Rivers said, "and they feel that someone is finally taking on the playground bully."

LIKE BATMAN, CITY MANAGER KEEPS HIS WORK UNDERCOVER

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
May 16, 1999

City Manager **Pat Salerno** is proud of his new nickname, "Batman," after his City Hall was likened to "the bat cave -- underground, undercover and top secret."

He figures that makes him protector of the city, and makes his latest critic, a senior executive from his city's biggest taxpayer, Sawgrass Mills, "the Joker."

It's a fitting title for **Salerno**, a city manager with seemingly superhuman powers. Able to single-handedly make multimillion-dollar projects appear from behind closed doors. Able to turn the City Commission into a virtual rubber stamp, rarely, if ever, voting down an item. **Salerno,** 48, is arguably the most powerful sitting city manager in South Florida.

While his hubris and secretive operational style got him ousted from his last job, as manager of Cobb County, Ga., Sunrise commissioners have honored the New York native with more money, praise and power.

The city's west side provides more proof every day of his workings, as first an arena, then new roads, restaurants, hotels, offices and apartments are built or planned. The area is shaping up as a downtown in the Everglades, accessible by major highways in all directions.

For that, **Salerno** is often credited. For the way it was achieved, he's the butt of criticism. "**Salerno's** situation is the extreme," said Ron Wainshal, a Sunrise resident who has fought for information on a 10-story office building, a deal that emerged from secrecy to city agenda, complete with a $500,000 taxpayer giveaway. "I don't know of too many cities with such a strong city manager and such a weak, by choice, city commission."

"Sunrise certainly is a unique city when it comes to how the public's business is operated," said Sunrise Commissioner Roger Wishner, the lone voice of occasional dais dissent. "My colleagues sometimes believe that little or no discussion on these issues is the best. They truly have a firm belief that **Pat** can really do no wrong and he can't make mistakes."

Mayor Steve Feren declined to comment. Commissioners Fran Klauber, Joseph Scuotto and Irwin Harlem said they have input behind the scenes, preferring to ask questions privately instead of before the public.

"Go look at the other cities, that's all I can say," Scuotto said. "Somebody must be doing the right thing."

"I think the one overall statement I have to make," Klauber said, "is that the city manager doesn't

vote."

"He works for us. He works for me," Harlem said. "And he does know what I'm looking for."

Salerno's leash has grown longer through the years, as he has grown to know the commissioners, three of whom he has worked with 10 years or more. He said he knows their visions and doesn't bring ideas to them "half-baked."

Salerno, who was hired in 1990, is paid $128,214 to rule over a staff of 1,200 and a $282 million budget. He is not subject to annual evaluation. If commissioners even suggest publicly that he leave, he can take his buyout package and run.

In the past year, commissioners expanded his spending powers. They gave him an 11 percent raise. They named a road after him.

He is allowed to work clandestine deals without tipping off commissioners first. He can spend taxpayer money on consultants and use up staff time, as evidenced with the latest "Sunrise Surprise," the proposed $200 million-plus mall that would be built across the street from Sawgrass Mills.

In that deal, **Salerno** negotiated for about six months with Alex Muxo, lieutenant for H. Wayne Huizenga, hired consultants, then let commissioners in on the secret just days before their vote. It was, as almost always, unanimous. He conducted similarly secret deals to bring the National Car Rental Center and countless other projects to the city. **Salerno** couldn't cite a time an agenda item had been voted down.

"I would grant you that it's a unique situation, that you have five very focused individuals, and I think their visions are parallel. Without that, nothing gets done -- zero," he said.

But his secretive style didn't gel with his last employer -- the Cobb County, Ga., commission -- which forced him to resign in 1989 as county manager in a secret meeting later ruled to have been a violation of open meetings laws. Newspaper accounts recount the acrimonious end of a two-year job, and the ring of familiarity it had with his previous employers, the Chatham, Ga., County Commission, when they heard he was accused of squelching the information flow.

Many say **Salerno's** reign reminds them of the strong mayor days. Only this autocrat, they say, isn't answerable to voters.

"What you're dealing with here is a city commission which acts just because **Pat Salerno** asked them to," said James Dausch, senior executive vice president of Mills Corp., the one **Salerno** dubbed "the Joker" at the last commission meeting.

"They play it so close to the chest it forces you to be adversarial just to get information that any other city would give without batting an eye."

Like many of **Salerno's** critics, Wainshal tempers his words with praise.

"He does a lot of good, but {commissioners} have abdicated responsibility on their part. Effectively **Pat's** boundaries are so broad now, he can do what he pleases. And he does that in a very intelligent way: If you don't share information, the opposition has no time to mobilize," Wainshal said.

Commissioners rarely debate or even discuss in public. Most business, except items requiring public hearings, is put on the "consent agenda," meaning the items will be passed all at once without talk.

Some commissioner-manager debate takes place over the phone, outside the public's earshot.

"I think people can communicate better one-on-one," **Salerno** said, calling "preposterous" the idea that he's circumventing the Sunshine Law's rules on open government, which are designed to let the public in on not just the final votes, but the deliberative process, too.

Unlike other cities, Sunrise conducts no public workshops, where commissioners or the public could debate a proposal.

The city passed its strict sign law in August without any workshops beforehand. The small-business community is now up in arms. In Pembroke Pines and now Hollywood, officials turned to public workshops to test the waters and solicit opinions.

The lack of input serves to embolden **Salerno**, as projects sail through free of public derailment. If commissioners want workshops, **Salerno** said, they can have them.

"Some communities decide they need a workshop to decide whether to landscape a median strip on a little strip of road," he said. "But those are not forward-looking communities."

Salerno said Mills Corp., parent of Sawgrass Mills, has created the secrecy issue to drum up controversy over the proposed mall. But Mills Corp. is the latest in a line of people pounding on the cone of silence over City Hall.

"If you are working for the people, why don't you ask the people?" a frustrated businessman, Randy Horn, implored in February, after finding out about the new sign law.

At Sawgrass Estates, across the street from the proposed upscale mall, Bridget Zelinka said she likes the new wall the city built to drown out traffic honks and squeals.

But "the people here directly affected were never part of the process," Zelinka said. "They never considered our feelings or even questioned us. They come up with these beautiful plans. They don't inform the people until the plans are made."

That's what tennis players at the city's complex have been grousing about. They said they're the ones who use the courts, but no one ever asked them for thoughts on a $2 million renovation.

When **Salerno** in April 1998 sprung a $20 million "Neighborhood Renaissance Plan" to do projects all over the city, it was brought to commissioners with no commission or public discussion beforehand.

It passed unanimously one day after it was made available to the unknowing public. **Salerno** said it was the product of commissioners' desires.

"When you -- I don't want to say discourage -- but when you don't encourage public input, you may be missing something you don't realize you're missing," said Lou Hendrix, a 13-year member of the city's planning board and a founding member of a citizen's action group that supported the switch from strong mayor to a city manager form of government.

Throughout the years, Hendrix said, the city has moved farther and farther in a direction that pinches out the public. For example, nonresidents aren't allowed to give public comment at commission meetings, and in certain hearings, affected residents must have responded by a certain date and according to complicated procedures.

In May, when 25 upset condo dwellers showed up to protest a bagel operation they thought would stink, commissioners allowed only one of them to speak, saying he alone had come close to stating "with particularity the comprehensive land development regulation that would be violated."

"This was a done deal," Stan Berman, 70, said at the time. "We had no chance in it."

Hendrix lives in the New Orleans Lake homes, just outside Plantation.

"If I think of the hundreds of times I've spoken at the city of Plantation," she said, thankful they listened to her Sunrise enclave's thoughts on what would happen across the street.

Mayor Feren on Tuesday noticed that for the second meeting in a row, there was no one to speak at public comment. "I think it's something to be proud of," he told fellow commissioners. "We must be doing something right, if no one wants to complain."

Hendrix said she flipped on the television and caught that quote. She lauds **Salerno** and the commission for their work, but wonders whether they're afraid of what their public has to say.

"If you say anything negative, well then you're the bad guy. You're out to get them. Life's not that way. At least it's not to me," she said.

"But you know the real issue," Commissioner Wishner said, "is that does the public want more discussion and more debate about these issues? The answer is clearly no, because I don't get phone calls."

SAWGRASS MILLS BLASTS PLAN FOR NEW MALL CITY MANAGER DEALT BEHIND SCENES ON DEAL

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
ALAN CHERRY Staff Writer
Apr 28, 1999

The secretive dealings of City Manager **Pat Salerno** continued to pay dividends on Tuesday evening with an agreement that could bring one of the finest shopping centers in the United States to town.

However, it may have strained relations with the city's largest retailer, Sawgrass Mills.

"That such a project could be hatched without consultation with us, despite our request for information and your statement that nothing was going on, is calculated to guarantee our strong and persistent opposition," said a Tuesday letter from a senior vice president from The Mills Corporation to **Salerno**.

Salerno fired back to the company a written reply that said, "Your letter demonstrates that, once again, the Mills Corporation's prime motive is its own self interest."

Commissioners agreed, 4-0, to a pact for a $200 million new extravagant mall, planned by Fort Lauderdale tycoon H. Wayne Huizenga, that targets some of the wealthiest shoppers in South Florida. The 1.2 million-, multistory structure will go on 150 acres owned by Huizenga and will be built through his Sunrise Land Group, an offshoot of Huizenga Holdings.

"I was totally in the dark," said Mayor Steven Feren, who **Salerno** excitedly called at home on Friday evening to tell of the deal. "He was like a kid bringing home a straight A report card to show you. He was very pleased and very proud."

To date, most of **Salerno's** behind-the-scenes dealings have led to little more than tepid complaints, yet substantial gains for the city.

He worked out of public view to draw the National Car Rental Center and telecommunications giant Nortel to the western end of the city in recent years. With the new shopping center Tuesday, he once again convinced city commissioners his private negotiations were in line with the city's desire to be a shopping, sports, office and entertainment mecca.

Salerno said he had been negotiating with top Huizenga assistant Alex Muxo for months. The city manager used his authority to hire city consultants without commission approval. He is allowed to spend up to $10,000 on such services without special permission -- a power commissioners gave him long before the new mall was proposed.

He also mobilized city staff and didn't tell elected officials until late Friday, after a deal was

worked out and ready for a vote. Tuesday's commission review was buried on the meeting's public agenda as an agreement "for certain development matters and the design and development of a linear park."

"I don't think **Pat** thinks of anything but being able to return something to the community," said Commissioner Roger Wishner, who learned of the project when he met **Salerno** for lunch on Saturday. "We are looking at something that is the highest and best quality that it can be."

The pact states the city's desire to cooperate and expedite permits when possible. The deal also allows the developer to use neighboring city property for wetlands and drainage. In exchange, the Sunrise Land Group must give the city a $500,000 linear park at the site, as well as provide approximately $500,000 in other improvements to accommodate the park.

Salerno's stealthy negotiations on the new mall over the past six to eight months matches the way the city manager of eight years sometimes prefers to do public business, especially in the big deals.

In April 1996 on a Sunday, **Salerno** presented commissioners a privately negotiated deal to exchange millions of dollars in city services for making Sunrise the site of the National Car Rental Center -- a 21,000-seat building costing $184 million that two years later would be the home of the Huizenga-controlled Florida Panthers hockey team. At the time, the city was in a bidding war with Fort Lauderdale to land the project.

For 15 months in 1994-95, he quietly met with Nortel to move its 400-employee Latin American headquarters out of Miami-Dade County to Sunrise, in exchange for $300,000 from the city. He lined up the deal behind closed doors, and commissioners agreed to it with plaudits for his efforts. Feren said too much advance publicity can doom a major project. "Sometimes that is the way the city has to operate," he said.

This time, however, the city rankled The Mills Corporation's Senior Executive Vice President James F. Dausch. "Such a project would have potentially serious negative implications for Sawgrass Mills and the surrounding areas," Dausch wrote.

The proposed new mall is across the street from the huge Sawgrass Mills mall and would be the northern neighbor to the National Car Rental Center. The acreage has often been mentioned as a potential site for a professional baseball stadium. The shopping center kills those rumors.

Salerno said he never denied the possibility of a mall on the property and that at one point Sawgrass Mills considered using the site. "I guess the real point of your letter is The Mills Corporation doesn't want another mall unless The Mills Corporation is the developer," **Salerno** wrote.

The city agreement with the new mall, fashioned by **Salerno** and his staff, requires it be on par with two of the most luxurious shopping venues in the nation -- Phipps Plaza in Atlanta and The Somerset Collection in Troy, Mich. The new Sunrise mall is expected to take two to three years

to finish.

Three of the proposed mall's four anchors are to be a Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, Neiman Marcus, Lord & Taylor, Macy's or Nordstrom, the city deal says. Skeptical marketing experts say the shopping center's goal is unrealistic because many of those stores already have leasing deals at other malls, among other reasons.

A city-hired consultant said there was room in South Florida for a high-end shopping complex. Muxo, with Sunrise Land Group, concurs. "This is not just another mall," he said.

A LOOK AT OUR CITIES SUNRISE BROWARD CITIES ARE RESHAPING THEIR IMAGES AS THEY COPE WITH DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS.

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
Mar 27, 1999

One of Broward's larger cities, Sunrise has shed an ugly past and is becoming an entertainment hub, with a giant mall, a hockey arena and concert venue, and a coming cluster of restaurants and family entertainment.

The city, with a population now of about 78,000, was incorporated in 1961 as Sunrise Golf Village by Norman Johnson, who used an upside-down house to attract buyers.

Six years later, John Lomelo Jr., a pardoned felon, became mayor. Through annexation, the city grew westward, reaching the Everglades and dropping south of State Road 84.

While mayor, Lomelo survived a criminal charge in 1967 that later was dropped, several IRS audits and 14 state attorney's investigations. He was convicted in 1985 of defrauding taxpayers of $52,000 and trying to extort money from a Maryland nursing home company.

For years, the city has worked to shed a reputation for corruption. The city is now runby a professional city manager and is governed by a mayor and four commissioners elected citywide.

In 1998, the city's regional clout grew when the new Florida Panthers hockey arena, the National Car Rental Center, opened. The arena -- a partnership among companies lead by local sports mogul H. Wayne Huizenga, Broward County and Sunrise -- draws top national music artists, wrestling, soccer, football and circuses. A road behind the arena was named in 1998 after City Manager **Pat Salerno**, who was credited with obtaining the arena. Across the street, Sawgrass Mills draws 25 million visitors a year, mall officials say. They and tourism officials say that makes it the state's second-most popular tourist attraction, after Walt Disney World.

In 1999, The Oasis, a cluster of top-end restaurants and entertainment centers, was scheduled to open at the mall.

The City Commission meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month in City Hall, 10770 W. Oakland Park Blvd.

SUNRISE MANAGER TO GET 2ND RAISE

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
Mar 24, 1999

City commissioners voted themselves a raise Tuesday night, giving City Manager **Pat Salerno** his second pay boost in six months.

Commissioners will receive a 6 percent raise, on top of their current $20,691.22 salary. They also receive a pension and a $400 a month stipend that requires no receipts. **Salerno** received a 5 percent raise on his $115,198 salary in October and now will get a 6 percent raise retroactive to October. The raise brings his salary to $128,214, plus a car, mobile phone with unlimited use and $100 a month expense account with no accounting or receipts required. He accepted the job in 1991 making $82,096, according to city records.

The city manager's raise stirred a short debate, in which commissioner Roger Wishner questioned the large increase and the mayor defended it. The vote was unanimous.

"He's the hardest working person I know," Mayor Steve Feren said.

Salerno thanked them for the raise and added that while he may make more than other Broward managers, some of them, such as Fort Lauderdale's, receive additional compensation such as a housing stipend.

Salerno receives a 5 percent raise automatically each year and is not subject to annual evaluation by the city commission.

His responsibilities include managing the city's $275.6 million budget and executing the will of the five city commissioners.

In contrast to **Salerno's** salary, the city manager of Fort Lauderdale, population 149,700, makes $125,000; in Hollywood, population 126,900, the city manager makes $124,592; in Pembroke Pines, population 112,692, the salary is $122,553; in Coral Springs, population 107,000, the salary is between $117,000 and $120,000; in Weston, population, 38,000, the pay is $105,000.

Last year, commissioners of this 77,000-population city gave themselves a 5.5 percent raise and gave themselves and **Salerno** a pension. The Tuesday night raises were folded into a resolution giving city supervisors and managers their annual 3.5 percent cost of living adjustment.

It was placed on the consent agenda, which allows items to be passed all at once with no discussion, unless it's specifically removed from that list. Wishner pulled it from the list.

SUNRISE PAID FEE COLLECTOR TO QUIT HIS POSITION

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
Jan 9, 1999

The occupational license fee collector who two weeks ago quit a department under investigation was paid $36,900 by the city to resign.

Jorge Capella, 39, said he hurt his back at work while moving a piano in 1993. The city settled his workers compensation case last month, stipulating that he leave his job in return for the sum, said attorney William Platow, who represented the city on the case. "That's fairly standard," Platow said.

City Manager **Pat Salerno** declined comment, referring calls to City Attorney Jeffrey Olson, who was unavailable.

The settlement has come during an 8-month-old police/State Attorney's Office investigation of Capella's cash-intake window and other Code Enforcement and Building Department issues.

Capella became the second official to quit during the investigation. His boss, David Jaccarino, resigned in September.

Neither said they quit because of the investigation into missing money in the occupational license fee department, time card irregularities and the discounting of permit fees for National Car Rental Center just prior to the city's acceptance of a free luxury suite there.

Capella fell into the public spotlight during the investigation. Though his job required knowledge of occupational license fee rules, he didn't have a license for his own limousine business. Capella rose to the cash-and-check collecting window from a filing job. His back injury in Leisure Services relegated him to light duty, and he left the department.

In Leisure Services, his poor attendance and lack of a high school equivalency degree were cited continually by bosses in his evaluations, and he was threatened with being fired.

However, in the Building Department, he was lauded for improving the fee collection rate and following rules and policies.

Capella, a nine-year employee who made $23,992 a year, did not return calls for comment. The $36,900 includes attorney's fees Capella has to pay, Platow said.

SUNRISE OFFICERS STEP UP ATTACK

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
Oct 28, 1998

Buoyed by two police chief resignations last week, in Hollywood and Davie, Sunrise's officers have stepped up their attack on city commissioners, the city manager and the police chief.

Police officers carried their contract angst to the people Tuesday night, lining the street in front of City Hall in their blue union T- shirts, picket signs aloft.

"Sunrise, Stop Abusing Your Police," the shirts and placards admonished.

Police were surprised to find picket signs suddenly banned inside City Hall when they went to complete their protest in the commission chambers. City Manager **Pat Salerno** posted a directive saying the signs' sharp edges could be dangerous, are distracting and create a circus-like atmosphere.

The officers, members of the Police Benevolent Association union in the Sunrise Police Department, want increased pension benefits.

The 19-month contract dispute has elevated hostilities between the rank and file and administrators. Police have mailed fliers to voters, placed a cartoon in a weekly paper and conducted silent protests at commission meetings prior to Tuesday's off-duty picketing.

Sunrise union representative, Detective Miles Robison, said negotiations have shown Police Chief Dave Boyett's tendency to follow the city manager, rather than leading his force.

"We want a chief who will look into the needs of the officers," Robison said.

The union has threatened a no-confidence vote against **Salerno** and formed a referendum committee to institute term limits and elections by district on the commission. The commission has several longtime members, and several live in the same area. Boyett said he expects the fervor to die down when the contract is settled.

He received a no-confidence vote in his previous job as police chief in Norman, Okla., during contract negotiations in 1994, he said.

"It's just part of the job of being police chief," Boyett said. "It's a difficult job."

SUNRISE READY TO OPEN 3 NEW POOLS

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
Oct 28, 1998

For weeks, three new city pools have tantalized the neighbors with their clean blue waters.

But the gates are locked, and the communication from City Hall to the public about the opening dates has been paltry, residents said.

"The bottom line is the Leisure Services} Department is trying to hide from the public," said resident Charles Dionne, who has been trying to find out when Welleby and Village Beach Club pools will open. "Who am I? I'm just a citizen who pays taxes."

Village Beach Club "was supposed to open last year some time," said resident Richard Rivera. "Now it's too late. It's becoming winter."

But the days of waiting are almost over, said City Manager **Pat Salerno**, and the pools are heated. City pools are open on weekends during the winter months, he said, but the civic center pool is open daily.

Roarke Hall, at 1720 NW 60th Ave., was completed in late August. It will open Nov. 7. Total cost for the project: $1.69 million.

Village Beach Club, a sandy "beach-style" pool at 6767 NW 24th St., was completed in early September. It will open Nov. 14. Cost: $1.64 million.

Welleby Tennis Club pool, at 9605 W. Oakland Park Blvd., isn't finished yet but will open Nov. 21. Cost: $765,000.

All will open with celebrations and open houses, **Salerno** said.

The delay in opening the three pools is blamed chiefly on a lack of lifeguards.

The city had to hire lifeguards for its new Olympic-sized pool at the Sunrise Civic Center & Athletic Club.

Salerno said adding to the difficulty in finding lifeguards is the timing. During the school year, some lifeguards drop work and commit to studies. "Adding these three new facilities at the same time when these people are leaving, it's very difficult."

Another city pool, near Nob Hill Road and Sunset Strip, closed and is empty. Plans are in the works to demolish it to make way for the soccer complex on that and adjacent land the city

recently purchased.

The new pools will be run by Leisure Services, located in the civic center. Director Don Campbell did not return a call for comment.

At least five lifeguards still are needed and can call the personnel department at 954-572-2322 or pick up an application at that office, 9525 W. Oakland Park Blvd.

LAW FIRM SETTLES, PAYS SUNRISE $4.15 MILLION

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
BRITTANY WALLMAN Staff Writer
May 27, 1998

A law firm accused of bungling a city lawsuit will pay $4.15 million to settle a suit filed against it by the city.

Sunrise sued Atlanta firm Phillips & Reid, now Phillips, Cook & Lowe, claiming malpractice in a case against the city's civic center contractor.

The city was having troubles with its planned civic and cultural center _ a $26 million project that is not yet open.

When Sunrise hired Phillips & Reid in 1992, officials thought they were hiring the nation's preeminent construction litigation experts.

According to the 1993 lawsuit, a Sunrise employee even gave a testimonial about the firm that was printed in a brochure for National Construction Law Center, an entity whose address was the Phillips & Reid office.

But the city had hired a firm with a past.

The Phillips & Reid story is repetitive; in its various incarnations, the firm has been chastised or sued several times for mind-boggling bills and ugly losses.

In Broward County, the School Board is pursuing a case against the firm. That case is a near duplicate of the Sunrise case _ a fight against a contractor, a hefty legal bill and a loss. The School Board paid the firm $2.1 million and the contractor $420,000.

In 1996, Sunrise paid $2.77 million in judgments, mostly to contractor James R. Tucker Inc., and paid more than $2 million in legal fees to Phillips & Reid.

That represented more than 17,200 hours of attorneys' hours, a feat impossible for the complexity of the case and number of lawyers, the lawsuit said.

The City Commission voted unanimously Tuesday night to accept the settlement, which is to be paid by Phillips & Reid's insurer.

"We're very pleased," City Manager **Pat Salerno** said. **Salerno** declined to reveal the spending plan he has for the money, saying he will tell the commission first.

"I think justice has been done, and that's all I can say about it," said Stuart Michelson, one of the

city's attorneys on the case.

About $500,000 will go to Michelson and co-counsel Bill Scherer of Conrad, Scherer & Jenne, **Salerno** said.

The civic and cultural center, at 10610 Oakland Park Boulevard, still is not open, but **Salerno** vows an opening before the summer _ two contractors, two law firms and five years after ground was broken.

Michelson, who represented Sunrise in its case, said he will file a suit against the firm on behalf of the school district in state court this week.

James R. Tucker Inc., the contractor Sunrise paid Phillips & Reid to sue, has also turned around and sued Phillips & Reid, charging the firm engaged in "scorched earth litigation" with no legal basis, putting Tucker out of business.

SUNRISE MANAGER'S JOB CANDIDACY SEEN AS COMPLIMENT

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
ALAN CHERRY Staff Writer
Sep 11, 1997

City Manager **Pat Salerno's** candidacy to be the boss of Naperville, Ill., is being viewed almost with a sense of pride here.

"It is pretty flattering," City Commissioner Fran Klauber said. "It used to be people didn't even put the city of Sunrise's address on their business cards, now it is a whole turnaround."

Salerno is among seven candidates to be the next city manager of Naperville, a Chicago suburb of 110,000 with a reputation as one of the finest communities in America.

A Washington-based organization, Zero Population Growth, last month ranked Naperville as the most child-friendly community in the United States.

Sunrise, with 75,000 residents, is too small to make the list, which includes cities over 100,000.

Sunrise commissioners applaud the recognition, say they are not sure **Salerno** would take the job, and generally express confidence the town would be fine if he chooses to leave.

"Would the city stop running? No," Mayor Steven Feren said. "We have two assistants to the city manager, or administrative assistants . . . who would certainly have the ability to keep things going."

Sunrise has little experience dealing with the departure of a city manager.

Salerno is only the second one in city history. The first was Dale Sugerman, who came in 1989 after the town dumped its strong-mayor government in exchange for a professional manager. Sugerman hired **Salerno** as an assistant. **Salerno** took over when commissioners ousted Sugerman late in 1990.

During **Salerno's** stay in Sunrise, he has brought in new corporate businesses, pushed through a plan for $50 million in civic improvements and negotiated the deal that is bringing a $185 million professional hockey arena to the western side of town.

"He has done a fantastic job for the city," Commissioner Irwin Harlem said.

Irwin and Klauber joined Feren in saying existing staff would keep the city running if **Salerno** gets the Naperville job.

"We have good staff that will pick up the slack," Harlem said.

The only words of worry come from Commissioner Roger Wishner, who said the city should have insisted **Salerno** hire an assistant city manager.

"We should put back into the budget the assistant city manager position and see to it that position be filled," Wishner said.

Planning for **Salerno**'s departure is premature, though.

Salerno said he had not decided whether to accept an invitation by Naperville officials for a personal interview in about 10 days.

Commissioners, who didn't know **Salerno** was looking for work, said they expected to be told if he went for the interview.

"There is always the possibility **Pat** will leave one day," Feren said. "The city will cross that bridge when it comes to it."

SUNRISE SLASHES RATES IN TRASH CONTRACT

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
RAFAEL LORENTE Staff Writer
Aug 21, 1996

More than seven months of secret negotiations between the city and All Service Refuse ended last week with a new contract that provides residents and businesses with lower garbage pickup rates. City Commissioners voted 4-0 to give initial approval to the contract after praising City Manager **Pat Salerno** and Harold Carter of All Service Refuse for their work.

Commissioner Fran Klauber was absent.

The new contract, retroactive to April 1, reduces collection costs from $22.21 a month to $18.10 a month for single-family homes. Condominiums will have their monthly rates reduced from $15.11 to $12.31. Commercial rates vary but also will be about 18 percent lower.

Since the contract is retroactive, the city will credit the money from the last few months over a three month period.

"It's a very major rate reduction across the board to all residents and businesses within the city of Sunrise," said Carter, vice president of the company. "It's a major loss of revenue for All Service," Carter said. Carter said he hoped to make up for the money through continued growth in the city.

Sunrise's population of about 77,000 is expected to surpass 85,000 by 2000, according to city records. The new contract runs through March 30, 2002. All Service has held the city's garbage contract without facing competitive bidding since 1967.

Commissioner Irwin Harlem defended the contract with All Service. "If we went out to bid, we wouldn't get the service that we get from All Service today."he said.

Secret negotiations are not new in Sunrise.

During the last few years City Manager **Salerno** has negotiated in secret to get NORTEL and CareFlorida, two major employers, to move their headquarters into the city.

Recently, **Salerno** dealed in secret to get an arena for the Florida Panthers built in the city just south of Oakland Park Boulevard and the Sawgrass Expressway.

A final vote on the new contract is scheduled for the next City Commission meeting, which starts at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at City Hall, 10770 W. Oakland Park Blvd.

SUNRISE DEALMAKER HAS SECRET STRATEGY MANAGER SCORED ARENA WORKING IN SHADOWS

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
RAFAEL LORENTE ROBIN BENEDICK Staff Writers
Apr 21, 1996

City Manager **Pat Salerno** is a big sports fan, but he has never been to a Florida Panthers hockey game. He doesn't have time.

The dealmaker who negotiated in secret for months to bring a hockey arena to Sunrise was so busy in the days leading up to the final vote that he went several days without seeing his children awake. "I did what I had to," he said.

Salerno always does.

Like calling commissioners while they're watching the late news and filling them in on the day's arena negotiations. The conversations usually spill over into The Tonight Show.

Like coming into the office on Saturdays and Sundays, right after an early-morning Mass at nearby All Saints Catholic Church.

Negotiating in secret is nothing unusual for **Salerno**, either. He has planned a number of major projects with little or no public discussion until a vote is scheduled before commissioners. "My style is that I don't try to present anything that's half-baked," **Salerno** said. "It makes me feel good that when I present something I've covered all the bases, I've analyzed all the angles."

Critics such as City Commissioner Roger Wishner complain that **Salerno** practically runs the city by himself. "My biggest concern is that there is not enough discussion publicly about things," Wishner said.

But even Wishner, who frequently finds himself at odds with his four City Commission colleagues, concedes that **Salerno** is a whiz when it comes to financing. And despite his criticism, Wishner has voted in favor of some of **Salerno's** most secretive deals, including hundreds of thousands of dollars in incentives to get a major company to move to the city.

Mayor Steve Effman said many people in Sunrise see **Salerno** as secretive because they have not become accustomed to the city manager form of government adopted only eight years ago. "He has achieved things in the last few years that have brought the city into its own," Effman said.

The citywide improvement project, for example, includes a civic center, a senior center and several new parks. In addition, several large businesses have moved to Sunrise.

Salerno, 45, is Sunrise's second city manager and has held the job since 1991.

When he's not cutting deals, he spends his weekends with his wife and two children attending Little League baseball games and eating dinner at restaurants. Dinner is his only meal of the day.

For 15 months in 1994-95, **Salerno** negotiated in secret with a Dade County company that was considering a move to Sunrise. But when a deal offering Nortel, formerly Northern Telecom, $300,000 to move its Latin American headquarters to west Sunrise became public, nobody complained.

Commissioner Dan Pearl, who called it the most secret deal since the atomic bomb, joined his colleagues in unanimous approval.

Salerno got the same response from the commission when he presented his plan to join Sunrise with neighboring Bonaventure. Chances are that a recent deal to get CareFlorida, a healthcare company, to move from Miami to Sunrise, also will be approved by commissioners.

That deal also was negotiated in secret.

For his part, **Salerno** doesn't see himself as secretive, just different in his management style. He sees the job of the city manager as a behind-the-scenes position. Commissioners should be out front, he said.

Salerno won't even take credit for getting the arena in Sunrise, saying the superior site won. The Florida Panthers and Broward County had to do their part, he said, almost apologetically.

Salerno's way of keeping commissioners informed of deals he's working on is to call each one individually. He knows when he has the support of at least three of five, a majority, he said recently.

That's how **Salerno** was able to put together an incentive package that got H. Wayne Huizenga to turn his back on his hometown of Fort Lauderdale and choose Sunrise for the arena.

Until last Sunday, when the city announced a meeting five hours before it started, Sunrise had never had a public forum to discuss its multimillion-dollar package of incentives. By contrast, Fort Lauderdale held several public meetings to discuss its plans.

"The public should have been advised of the public meeting," Sunrise resident Bob Tangeman said. "I think the way you're treating the citizens is wrong. The way this is being handled is wrong."

Besides negotiating in secret with officials from the Florida Panthers, **Salerno** worked the county, trying to gain support from groups he thought were important, such as the hoteliers

whose businesses would pay the bed tax crucial to financing any arena.

County Commission Chairman John Rodstrom said **Salerno** convinced county leaders and Huizenga that Broward could pay for an arena. Huizenga was planning to sell the team to an out-of-town buyer until **Salerno** showed an arena was feasible in Broward, Rodstrom said.

John Fazzino, general manager of the Riverside Hotel and treasurer of the Broward County Hotel and Motel Association, said **Salerno** worked hoteliers until he got some of them to support the site in Sunrise.

"He {**Pat)** was one of the first soldiers in the war and he won the battle," Fazzino said. "He never gave up. You've got to give him credit for that."

NEW PARK GETS CLOSER TO REALITY

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
RAFAEL LORENTE Staff Writer
Jan 28, 1996

Residents are a step closer to having a new park after city commissioners agreed Tuesday to offer $1 million for a 10-acre parcel on the west end of town.

The site, adjacent to Oscar Wind Park, will be part of the Sawgrass Sanctuary. The sanctuary will have no ball fields or basketball courts. Instead, it will be used for walking, fishing and relaxing.

Commissioners voted 4-0 to make the offer for the parcel, owned by Lennar Corp. Mayor Steve Effman was absent.

Half of the $1 million purchase price would be paid by the state through the Florida Communities Trust, City Manager **Pat Salerno** said.

The city had the land appraised twice. Both appraisals placed the value of the site at more than $1 million, city officials said.

The site the city is trying to purchase is just north of Oscar Wind Park, 200 N. New River Circle. Oscar Wind Park is already about 10 acres.

Besides Lennar's 10-acre tract, the city is acquiring another adjacent 10-acre tract through a deal made in 1985 with representatives of two pension funds.

If Oscar Wind and the other two sites are counted, the park could total about 30 acres, **Salerno** said.

Improvements needed on the Sawgrass Sanctuary, which will include the Lennar and pension fund tracts, will cost about $1.5 million and include the creation of some wetlands, **Salerno** said.

"There will be a fishing pier," **Salerno** said. "There will be walking paths."

FIRE STATIONS TO BE `MINI CITY HALLS'

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
RAFAEL LORENTE Staff Writer
Jan 19, 1996

Residents looking to pay utility bills or take care of other city business will soon have two more places to do it.

Two of the four fire stations Sunrise is building as part of its Community Enrichment Plan will include meeting halls and a counter area for residents to pay utility bills, register their children for athletic programs and conduct other city business.

The stations will be at Sunset Strip and Northwest 68th Avenue and at Weston Road and North New River Circle.

"It's like a mini city hall," City Manager **Pat Salerno** said.

Salerno said the two stations, which will be about 24,000 square feet each, should be completed by early next year.

Commissioners approved the changes to the fire stations earlier this month. The city hall additions added $450,000 to the cost of each fire station.

The station on Sunset Strip is budgeted for $3.1 million. The one at Weston Road is budgeted for $2.9 million.

Besides the fire stations and the city hall components, the new buildings also will have police substations, increasing the visibility of police patrols around the city.

"What we're trying to do is provide a facility that has people there so that you can conduct any city business you would want," **Salerno** said.

Sunrise also plans two traditional fire stations on Northwest 27th Place and on Northwest 136th Avenue

AMBITIOUS SUNRISE PLAN PRESENTED

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
ALAN CHERRY, Staff Writer
Oct 31, 1991

Informational box at end of text BROWARD

SUNRISE -- The unveiling of a $42.67 million plan for new public buildings, road paving and other improvements has been greeted with both optimism and skepticism in this financially troubled city.

The 15-project proposal, dubbed "Blueprint of a Vision," includes a $12 million community center, four new or renovated fire stations, the resurfacing of every city road east of University Drive, and the building of two parks.

"I think it is super, if it works," activist Maxine Marshall said on Wednesday.

City Manager **Pat Salerno** released the plan late Tuesday after presenting it to city commissioners, who unanimously gave their approval. The multimillion dollar proposal comes five weeks after commissioners approved a 29 percent tax increase to bail the city out of financial troubles.

No new taxes will be needed to complete the projects because financing would rely on a $26 million bond issue program for much of the work. The plan also would rely on the city's continuing to use an existing tax that, without action, will expire in 1992. Money would also come from developers' fees, special assessments, county contributions and other sources.

"This is really a bold, creative step into the future," Commissioner Steven Effman said.

Many of the proposals have been on and off the drawing board during the past three years.

Last year, the $12 million community center, to be built between City Hall and the Public Safety Building on West Oakland Park Boulevard, fizzled because of concerns the city could not afford to operate the building after it opened.

Salerno said a proposed privately run restaurant at the community center site will help offset the cost of the center, which will be used for recreational and cultural activities.

"This idea of spending $26 million scares the hell out of me," community activist Joe Muller said.

Sunrise has suffered from a lack of planning public improvements, Muller said. On the down side, though, Muller said last month's tax increase had shaken his confidence in the city's ability

to manage its money.

Marshall said the strongest point of **Salerno's** "blueprint" is that it includes work throughout the city. It also does not exacerbate long-standing political divisions between homeowners and condominium owners, young and old, or residents in eastern and western Sunrise. "If it works, I would applaud him from here to eternity because he considered everybody," Marshall said.

Much of the work is still three to four years away, **Salerno** said.

PLAN COSTS

Sunrise's proposed public improvement plan:

-- COST: $42.67 million.
-- START: First projects a year away.
-- COMPLETION: Three to four years.
-- FINANCING: Variety of sources.

PROPOSED PROJECTS
-- $12 MILLION: Build civic, recreation and cultural arts center next to City Hall.
-- $10.18 MILLION: Build two new fire stations, renovate two others.
-- $4.08 MILLION: Build Broward County library next to City Hall.
-- $3 MILLION: Building for the purchasing and building departments.
-- $2.5 MILLION: Miscellaneous park projects, yet to be identified.
-- $2.5 MILLION: Replace water lines east of University Drive.
-- $1.42 MILLION: Develop park on Northwest Eighth Street.
-- $1.4 MILLION: Build restaurant at the civic center.
-- $1.26 MILLION: Build senior center next to City Hall.
-- $1.14 MILLION: Expand the Welleby tennis center on West Oakland Park Boulevard.
-- $1 MILLION: Landscaping and curbing of medians.
-- $750,000: Upgrade City Park on Sunset Strip.
-- $680,000: Resurface all city roads east of University Drive.
-- $400,000: Reconstruct Northwest 68th Avenue from Oakland Park Boulevard to Sunset Strip.
-- $355,000: Renovation of Whiting and Nob Hill halls.

ACTING CITY MANAGER MAY BECOME PERMANENT

Sun Sentinel - Fort Lauderdale
ALAN CHERRY, Staff Writer
Mar 22, 1991

SUNRISE -- Acting City Manager **Pat Salerno** may not be acting for much longer. City commissioners say it is time he become the permanent boss, without qualifiers on his title.

"We need to get this straightened out one way or another," Commissioner Steven Feren said.

Salerno has been acting city manager since the December firing of Dale Sugerman. **Salerno** served as Sugerman's hand-picked deputy for six months until replacing his former boss as the city's top administrator on Dec. 21.

Commissioners handed the job to **Salerno** at the time without attaching any dates as to when they would lift the "acting" from the title. "I am interested in discussing the matter," said **Salerno,** declining to elaborate or speculate on his future as acting city manager, which pays him $64,500 a year.

Now is the time to make a decision on **Salerno's** future, commissioners say, because city elections are over and because the absence of a permanent boss has hindered attempts to hire new help for the administration.

Commissioners say the city needs to fill job openings, which include a finance director, purchasing agent and data processing director.

One key financial position was filled this week with the hiring of Tariq Riaz as budget officer. Riaz had been serving as a senior productivity analyst for Miami when he was hired by Sunrise.

The uncertainty in the administration has discouraged some job candidates, said Commissioner Roger Wishner, who was re-elected to office last week. "The city needs to fill these important positions," Wishner said.

Sugerman hired **Salerno** because of his quiet personality and his experience as the top administrator in Cobb County, Ga.

A majority of commissioners voted to fire Sugerman because they said he had a combative personality.

When **Salerno** was hired by Sugerman, he said he took the deputy's job in Sunrise so he could spend more time with his family. **Salerno** has yet to move out of the deputy manager's office.

Commissioner Steven Effman, who also said he would prefer **Salerno** to accept the job in

Sunrise, said it was time to remove the "acting" from his title.

"I like this guy," Effman said. "We need to tell **Pat** where he stands."

If **Salerno** takes the job, he will be Sunrise's second city manager since voters cast aside its old strong mayor government in 1988 and handed the administrative duties of the city over to a professional administrator.

Effman said he wasn't sure what would happen if **Salerno** turned down the permanent post.

The Atlanta Constitution
October 23, 1989

Two Cobb Commissioners Bullying Staff, Colleagues Say
By McKay Jenkins, Staff Writer

The forced resignation of Cobb County Manager **Patrick Salerno** has cleared the way for Commissioners Emmett L. Burton and Harvey D. Paschal to bully department heads and muscle their way into a perceived "power vacuum," other board members say. Commissioners Burton and Paschal have repeatedly vented their anger at staff members at public board meetings over the county's budget, road repairs and pending garbage crisis. The attacks often have come over the objections of Commission Chairman Philip L. Secrist. The forced resignation of Cobb County Manager **Patrick Salerno** has cleared the way for two commissioners to bully department heads and muscle their way into a perceived "power vacuum," other board members say.

Commissioners Emmett L. Burton and Harvey D. Paschal have repeatedly vented their anger at staff members at public board meetings over the county's budget, road repairs and pending garbage crisis. The attacks often have come over the objections of Commission Chairman Philip L. Secrist.

"I think there has been a major deterioration of what occurs at these meetings," Commissioner Thea J. Powell said. "For a long time, staff has been shaking in their boots, waiting to see who's going to get the guillotine this week."

At the Oct. 9 commission meeting, Mr. Burton became enraged at solid waste Director Jarvis Middleton when he said he supported the recommendation of a $270,000 solid-waste study not to ship Cobb's garbage out of the county. The county's landfill is scheduled to close within a month.

"Do you work for us, or do we work for you?" demanded Mr. Burton, an outspoken proponent of out-of-county hauling. "Do what we say and quit arguing with the board."

At the Sept. 26 meeting at which **Mr. Salerno** was asked to resign, Mr. Paschal angrily expressed his frustration with the county manager and staff department heads.

"Every time, up to this point in time, we've had to come and ask you, in fact, beg you, and threaten you, in order to get answers back," he said. "That's exactly the reason I don't have any confidence in [you]."

Mr. Salerno resigned Oct. 3, effective Dec. 2.

Mr. Paschal said Sunday that **Mr. Salerno** consistently blocked communication between departments and the commissioners, in effect screening recommendations before they reached the commission.

"You'll never see a department head that I didn't apologize to for his boss not taking the blame," Mr. Paschal said. "What we were trying to do was pull **Pat** out of his shell. I wanted what the man in the field had to say, not what the man in the front office had to say."

In a separate interview, Mr. Burton blamed both **Mr. Salerno** and the department heads for delays in board decisions.

"Department heads hear what we say, but they don't act," he said. "They operate as if they ran their own companies, with no incentive to work with anybody. You hope people will adjust and become part of the Cobb County family. When commissioners say move, employees gotta move, the way we like it."

But by leaning on department managers hired by **Mr. Salerno** -particularly the heads of transportation, solid waste and public transit - Mr. Burton and Mr. Paschal are creating dissension that leaves the board little time to discuss county problems, Commissioner Harriet Smith said.

"I think department heads are being browbeaten in public, and I don't like it," Mrs. Smith said. "I think it's going to take three commissioners saying in unison that we are not going to do this anymore. We are elected officials, and it's up to us to determine the course of meetings."

During the discussion of his resignation, **Mr. Salerno** said department heads fear bringing recommendations to the board that might be unpopular with Mr. Paschal or Mr. Burton.
"That's sending a message to them that, `I better watch what I say at the mee ting,' " **Mr. Salerno** said.

The criticism of employees has become so intense lately that Mr. Secrist has gone to department heads to reassure them their jobs are secure.

"When there is a perceived vacuum - and some may perceive this -there are always those who take the opportunity to work their will," Mr. Secrist said. "The boat is adrift right now while we have a lame-duck manager, and there will be efforts by some individuals to further shake things up."

The Atlanta Constitution
October 14, 1989

Critics: County Manager Is a Scapegoat
They Blame Problems On Cobb Commissioners
By McKay Jenkins , Staff Writer

When the Cobb Commission fired County Manager **Pat Salerno** last month, board members blamed him for delays and indecisiveness on such matters as the fiscal 1990 budget and road improvements. But critics say commissioners are using **Mr. Salerno** as a scapegoat for the board's own procrastination and misguided policies.

Cobb commissioners voted 3-2 at a private meeting Sept. 26 to ask for **Mr. Salerno**'s resignation. Minutes and a recording of the meeting, which the commission voted to keep secret, were opened Thursday by a Superior Court judge.

Mr. Salerno resigned last week effective Dec. 2.

Local observers say the commissioners are blaming **Mr. Salerno** unfairly for a host of problems for which they should be held accountable.

"People have been calling me up and asking me what's wrong," said state Rep. Tom Wilder (R-Marietta), a commercial real estate developer who has been critical of the county's delays in processing zoning applications. "My next-door neighbors think the commission is a joke."

"There is a clear indication that people have no confidence in what is going on," said state Rep. Herman Clark (R-Acworth). "We're elected officials, and we are accountable to the public. No matter what happens, that accountability can't be shifted."

Commissioner Thea Powell, who asked for **Mr. Salerno**'s resignation during the closed commission session, said her decision "had nothing to do with using him as a scapegoat."
"He has accomplished a number of things that have been very positive - such as the transit system and bringing about an integrated solid-waste plan - but by and large my concern has been the length of time it takes for issues to be resolved," she said. "What I saw was a repeated pattern of always doing things at the last minute."

Mrs. Powell questioned the county manager's "nonchalant" treatment of Cobb's April referendum on extending its special sales tax. The tax extension, which would have brought the county about $250 million over four years, lost by 112 votes.

She also criticized **Mr. Salerno** for delays in preparing the county's $432 million budget, which the commissioners did not begin discussing until four days before they were to vote on it. The commission is still haggling over budget cuts and has not passed the spending plan for the fiscal year that started Oct. 1.

Mr. Salerno did not return a reporter's telephone calls Friday.

Bob Terrell, who sits on the county's land-use plan advisory committee and has been an outspoken critic of **Mr. Salerno** at recent budget hearings, said the commission had every reason to fire the county manager.

"I thought his creative financing plan [for the budget] was absolutely terrible," he said. "His rapport with the commissioners has not been good since he's been in office. Anybody who has such ongoing problems with the commissioners ought to look for another job."

But former Commissioner Barbara Williams, whose tenure preceded **Mr. Salerno**'s, said delays in county policy are caused by the commissioners, not the manager.

"I don't lay the fact that virtually nothing has been done this year at **Mr. Salerno**'s feet," she said. "There is no manager alive who could have brought those five commissioners together this year for a reasonable decision-making process."

Larry Thompson, a developer building on a 407-acre tract in east Cobb, said delays in the budget "can't be hung on the county manager."

"Budget problems are with the size of government, and to me that's commission policy," he said. "Our problems are not with **Salerno** or any other county manager. That would be like me saying I'm not responsible for my employees. You can't get away with that."

Developers, Homeowners Win Delay of Cobb Budget

McKay Jenkins , Staff Writer
September 27, 1989
The Atlanta Constitution

The Cobb County Commission paid heed to a roomful of real estate developers Tuesday and postponed passage of the county's 1990 budget for two weeks. More than 100 developers and homeowners packed the commission hall to protest an increase in development fees they say would worsen an already soft building market in Cobb.

"We have a good county, we have a rich county. The developers are good, and the homeowners are good," said Pat Seay, president of the South Cobb Civic Association. "A stagnant county will be a crime-ridden county. Let's take care of our developers."

The commission asked Finance Director Virgil Moon to bring the budget back in two weeks without the fee increase so it can be compared with the present proposal.

Fiscal 1990 starts Sunday, so the county will operate on a "bare-bones" continuation budget until the new spending plan is approved.

As it stands, the 1990 budget includes no property tax increases. The county would operate on a budget of $225 million, up 3.5 percent from fiscal 1989. The county's tax digest is expected to grow by about 8 percent in 1990, down from 10 percent in fiscal 1989 - reflecting a slowdown in real estate development, County Manager **Patrick Salerno** said.

The increased development fees are part of a budget philosophy meant to shift the burden of taxes from the shoulders of property owners to those who use county services. New development costs would include charges of $8,000 for site inspections, $250 for a land-disturbance permit and $660 for a plan review from the county development department for a home built in a typical subdivision.

Rate increases also have been proposed for tipping fees at the county landfills, from $20 to $23 per ton.

But it was the development fees that brought out the protesters and moved the commissioners to delay their vote.

John Schoen, president of the Cobb Developers Association, said development fees should be borne by everyone in the county because economic growth enhances the county's bottom line. "We [developers] are major taxpayers, and for that the development community has every right to expect these services," he said.

Communication Flows Between City, County On Mutual Problems

Rebecca Nash , Staff Writer
June 30, 1988
The Atlanta Journal Constitution

In an effort to improve communication between city and county officials, Smyrna's mayor and City Council met with Cobb County Commission members last week in the first of what will be regular quarterly discussions. The meeting was requested by Mayor Max Bacon and the council in an effort to establish a closer working relationship with the commission.

"It's an attempt by both parties to exchange ideas and thoughts," Councilman Jack Shinall said. "Somehow the rapport [between city and county officials] was cut off and we wanted to re-establish it."

The agenda listed Smyrna's requests for in-kind services as primary topics. Bacon and council members asked for guidelines for contacting county departments for specific services such as striping streets, drainage improvements and road construction.

"The biggest problem for those of us who've been here a long time is now we don't know who to go through," Bacon told commission members.

Commission Chairman Earl Smith said requests for county assistance should be made through the office of Jerry Singer, assistant county manager for development.

Smith told Smyrna representatives that the county "always wants to help the cities where we have the expertise."

"There's no need to go out and pay for expertise we may have," he added.
The agenda, drawn up by Bacon, contained a tongue-in-cheek reference to controversial matters between the city and county.

Under a heading of "The following items will not be discussed" were "Atlanta Road widening, water boundary, double taxation, annexation and water line lawsuit."

However, both groups of officials briefly discussed the controversial Atlanta Road median proposed by the state Department of Transportation.

"We've got to support widening the road without the median," Smith said.

City officials asked for county help with improvement of the South Cobb Drive-Powder Springs Street intersection, where westbound traffic on Powder Springs backs up because there is no left-turn lane. Smith told the group the county wil l look into the problem. Right of way for a left-turn lane would cost $43,000, Shinall said.

Other topics discussed at the meeting were:

- Inspection of older buildings, particularly apartments.
- Potential problems with extended-stay motels.
- Cobb's new bus transit system. Paperwork on grant applications for the system is "near completion," according to Smith.

County Manager **Pat Salerno** said a marketing study for the system has been completed and an analysis of the bidding process is in the works.

Singling out traffic as the county's biggest problem, Smith told the mayor and the council that educating people to "get them out of their cars" will be a significant part of the system's budget. "It will take several years," he said.

Besides Smith, **Salerno** and Singer, county representatives attending were Commissioners Thea Powell, Harvey Paschal and Emmett Burton, and Herman Hill, the chairman's executive assistant.

Cobb's manager adds bureaucracy, some foes charge

James Budd, Staff Writer
May 5, 1988
The Atlanta Constitution

Several officials in Chatham County said Wednesday they are not surprised by a rift developing between some Cobb County commissioners and County Manager **Pat Salerno**, who was hired last August after nearly two years as Chatham's county manager. One Savannah legislator said the county manager is following a pattern in Cobb similar to his performance in Chatham County, where he seemed "unconcerned for elected officials" and made the government top-heavy.

Salerno, however, has supporters in Savannah, including Chatham Commission Chairman Charles C. Brooks, who said he would hire **Salerno** again. **Salerno** was Chatham's first county manager, which placed extra scrutiny and pressure on him from older employees who didn't like the change, Brooks said.

"The greatest fault I found with **Pat** was all he thought about was his job," he said. "He worked 12 to 14 hours a day. He understood government and knew how to organize it. He did a good job for us."

Some Cobb commissioners, including Chairman Earl Smith, say they are concerned that **Salerno**'s fast-track reorganization of Cobb's government has only increased the government's bureaucracy.

Salerno has hired three assistant county managers to oversee six departments each. The assistants, with a combined salary of $173,285, replaced two administrative coordinators, with a combined salary of $73,465, who worked under Cobb's previous county manager.

Smith, who said he plans to call a meeting this month with the commission and **Salerno** to discuss the reorganization, said he doesn't believe **Salerno**'s job is in jeopardy but is unhappy with some aspects of his performance.

"We have too much bureaucracy and I hate bureaucracy," said Smith.

Chatham County Sheriff Walter Mitchell said he had a continuing feud with **Salerno** over funding for the sheriff's department, and the sheriff accused him of not responding quickly enough to problems with the county's jail.

Salerno, 37, hired assistants from outside the Chatham government and bypassed promotions from within, Mitchell said. "He goes into a county and hires all these people from outside and puts them over people that have been there 20 years," he said.

Rep. Tom Triplett (D-Savannah), chairman of the House Transportation Committee, said Chatham voters approved a 1 percent sales tax in 1985 to improve roads and **Salerno** "didn't build the first road."

Brooks defended **Salerno**, saying rights of way had to be bought before the roads could be built. The problem was compounded by the county's lack of experience in buying rights of way and engineering. **Salerno** hired experienced consultants to deal with the problem, he said.

Triplett said **Salerno** was perceived as a "big spender" who added to the size of Chatham's government and didn't get along with elected officials.

Salerno did not return a reporter's telephone calls Wednesday.

Cobb Commissioner Harvey Paschal said he initially thought **Salerno**'s reorganization would reduce bureaucracy in county government, but has only increased it. Dissatisfaction with **Salerno** surfaced two weeks ago when Paschal received a letter written to him by a county department head that went through five departments, including **Salerno**, for clearance before reaching him 10 days later.

Paschal said he was told on another occasion that all commission inquiries of department heads had to be cleared through **Salerno**.

"I'm bent out of shape," said Paschal. "The general consensus of the public is the commission is letting the hired help dictate to us."

Commissioners Chuck Clay and Thea Powell are supportive of **Salerno**, saying it is too early to judge his job performance.

"I don't see that there's any justification to fire anybody," said Mrs. Powell, who added she supports the county manager's reorganization.

Clay said the feud is the result in part of election-year jitters. Smith, Paschal and Commissioner Emmett Burton, who has been in Jamaica working with a film crew, are up for re-election this year.

"I don't think anybody is under fire," Clay said. "I think it's an election year and people are asking what they are getting for their dollars. As far as anybody being on thin ice, I would say no."

Resume

LARRY M. SPRING

1111 Brickell Bay Dr. Apt 702 · Miami, FL 33131 · Telephone: (305) 579-8510· Cell: (786) 256-1459
Email: LarryMSpring@aol.com

EXPERIENCE

Chief Financial Officer, CITY OF MIAMI, July 2006 - Present
Miami, FL
Responsible for oversight and management of all aspects of the City of Miami's finances including ensuring that the City remains in compliance with its Financial Integrity Ordinance. Responsible for oversight and coordination of various City departments ensuring such departments operate in accordance with policies established by the City Commission and City Charter. The departments for which this position is responsible for include, but are not limited to: *Finance; Purchasing; Economic Development; Conferences, Conventions and Public Facilities; Risk Management, and Community Development.* Assisted in the development and updating of strategic plans and performance indicators city wide, oversight of the City's risk management program, pension funds; worker's compensation program; capital financing and bond issuance activities; and financial planning and monitoring, including reporting monthly on changes in financial condition.

Chief of Strategic Planning, Budgeting, and Performance, CITY OF MIAMI, February 2003 – July 2006
Miami, FL
Executive level administrator responsible for managing the budget and strategic planning development, implementation and monitoring processes for the entire municipality. Responsible for guiding the short and long-range fiscal planning for the municipality and presenting this information to the Mayor and City Commission for policy consideration and approval. Participate in the labor negotiation process, various RFP/RFQ evaluation committees, and act as lead administrator on various special projects. Serve as a voting member of the City's Housing and Loan Committee and ERP Steering Committee. Periodically serves as the Acting City Manager in community and City commission meetings.

Projects and Initiatives

- **Completed the implementation of the citywide strategic plan utilizing the Balance Scorecard Methodology**
- **Completed the implementation of Financial and Purchasing Oracle Modules**

Vice President and Controller, TOTALBANK, March 1999 – February 2003
Miami, FL
Responsible for the accounting and treasury functions of a $600 million commercial banking institution. Responsibilities include pricing of various banking products, oversight of the annual budget process, income forecasting, monitoring and analyzing the financial position of the institution. Served as a voting member of the institution's Asset/Liability Management and Product Development committees. Supervised and performed personnel functions including staff performance evaluations, hiring, terminations, and staff development.

Assistant Controller, TOTALBANK formerly FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL BANK, July 1997 – March 1999
Miami, FL
Responsible for management of the daily accounting function. These responsibilities included maintaining internal control of the general ledger, supervision of the accounts payable and fixed assets functions, maintaining all correspondent banking relationships and maintenance of the investment portfolio. Also compiled and analyzed the monthly financial statements and worked on special projects. Supervised staff of seven accountants and accounting clerks

Accounting Officer, PEOPLES NATIONAL BANK OF COMMERCE, July 1996 - June 1997
Miami, FL
Responsible for serving as the immediate support to the Chief Financial Officer in management of the daily accounting operation. Additional responsibilities included preparation of all regulatory and internal financial reporting, management of fixed asset activity, and the Bank's investment portfolio. Acted as the IT System Operations Administrator. Supervised a junior accountant and an accounting clerk.

Financial and Regulatory Accountant, FIRST COMMERCE CORPORATION, January 1996 - July 1996 New Orleans, LA

Prepared and submitted all required regulatory fillings for an $8 billion asset multi-bank holding company. Additional responsibilities included preparation of the annual and monthly financial statements for the Board of Directors of the corporation and each affiliate bank.

Staff Auditor, HIBERNIA NATIONAL BANK, May 1994 - January 1996

New Orleans, LA

Under the supervision of in-charge or senior auditor, collected information related to audit objectives, scope of work, and internal controls being audited. Executed the appropriate testing programs, interpreted the results, and documented and reported exceptions and findings to management.

EDUCATION

A. B. FREEMAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, TULANE UNIVERSITY

New Orleans, LA

Bachelor of Science in Management Degree, May 1994

- Major in Accounting
- Passed Uniformed CPA Examination, May 2001

AFFILIATIONS

Board Member, Dade Community Foundation
Former Board Member, City of Miami Housing and Loan Committee
Former Board Member, City of Miami Homeland Defense Neighborhood Park Improvement Bond Oversight Board
Former Board Member and Treasurer Universal Truth Community Development Corporation
Former Board Member and Treasurer Harambee, Inc.
National Forum for Black Public Administrators
Government Finance Officers Association
Member of Class II of the Dade Community Foundation's Miami Fellows Initiative Leadership Development Program
Past Polemarch, Richmond-Perrine Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.
100 Black Men of South Florida

CB & A Interviews

Education

Bachelor of Science, Accounting and Management, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

Experience

Chief Financial Officer, City of Miami, FL	2006 – Present
Chief of Strategic Planning, Budgeting, and Performance, City of Miami, FL	2003 – 2006
Total Bank, Miami, FL Vice President and Controller (four years) and Assistant Controller (two years	1997 – 2003
Accounting Officer, Peoples National Bank of Commerce, Miami, FL	1996 – 1997
Financial and Regulatory Accountant, First Commerce Corporation, New Orleans, LA	1996
Staff Auditor, Hibernia national Bank, New Orleans, LA	1994 – 1996

Background

The City of Miami has a population of 373,000 and has approximately 4,000 full and part-time employees. Mr. Spring has six personnel who report directly to him, and he indirectly oversees a team of several hundred more. He has had multiple opportunities to serve as Interim City Manager in the City Manager's absence, during which time he has managed all city employees and emergency services. The general fund budget for the City of Miami is $525 million with a total funds budget (excluding capital projects) of $700 million. The three most important issues currently facing the City of Miami are:

- Loss of state-shared revenues;
- Decline in property values and the impact on property taxes; and
- Pension issues.

Interview Comments

Coral Gables is one of the premier communities in Miami-Dade County and it feels like home to Mr. Spring. He is a graduate of Coral Gables High School and currently resides in Miami. He has always been impressed with the City and its dedication to high quality service. He, himself, takes pride in delivering high quality services and in serving his community. Thus, Coral Gables would not only be an opportunity to continue that commitment but to take it to another level. High quality service is simply more important in the Gables than in other places he has worked. He notes he has experience in the public sector but also in the private sector. The latter has provided him with invaluable insights that many others who have only worked in the former do not have. At this point, he has a desire to take on the challenges of being a City Manager and not just any city manager. This position is the first one he has applied for. He is energized by the fact that it is Coral Gable and by the potential of working with this particular group of elected officials. He would be honored to have the opportunity to serve the Coral Gables community

and to help guide it into the future. He is ready to assist in the policy making process while making the day-to-day final management decisions. Coral Gables is simply the place he wants to be.

As a manager, Mr. Spring empowers employees and encourages them to utilize their professional abilities. His job is to be a buffer/liaison between the management team and the elected body. He carries out the policies of the elected body and provides the day-to-day direction that the staff needs. He takes what the elected body wants done and organizes it so the services are provided in an efficient, cost effective manner. He holds his staff accountable for results just as he expects the elected officials to hold him accountable. He champions employees when it is merited and fosters a nurturing, supportive work environment. He recognizes that employees will occasionally make mistakes, and he gives them the opportunity to correct their actions. If they are unable to do so or make the same mistake repeatedly, then he does not hesitate to assess their contributions to the organization and determine if separation is appropriate. Above all, he strives to create a team atmosphere where work can progress in a positive manner.

Employees who have worked with Mr. Spring have noted that he is the "glue" of the organization. He is passionate about the city he works and sincerely wants it to become the best it can be. He is focused on getting the job done and prides himself on his ability to find innovative approaches to solving problems.

The elected officials he has worked for would say that Mr. Spring is a consummate professional. Some have commented on his strong work ethic and appreciate his reliability whether it is dealing with minute issues to presenting the City's five year bonding plan. He is trusted and his opinions are valued. Mr. Spring prides himself in being open and honest with elected officials. When making presentations he provides all the information available, even if some aspects less than positive. Whenever an issue has a negative aspect, Mr. Spring takes the time to explain all of its complexities and why it is important as a topic for discussion and debate.

One of Mr. Spring's greatest strengths is his ability to grasp the big picture, implement a plan, and motivate the staff to accomplish the projects at hand. He is a people person and balances his roles very well as both a disciplinarian and a motivator. He has an open door policy and seeks to interact with all staff – from the directors to the clerks.

In terms of weaknesses, Mr. Spring indicates he does not always enjoy dealing with the small details. He is more focused on the larger picture and delegates the details to very capable professionals. He realizes that his dependency on the competencies of others can be a double edged sword. Therefore, if he is ever unsure about an issue at hand, he will take the lead and do the details himself. Another weakness is that he can also procrastinate at times. He does so not because of any unwillingness to make a decision but rather, at times, it is better to let an issue percolate. In spite of this weakness, he never misses deadlines and the end products have always been considered to excellent. As his career progresses, he has become more aware of his weaknesses and has surrounded himself with people who enjoy working on the finer details and who urge him to move forward.

In the last several organizations Mr. Spring has worked for, he has quickly become the "go-to guy". He has received promotions within these organizations but, more importantly, has proven that he is trustworthy and capable. He is very proud of his work with the City of Miami and has made large contributions and introduced many of the innovations. He has also participated in implementing projects of the highest level. For example, most recently he acted as a lead negotiator with the County on a global agreement that will create numerous infrastructure projects, including the new Florida Marlins Baseball Stadium. He finds that one of the most rewarding aspects of public service is seeing the tangible results of his labors and this new stadium, when completed, certainly will certainly be something he will be proud to have been part of.

Adjectives or phrases Mr. Spring uses to describe himself:

- Ambitious,
- Serious,
- Determined,
- Trustworthy,
- Fun loving, and
- Intelligent.

Reason for wanting to leave his current position:

Mr. Spring has worked both in the private and public sector and has found his work in the public sector very rewarding. He feels privileged to work for the City of Miami and has thoroughly enjoyed both his position and the people he works with. His experience in management, and with city management specifically, has unearthed in him a desire to take on the challenges of being a City Manager. He believes he is well prepared and poised to guide a city and to make final management decisions.

Current Salary:

$180,000 plus benefits

Interviewer's Impressions

Poised and very bright. Energetic and enthusiastic. Ambitious and ready for new career challenges. Candid with excellent interpersonal skills. Serious yet has a good sense of humor. Thoroughly enjoys public service.

Prepared by:

Alayna Weiss
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Reference Notes
Larry Spring

Manuel Diaz – Mayor, City of Miami, Florida 305-962-6527

Mr. Diaz has known Mr. Spring since 2001. He first met him at a professional seminar and was so impressed by him that he wanted hire Mr. Spring immediately.

Mr. Spring has a great relationship with the elected officials. He keeps them well informed and gives good and credible advice. He meets the goals set for him and has helped the City. For example, he has helped control costs and improve services.

Mr. Spring also has a good relationship with the public. He is positive and personable. He explains in plain English how and why financial decisions are made because he believes the public has a right to be informed. He has also been very successful with the business community. Miami is a very entrepreneurial area and he can relate well to developers, attorneys, media representatives and business owners. He has encouraged the community to grow by helping entrepreneurs find ways to make their business successful in the region.

Mr. Diaz recommends Mr. Spring for a City Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Competent,
- Smart,
- Reliable,
- Credible,
- Dynamic,
- Positive, and
- Personable.

Strengths: Knowledge of public services, work ethic and intelligence.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Rosalie Mark, Retired Human Resources Director, City of Miami, (954) 328-3634

CB&A Note: When CB&A was conducting the recruitment, Colin Baenziger & Associates reached out to Rosalie Mark, the retired Human Resources Director the City of Miami and asked her impression of Mr. Spring. Mr. Spring, Ms. Mark and Mr. Baenziger had worked together recruiting a Community Development Director for the City of Miami. The following is an excerpt from her email.

. . . . . .

Colin,

Larry is very bright and hard-working. After almost six years on the scene, he is quite knowledgeable about the "business" of government and has evolved over the years I have known

him as a manager. He is a fast learner and adapts quickly to change. He garners trust with people, including employees, peers, elected officials and citizen advocates. He has also built sound relationships on an inter-governmental basis, which is, as you know, critical for a municipality.

One of Larry's strengths is excellent communication skills. He and I did employee meetings about a year after we arrived on the scene. I talked people and service and he talked money! He was able to "plain" speak to employees about the cost of doing business, how the City obtained revenues, spent dollars and what the financial challenges were. He was very well-received and displayed a patient manner in handling Q & A's.

I've seen him display similar skill in handling cranky elected officials and union leaders!

Larry is a team player yet is not reluctant to take the helm of leadership as required. (He usually acts as "Acting City Manager" in the CM's absence.) He is accessible to his direct reports and supportive of their efforts. He provides ample direction and it appears to get out of the way of experienced managers, while providing a guiding hand to those in need. It appeared that his subordinates respected him and enjoyed working for him.

Larry was one of the few people I totally trusted in the City. He was always discreet with sensitive information and displayed integrity in his actions. If there was one area that I thought Larry needed to continue to develop was his ability to delegate to his administrative personnel (although this didn't appear to be a problem with his directors), which I attributed to his being a "young" leader, who had moved quickly through the ranks in private sector and landed a hefty job in public sector first as Budget Director and then as CFO. A manager can sometimes become self-reliant in that type of trajectory, and I did see him show improvement in this area towards the end of my time there. He had to or he would be buried alive by now!

Larry's [weakness would be that he] has not had direct responsibility for labor; however, he has sure seen the process of labor negotiations up-front and personal. He was in most meetings re: negotiation strategy-building, cost analysis, and the overall give-take that takes place day-in-day-out.

Hope this is helpful.

Rosalie

Mike Sarnoff – Commissioner, City of Miami, Florida 786-303-5966

Mr. Sarnoff has worked with Mr. Spring since 2003.

Mr. Spring works well for the elected officials. He is helpful to them, fulfills their demands, provides them with good information, and offers sound advice. He also has excellent analytical skills. He easily spots problems and is then prepared with at least two solutions. That allows the elected officials to choose the solution they feel is best for the community as a whole.

Mr. Spring interacts well with all the elements of the community from business people to community activists. He is also very capable in dealing with other governments. He was and is, for example, deeply involved in putting together the plan to build the new stadium for the Florida Marlins. That took negotiations with the County and the State.

Mr. Spring is also a very capable negotiator. He has been a key player in the Tibor Hollo Park project. This park is on a two acre bay front property developed for public use. Normally, a CFO would not play such a key role, but the City trusts his negotiation skills.

Mr. Spring would make a great City Manager. During difficult economic times, his strong financial background will be beneficial to any city. Managing a budget will be vital and he has demonstrated very strong capabilities in that area. He also has the problem solving skills needed to be a successful City Manager. In short, Mr. Sarnoff highly recommends Mr. Spring for a City Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Approachable,
- Problem solver,
- Flexible,
- Easy going,
- Good sense of humor, and
- Enjoyable to work with.

Strengths: Finance and budget skills.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Angel Gonzalez – Commissioner, City of Miami, Florida 786-251-5801

Mr. Gonzalez has worked with Mr. Spring since 2003.

Mr. Spring is very knowledgeable and the City routinely depends on his financial advice. He is responsive, available, and prepared. He is also helpful and has a keen mind. In fact, Commissioner Gonzalez has reached out to him to assist in finding solutions that address the needs of his commission district. Mr. Spring's input has been very valuable.

Mr. Spring has been a very positive influence on the financial department. He has made quite a few changes and has developed a sense of professionalism within the department, something it did not have before.

Mr. Spring has served at times as the interim City Manager. During those periods, the City has run smoothly. He could easily take on the role of a City Manager and would be very good at it. Commissioner Gonzalez would hire him.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Hard worker,
- Dependable,
- Dedicated,
- Responsive, and
- Problem solver.

Strengths: Financial knowledge.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Tomas Regalado – Commissioner, City of Miami, Florida 786-356-5935

Mr. Regalado has known Mr. Spring since 2003.

Mr. Spring has a good relationship with the City's elected officials. He provides them with reliable and accurate information. He is straightforward and provides all the relevant facts, not just the ones others might want you to see. He freely admits his mistakes and will bring you the bad news when there is some that the elected officials need to now about. Due to his knowledge, honesty and integrity, the Commission has relied upon his expertise when making decisions in the face of some tough economic challenges.

Mr. Spring has improved the city budget. Previously it was a very complicated and at times bureaucratic system. He streamlined and simplified the process so that now the budget is prepared efficiently. He completes all assignments on time and is responsive. His analytical work is excellent.

Mr. Regalado has not supervised Mr. Spring directly so he is not aware of his day-today management skills although they seem quite good. As a City Commissioner, most of what he sees has been filtered through the City Manager. Nonetheless, Commissioner Regalado believes Mr. Spring could easily step into the position of City Manager and be successful.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Straightforward,
- Trustworthy,
- Accurate,
- Timely,
- Honest, and
- Organized.

Strengths: Communication skills and his honesty.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Johnny Winton – Former Commissioner, City of Miami, Florida 305-807-2110

Mr. Winton met Mr. Spring in 2003 and worked with him as a commissioner for three years.

Mr. Spring is a good communicator, meets the demands of the Commission, and is straightforward in presenting the information Commission needs. He manages well in a highly political environment.

Under Mr. Spring's guidance, the Finance Department has developed great pride and he is well respected by the staff. In fact, the general relationship between staff and management has greatly improved due to his leadership. He has gotten its staff members to focus on their work and provided the support they needed to be successful.

Mr. Spring works well with the public. He willingly listens to their problems, focuses on the important aspects of an issue, gets to the heart of the problem and then crafts good, workable solutions.

Mr. Spring would be a good City Manager in a smaller environment. He is a good manager of people and has proved he can have an excellent relationship with the public and elected officials. He is a great candidate for a City Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Strong communicator,
- Confident,
- Good interpersonal skills,
- Problem Solver,
- Well respected, and
- Straightforward

Strengths: Communication skills and his honesty.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Julie O. Bru – City Attorney, City of Miami, Florida 305-416-1816

Ms. Bru has worked with Mr. Spring since 2003, both as the Deputy City Attorney and as the City Attorney.

Reference Notes
Larry Spring

Mr. Spring is personable, committed, and a hard worker. He listens and communicates well. He also makes good decisions. Further, he does not shy away from making tough decisions even when they are controversial. None of his decisions have ever caused any harm to the City.

Mr. Spring has significantly improved the Finance Department. He has provided support to the staff, encouraged its members to enhance their skills of the staff and improved their professionalism.

Mr. Spring was always available when Ms. Bru needed to speak with him. He is even tempered and personable with everyone. He has the respect and trust of elected officials. When challenges arise, he quickly identifies the problem and navigates through to the solution. On several occasions, he has been able to take bad deals and renegotiate them so they are more favorable to the City. Especially in critical situations, he resolves issues in a very timely manner.

One project Ms. Bru has worked on with Mr. Spring was the negotiations for a new baseball stadium for the Florida Marlins. Although very complicated with many parties with different interests, the deal has been made. She has also worked with him on bond and employment issues.

Currently Mr. Spring is doing many of the same duties as a City Manager. He routinely works with Commission, Department Heads, and the public. He has knowledge in critical areas. Mr. Spring is an incredible asset to the City of Miami and is a great candidate for a City Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Personable,
- Committed,
- Hard worker,
- Listens,
- Even tempered, and
- Accessible.

Strengths: Leadership, professionalism and decision making skills.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Jason Walker – City Manager, Village of El Portal, Florida 305-773-0998

Mr. Walker was previously a Senior Assistant to a City Commissioner and worked with Mr. Spring for a few years beginning in 2003.

Mr. Spring is helpful, forthcoming, a good communicator, and discloses both the good and the bad information elected officials require when debating difficult issues. He is able to relay complicated budget matters using understandable terms. The Commission has a great deal of respect for him. Commission trusts him and relies on his advice to make decisions. He is also very good at accommodating their needs.

Mr. Spring prepares the budget in a very organized manner. Many times he had the municipal budget prepared by April even though it was not due until much later.

Prior to the employment of Mr. Spring the City of Miami almost reached financial bankruptcy due the previous CFO not to disclosed critical information. When Mr. Spring took the position, his open communication style and honesty helped instill confidence and save the City from the financial difficulties it was facing. The Commission greatly appreciated the transparency of the budgeting and financial processes he has followed.

The role of City Manager would come naturally to Mr. Spring. He has a strong financial background which would be a great benefit to any city.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Straightforward,
- Motivated,
- Nice,
- Even tempered,
- Respectful, and
- Positive.

Strengths: Budget and communication skills.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Ernest Burkeen – Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Miami, Florida 305-416-1320

Mr. Burkeen has worked with Mr. Spring since 2003.

Mr. Spring is knowledgeable, good with politicians, and credible. He is a visionary and able to see the big picture. He makes thoughtful decisions and due to his analytical skills and his ability to present all the relevant information, Commission trusts his recommendations.

Mr. Spring is very open and transparent. He does not hide information and the result is that the Commission, which lacked trust in the City's administration, solidly supports Mr. Spring. Its members trust him implicitly. He has accomplished tasks which those who came before him could not.

Customer service is very important to Mr. Spring and he has developed a respectful relationship with the community. He understands that citizens have needs and he tries to satisfy them. He is a doer and gets the job done. He makes a decision and then explains his decision rationally. He is approachable and well liked by many. He brings dignity and class to the community.

Mr. Spring has been prepared to become a City Manager. He steps into that role whenever the current Manager is absent. He would do extremely well in a City Manager position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Knowledgeable,
- Bright,
- Visionary,
- Credible,
- Thoughtful, and
- Good with politicians.

Strengths: People skills and organization skills.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Karen Cartwright – Community Activist, City of Miami, Florida 786-718-5986

Ms. Cartwright is a community activist and has worked with Mr. Spring since 2003.

Mr. Spring's greatest strength is his honesty. He is very good at explaining the funding available for the community and what he is able to do to manage those finances on its behalf. He is very knowledgeable and responsive.

Since Mr. Spring's time as CFO, the Financial Department has become more responsive, flexible and professional. He has fine tuned of its operations and the department is much better at dealing with the public than it was in the past.

Mr. Spring is courteous with members of the public. He listens carefully to their problems or questions. He then explains and leads them through to a resolution. If he can not resolve the problem he takes the time to connect them with someone who can. He is easy to speak with and capable of pacifying people who would otherwise make situations difficult for the City.

Ms. Cartwright feels Mr. Spring is qualified to become a City Manager because of the excellent job he has done in the many roles he has played in his current position.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Proactive,
- Capable,
- Honest,
- Knowledgeable,
- Responsive, and
- Patient.

Strengths: Honesty.

Weaknesses: None identified.

George Burgess – County Manager, County of Miami-Dade, Florida 305-375-1880

Mr. Burgess is the Miami-Dade County Manager and has known Mr. Spring since 2003. They have worked together on many business deals involving the city and county. One of these was the development of a new baseball stadium for the Florida Marlins.

Mr. Spring's greatest strength is his interpersonal skills. He is also very articulate and capable of explaining complex issues in understandable terms.

Mr. Spring has an entrepreneurial mindset and utilizes a creative approach to business and government. The City has made significant progressed because of his willingness to examine business propositions which might not have been looked at before. He has developed competencies within the Finance Department which the City had previously lacked. He has a strong financial background, excellent negotiation skills, and experience working on a variety of projects.

Mr. Spring relates well with each member of the Commission. As a group, they respect him and have trust in his abilities.

Mr. Spring has the attributes which would make him a good City or County Manager.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. Spring:

- Likable,
- Enjoys job,
- Good work ethic,
- Relates well with other,
- Courageous, and
- Creative.

Strengths: Interpersonal skills; financial background.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Donovan McGinley – Director, McGladrey Pullen CPA Firm, Miami, Florida 954-394-0424

Mr. McGinley has worked with Mr. Spring since 2006.

Reference Notes
Larry Spring

Mr. Spring has transformed the Financial Department from average to stellar. It started with him establishing a good organizational structure for the department. He then recruited good staff and has been able to retain them. He engages and motivates qualified people.

Mr. Spring is even tempered, has a calm presence and has been able to manage difficult situations. When McGladrey Pullen became the City's external auditor, the former auditing firm was not cooperative. Although, this exchange should have simply occurred between the two firms, Mr. Spring stepped in and diplomatically navigated the change of auditors.

Mr. Spring has a good relationship with the City Commission. He is a good communicator who leaves no ambiguity in the information or recommendations he provides. He completes all assigned work on time and manages projects well.

Mr. Spring is a key member on the team negotiating for a new stadium for the Florida Marlins. This issue has been somewhat controversial and a very sensitive issue to the citizens. He has handled the situation well and promoted the City's interests throughout the negotiations.

Many times Mr. Spring has acted in the place of the City Manager. Mr. McGinley feels Mr. Spring could easily step into this position. He has a good command of detail, strong leadership skills, and a broad knowledge of public service. He is well respected. Mr. Spring would make a good City Manager.

Adjectives or phrases used to describe the candidate:

- High integrity,
- Confident,
- Professional,
- Well tempered,
- Articulate, and
- Respected.

Strengths: Good leader; Problem solving skills; and Calm presence.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by:

Tiffany Gremmert
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for
LARRY M. SPRING

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County Miami-Dade County, FL	No Records Found
State Florida	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County Miami-Dade County, FL	Records Found March 2008 – Defendant, Mortgage Foreclosure **Disposition** = September 2008 – Dismissed August 2005 – Plaintiff, Contract and Indebtedness **Disposition** = November 2005 – Dismissed November 2003 – Defendant, Contract and Indebtedness **Disposition** = May 2004 - Dismissed
Federal Florida	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle Florida	Record Found January 2008 – Speeding Citation **Disposition** = Guilty, 3 Points
Credit	Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Employment confirmed except: Peoples National Bank and First Commerce Corporation

Internet Research

South Florida Business Journal -
December 19, 2008

Miami commissioners OK museum leases at Bicentennial
-by Oscar Pedro Musibay

Commissioners approved a 99-year lease on 4 acres for both the Miami Art Museum and Miami Science Museum.
Miami commissioners have taken a big step toward locating two museums in the city's downtown area, approving a lease agreement necessary for $175 million in funding from Miami-Dade County.

Commissioners on Dec. 11 approved a 99-year lease on 4 acres for both the Miami Art Museum and the Miami Science Museum. The city commission also voted for a benefits agreement that details things like the percentage of locals that must be hired to construct the project.

The approvals are important because they take the players one step closer to breaking ground, and make possible the sale of $175 million in general obligation bonds, which Miami-Dade voters approved in 2004. The bond sales are tied to having the agreements in place, Miami CFO **Larry Spring** explained.

"It's absolutely a major step forward," said Gillian Thomas, president and CEO of the Miami Science Museum. "All these things are really complicated. We are very pleased that we have this agreement signed."

South Florida Business Journal
11/07/2008

Miami plans deals so Hyatt can manage Knight Center
by Oscar Pedro Musibay

Miami officials need to pay off a $39 million bond before Hyatt can manage the James L. Knight Center in the downtown area, and possibly complete a massive renovation to the property.

City officials plan to sell the public garage underneath the Bank of America Tower at International Place and the air rights above for $50 million to pay off the bond.

The parking garage and the Knight Center are tied to bonds that were sold years ago to help pay for construction of the public facilities. The buildings sit on city-owned land, as does the Hyatt. But, the hotel is not tied to the bonds.

"The garage is the means by which we are coming up with the funds to pay off the bonds," city CFO **Larry Spring** said. "If the commission decided tomorrow to take general funds to pay off the bonds, we would still be able to do the deal with the Hyatt."

The University of Miami's management agreement for the Knight Center was not renewed this year, leaving the door open for Hyatt. UM will continue to run the Knight Center, however, until the end of next year.

If the funds to pay off the bond come from the sale of the garage, the transaction needs to happen before negotiations with Hyatt can become a contract.

"Until the city is able to resolve the parking garage, they don't want to move forward with the negotiations with us," said Megan Schmollinger, Hyatt's director of asset management. "We are in a holding pattern."

The 10-story garage is northwest of the Hyatt. Currently, Blue Capital holds a lease on the air rights – the space above the garage where the Bank of America Tower office space sits – and parking spaces in the garage, along with other tenants.

Hyatt wants to do renovations

City officials are also renegotiating Hyatt's long-term lease on the land underneath the hotel to make the terms better for the city and incorporate the Knight Center management terms. For example, **Spring** said the city is on the hook for 50 percent of the maintenance costs at the Knight Center. The center needs a $3 million chiller for the air conditioning system, which Hyatt has offered to buy, as long as the management deal goes through. Hyatt also wants to renovate the Knight Center in tandem with a renovation of its hotel, which would include upgrades to the lobby, restaurant and its own conference space.

Usually, the city would be required to put the management contract on a city asset like the Knight Center out for public bid. **Spring** is trying to avoid that by modifying the existing lease without changing the lease's expiration date. He's also considering using the Miami Sports and Exhibition Authority as a conduit for the Knight Center lease with Hyatt and avoid a public bid.

Spring affirms the city is trying to work out a deal with a downtown stakeholder with a good track record. He also said the Hyatt had been booking the majority of conference space at the Knight Center for some time, so a deal with the hotelier would cut out the middle man

"The transaction is not meant to usurp the public process," **Spring** said of the effort to have Hyatt run the Knight Center "It's meant to, as quickly and efficiently as possible, put the city and its taxpayers in a better situation."

South Florida Business Journal
Friday, October 3, 2008

Next challenge for stadium could be bonds, updated costs -
by Paul Brinkmann and Oscar Pedro Musibay

A sputtering economy and falling costs of materials may boost construction of a new Florida Marlins stadium, but uncertainty in money markets could cause bonding for the project to become more expensive.

Final costs for the stadium and its related infrastructure – along with who is paying for what – have not yet been agreed upon, but there are estimated figures for the ballpark. The Marlins provided a cost estimate of $515 million to Miami-Dade County, and the city of Miami has estimated parking for 6,000 cars will cost about $94 million.

The county will consider the project's final specifics in a series of agreements to be negotiated with the city of Miami and the team later this year. One major question is how much improvement to surrounding roads and utilities the former Orange Bowl site will require. The city is responsible for parking garages, but other responsibilities are still up for negotiation.

"We're not going out to the market anytime immediately," county manager George Burgess said. "There's a lot of uncertainty out there right now, but it could be a good time for a project like this."

Several factors will drive the final stadium price tag: the cost of steel, concrete, public financing and construction services.

Cost opportunity?

Steel and concrete costs soared to new heights in 2007 and 2008, but that trend shows signs of reversing. According to a recent report in The Wall Street Journal, steel prices have dropped in the last few weeks.

Fuel cost increases were the top contributor to increased construction costs. If fuel prices drop, it could also have a big effect on the cost of the product.

But, other factors could continue to drive construction prices up, said Ken Simonson, chief economist with Associated General Contractors of America.

"Steel has risen at unprecedented rates in the first part of this year," he said. "That's partly because of the weak dollar: Foreigners were treating our steel mills as bargain bins."

As fuel prices drop and the dollar improves against other currencies, construction inputs will again get downward pressure, he said.

According to Simonson's figures, heavy construction inputs had risen 17 percent between August 2007 and August 2008. The price decrease reported recently for steel began in September.

He said the stalling economy, particularly in housing construction, could create opportunities.

"At this point, contractors may be willing to accept a lower margin, given the state of the local market, such as it is in South Florida," he said.

City of Miami CFO **Larry Spring** said the design of the garage is not finalized, but consultant Tim Haahs has suggested three to four parking structures surrounding the stadium of no more than five stories in height. The design of the each structure must allow it to empty in 45 minutes, he said.

The city of Miami plans to use $6 million in tourist tax dollars it receives annually, money originally tied to the Miami Arena, and about $7 million in parking fees, to be paid by the Marlins, to float a bond to cover the garage's construction costs.

Spring said the city had already programmed street and sidewalk improvements as part of a transportation bond it has in the works. But, other infrastructure costs, specifically utilities, had not been finalized. He noted that funding sources were not identified and that negotiations between the county, city and team were still under way to determine who would cover the costs.

Miami-Dade Commissioner Sally Heyman said that is one of her biggest gripes with the project: No one can identify the funding source for the infrastructure.

Details and litigation remain

The county expected to be negotiating final details on the project by now, but litigation has pushed back construction starts. Auto dealer Norman Braman filed a lawsuit, challenging the proposed funding sources. Miami-Dade Circuit Court Judge Jeri Beth Cohen had indicated by press time that she would rule in favor of the county and city, but the planning process has already derailed. (See www.southfloridabusinessjournal.com for updated information.) Burgess said an appeal by Braman could cause further delay, but planning is moving ahead.

A series of five agreements – operating, construction, assurance, non-relocation and parking – must still be hammered out. The construction and assurance agreements are where the parties will spell out financial obligations.

Burgess said the county hopes to finalize the agreements by the end of 2008. "Steel is coming down. Aggregate and labor will be a function of activity out there and competition in the market," he said. Asked if the troubled economy might cause second-guessing, Burgess said no.

"The cost of money [public bonding] will be a function of timing. Obviously, we are watching this all very closely, related to all of the county's financing," he said. "Right now is a good time to put jobs into the local economy, especially construction jobs."

MIAMI TODAY
08/11/08

Miami seeks entrance into New Market Tax Credit Program that would provide for private investments in low-income areas
By Yudislaidy Fernandez

Miami is applying for a federal tax credit program designed to bring more business and economic growth into the city's low-income communities.

The New Market Tax Credit Program provides tax credits for private investments in areas that suffer from "slum and blight."

Through the program, investors use the newly created Miami Economic Development Fund LLC, a "community development agency" that serves as a vehicle to make the investments.

The program can be used through such vehicles as equity, debt, a mix of the two, and grants to be invested in all types of businesses with a few exceptions — no rental-only housing, financial institutions or businesses like liquor stores, golf courses and tanning salons, according to documents detailing the federal program.

The Miami Economic Development Fund is to be affiliated with the city, which owns 99% of it and the Community Redevelopment Agency 1%, because one requirement was to include an agency that focuses on development in those areas. "The main purpose is to get private investments into local areas and more job creation," said city Chief Financial Officer **Larry Spring**. The city commission on July 24 approved creation of the community development entity needed to qualify for the program.

City administrators are to act as members of the created limited liability company, including Mr. **Spring**, Senior Advisor for Economic Development Lisa S. Mazique, Director of Community Development George Mensah and Mayor Manny Diaz, who sits on the development fund's advisory board.

But at the meeting, commissioners agreed the city must closely oversee the program to make sure small businesses benefit. "I realize small businesses could benefit greatly from these tax breaks, but we need to have clear parameters of what we want them to do," Chairman Joe Sanchez said.

Mr. Sanchez asked that a report on the program to be sent to all commissioners periodically. Mr. **Spring** assured them the "allocations can only be used to support businesses in those areas." Eligible areas are to include Overtown, Little Haiti, Little Havana and Allapattah. He said the city plans to reach out to qualifying communities to alert investors and business owners of the program's benefits.

If Miami's application is approved, it would be the first time the city has participated in the 6-year-

old federal program, Mr. **Spring** said. "We are ready to move forward with it." Florida has not taken full advantage of the program, with only about 2% of total allocations going to community development entities in the state, he said.

Since the program began, it has awarded $16 billion in tax credits, according to documents. This fall, the tax credit program is to award another $3.5 billion to community development entities around the country such as the one Miami hopes to create. President Bush has asked Congress to extend the program through 2009; it was set to expire in 2008.

Mr. **Spring** said the program, through the created community development entity, gives the city legal right to attract investors in tax credits. "We take investors' cash and redeploy it back into low-income areas by providing grants to businesses and business owners," he said. Individual or corporate investors can claim a 39% tax credit based on the amount of their investment for a 7-year credit allowance period, according to the documents.

For the first three years, investors can claim a tax credit of 5% per year, totaling 15%, and credits equaling 6% for each of the remaining four years, totaling 24%. Investors must adhere to terms of the program's tax credit provisions or risk Internal Revenue Service recapture of the credits.

Mr. **Spring** said the city is to hire consultants to ensure Miami follows the rules and regulations set by the Treasury Department to help prevent such risks. Participants must provide the Treasury annual reports detailing how the tax credit monies were invested in low-income communities. Last year, the Treasury dispersed about $5 billion to entities in the program, with most funds going to support real estate developments and businesses in low-income areas such as charter schools, pharmacies, shopping centers and performing arts centers, according to the documents.

The city has letters of commitment from the community development arms of several banks interested in participating, Mr. **Spring** said.

US Bancorp pledged to make qualified equity investments of up to $125 million into Miami's Economic Development Fund and Bank of America is willing to make one or more loans of up to $35 million and equity investments of up to $15 million, according to the banks' letters Capmark Finance Inc. is to provide a combination of debt and equity financing of up to $125 million and Wachovia Bank agreed to make equity investments of up to $75 million in the city's community development entity, according to the letters.

Mr. **Spring** said the city hopes to get a response on its application to the tax credit program by September. If approved, he said, the next step would be to complete agreements with banks and move ahead.

MIAMI TODAY
January 4, 2008

ORANGE BOWL PARKING:

Though a Dec. 18 version of Miami-Dade County's Marlins baseball stadium draft agreement calls for the City of Miami "to identify at least 12,000 parking spaces within five-eights of one-mile from the baseball stadium and to construct, at its sole cost and expense, city parking on the entire site to house approximately 6,000 of those parking spaces," city Chief Financial Officer and acting City Manager **Larry Spring** said "We've only committed to 6,000 spots" thus far. "I don't think it will be 12,000," he said The agreement still needs to be ironed out and approved by both the city and county. The city plans to build a 6,000-car garage to serve the Orange Bowl site. It has not been determined who will glean the parking revenues, Mr. **Spring** said, though in the "first several years" the garage is to "serve to pay for itself."

LAWN TRADITION: Mr. **Spring** expects the long-standing tradition of using Orange Bowl neighborhood lawns to park for games to continue. "I absolutely do," he said. "It's been a main staple for the neighborhood." Knowing this, "obviously it's kept in mind when we look at the pricing we can charge" in the planned 6,000-spot garage, he said. Six-thousand spaces, he said, should serve the site sufficiently, though "people may opt" to park on lawns.

SAFE, PROBABLY: The city will probably not seize property surrounding the Orange Bowl site in order to develop it to include a baseball stadium, soccer stadium and parking garage, Mr. **Spring** said. When asked if eminent domain would be enacted, he said he "can't answer that right now," but "I'm thinking no." The city doesn't yet have a site plan, he said. An electrical building adjacent to the site "may have to be acquired," he said, but that could be it. When the issue of eminent domain involving the Orange Bowl came up at an October county commission meeting, county officials said no condemnation of private property would be necessary in order to build the stadium.

Resume

JOHN WESLEY WHITE

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(941) 685-6630 (c)
JWesWhite@msn.com

PROFILE

Decisive problem solver and effective leader of strategic change. Broad experience in turnaround situations and complex local governments. Excellent communicator with a creative, action-oriented, collaborative approach. Demonstrated experience engaging employees in problem-solving, organizational change, increased leadership capacity, and improved morale. Recognized by peers, elected officials, community leaders, and subordinates for fostering a climate of integrity, fairness, mutual respect, and shared commitment to organizational vision and goals.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT RESOURCES 2004 – Present
Owner and Consultant 1997 – 1998
Consulting and interim management services to state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and industry. Clients have included: City of Lancaster, California; City of Sarasota, Florida; City of Plant City, Florida; Lee County, Florida; Lake County, Florida; Nonprofit Risk Management Center; and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Recent assignments have included.

- Interim Assistant City Manager, Lancaster, CA. Nine month assignment during a transition period in a Los Angeles suburban city of 150,000. Led initiatives to implement a "stronger neighborhoods" program, improve development review, and implement a community branding and community relations campaign. Supervised city operations, including departments of Planning, Public Works, Economic Development and Redevelopment, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, and Parks, Recreation, and Arts.
- Interim Executive Director, City of Sarasota's Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. Ten month assignment during a difficult transition period following the dismissal of a long-term agency head. Oversaw the operation of a 1,700 seat performing arts hall with over 200 performances a year. Analyzed critical issues and a structural financial deficit, reducing taxpayer subsidies.
- Consultant to the City of Plant City, Florida. Development review efficiency study, reorganizing City programs and significantly increasing development review and permitting capacity.

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA 1998 to 2004
Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Responsible for twenty major organizational units operating and contracting for nationally recognized programs of code enforcement, land development regulation, environmental permitting, stormwater management, capital projects design and construction, solid waste collection and disposal, wastewater collection and treatment, and facilities management, serving a diverse population of 1,000,000 residents. The Department has 1,500 employees, an annual operating budget of $203 million, and construction contracts averaging $300 million annually. Oversaw significant organizational development efforts to build employee leadership capacity and morale, strengthen an environmental ethic, increase communication among programs, increase productivity, and transform the organizational culture into a higher performing organization.

SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA 1987 to 1997
County Administrator
Chief executive of an urban county government in coastal southwest Florida. The county government serves a high quality-of-life community of 325,000 residents through nineteen departments, employing 2,000 people with an annual budget of $545 million. Provides full range of services with emphasis on growth management and infrastructure development. Oversaw construction contracts for a $100 million water improvement

program, an $85 million landfill, five new libraries, and a new courts building. County is a leader in planning, economic development, growth management, and environmental protection. Award winning accomplishments in comprehensive planning, financial management, and consolidation of municipal and county services. During 1993-94, served as *President* of the *National Association of County Administrators*. Recipient of *1996 ICMA Award for Innovations in Management*. Recipient of *1994 Good Government Award* from the *Sarasota County League of Women Voters*.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND 1983 to 1987

Chief Administrative Officer

Principal manager of a large urban county government in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The county government served a racially and culturally diverse population of 700,000 through thirty-five agencies with an annual budget of $1.1 billion. Major initiatives in fiscal reform, citizen involvement, and economic development led to the County's designation as an *"All-America City"* by the National Civic League. Full managerial responsibility for the entire range of urban services, including police, fire, licensing and permits, public works, environmental services, and corrections. Initiated major reorganization of environmental services, redirection of police and corrections services, and reformed a deficient sediment control program into an award winning environmental program. Personally oversaw the construction contracts for a 1,200-bed jail, major landfill expansion, and several urban redevelopment projects. Led County's intergovernmental negotiations on transit capital construction allocations and the formation of the Chesapeake Bay National Estuary Program. During 1985-86, was *President* of the *Maryland City/County Management Association* and *Chairman* of the national *Urban Consortium*.

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION 1980 to 1983

Director, Department of Services Planning

Responsible for planning, policy development, intergovernmental coordination, and technical assistance for local government management and services in the seven county metropolitan Atlanta, GA area, serving a diverse urban and suburban population of two million. Piloted numerous innovative regional approaches to urban problems. Administered various Federal and state grants. Extensive contract management responsibilities. Supervised a staff of planning, monitoring, and technical assistance professionals.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES 1976 to 1980

Deputy Assistant Secretary (two years)

Two assignments: 1) Program planning. Responsible for policy planning and program development in a comprehensive state health and social service agency. Supervised major program offices employing 700 headquarters employees providing program direction, technical assistance, and operations monitoring in an integrated human services delivery system. 2) Operations. Responsible for managing the statewide system of health and social services in an organization with approximately 28,000 employees in 350 local offices. Supervised eleven service districts, state institutions, central laboratories, and other operational functions in the Florida human services system.

District Administrator (two years)

Responsible for management of all health and social services in a ten-county, 11,000 square mile area of Southwest Florida, serving a population of over one million.. Programs included aging services, children's medical services, delinquent and dependent youth, community mental health, vocational rehabilitation, food stamps, AFDC, community retardation services, county health departments, a 1200-patient mental hospital, a 750-bed state retardation institution, and a state alcoholism treatment center. Administered contracts with community based organizations. Employed 3,500 persons.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Earlier employment included service as Budget Director of the City of Miami, Florida, Director of the State of Florida Division of Employment Security, and legislative analyst and staff director for the Florida Legislature.

EDUCATION

B.A., Florida State University, Tallahassee. Major in government; minors in economics and history. Member of Pi Sigma Alpha (political science honorary).

M.S.P.A., Florida State University, Tallahassee. Major in public administration. Additional courses in law and urban planning.

Credentialed Manager. International City and County Management Association
Certificate. Executive Leadership and Management. Federal Executive Institute
Certificate. Senior Executive Institute. University of Virginia
Certificate. Human Behavior and Motivation. Menninger Leadership Center

OTHER

International City and County Management Association
District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (Board of Directors, 2000-2004)
Center for Watershed Protection (Board of Directors, 2003-2004)
National Association of County Administrators (President, 1993-94)
Florida City and County Management Association (Board of Directors, 1992-93)
Maryland City and County Management Association (President, 1986)

John Wesley White
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jweswhite@msn.com

December 1, 2008

Mr. Colin Baenziger
Colin Baenziger & Associates
12970 Dartford Trail, Suite 8
Wellington, FL 33414

Dear Mr. Baenziger:

Attached is my resume in support of my application for the position of City Manager of Coral Gables, Florida. I believe that my background qualifies me well for this position.

I am a native of Coral Gables and graduated from Coral Gables High School. While my career has encompassed senior executive positions in several states, I have also worked in Miami-Dade County, including service as a police officer with the City of Miami and, years later, as a senior member of the City Manager's staff of the City of Miami. I believe that this diverse background and my deep appreciation of the history of Coral Gables would serve me well in fulfilling the duties of Coral Gables City Manager.

My entire career has been in public service, primarily in city and county government. The diversity of my experience lends strength to my ability to perform as a city manager. My work has been recognized with a national award for innovations in management by the International City and County Management Association and as the recipient of the good government award by the League of Women Voters of Sarasota County. I was selected by my peers as President of the National Association of County Administrators. I hold the designation as a Credentialed Manager from ICMA, the credentialing authority for local government managers. I led the successful effort to have Prince George's County, Maryland designated an All America City. Earlier in my career, I was the local government analyst for the Florida Legislature, Budget Director of the City of Miami, and the chief executive of several large state and local organizations, both in Florida and in other states.

While my experience includes managing all of the major functional areas of local government, I have developed a particular affinity for addressing the consequences of growth and providing opportunities for community engagement in contentious circumstances. Under my supervision, Sarasota County was repeatedly recognized for the quality of its professional planning program, including innovative strategies for community based planning and preservation of important historical and natural resources. Early in my tenure as Sarasota County Administrator, we created a separate Department of Historical Resources and planned for new facilities to preserve our collection of historic artifacts and archives. I have also been responsible for major initiatives to protect and preserve natural resources. I was an advocate for and served in estuary-bordering jurisdictions at the time of designation of both Chesapeake Bay and Sarasota Bay into EPA's National Estuary Program. I have served on the Board of Directors of the national Center for Watershed Protection and was also a member of the Board of Directors of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority during the time when that organization received plaudits for increased environmental accomplishments. During my tenure in Fairfax County, Virginia, I was recognized by both the environmental and the development

communities for transforming the culture of my large agency from a rather staid public works and permitting organization into a champion of balanced environmental stewardship, with focus on efficient processing of permits and initiating a first-ever stormwater environmental program. Finally, I have worked successfully in several communities with higher education institutions, including a major university, and have collaborated with university officials on issues of mutual concern.

A hallmark of my success as a local government manager has been fostering harmonious intergovernmental and labor relations. The resulting climate of mutual respect and trust enabled substantive progress on many fronts. Under my leadership, labor matters have almost always been resolved amicably. In addition, I played a key role in settling a decade old dual taxation lawsuit shortly after I arrived in Sarasota County. Thereafter, we achieved national recognition for our collaborative city-county efforts to consolidate or improve services.

Please advise if there is any additional information I can provide to you or the City of Coral Gables to assist in your evaluation of candidates for this position.

Sincerely,

John Wesley White

CB & A Interviews

John Wesley White

Education

Master of Public Administration, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
Bachelor of Arts, Major in Government, Minors in Economics and History, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Experience

Principal Consultant, Strategic Management Resources, Sarasota, FL (assignments included Assistant Manager, Lancaster, CA, and Interim Executive Director, VanWezel Performing Arts Hall, Sarasota, FL)	2004 – Present
Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, Fairfax County, Virginia	1998 – 2004
Principal Consultant, Strategic Management Resources, Sarasota, FL	1997 – 1998
County Administrator, Sarasota County, FL	1987 – 1997
Chief Administrative Officer, Prince George's County, Maryland	1983 – 1987
Director, Department of Human Services Planning, Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia	1980 – 1983
Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services Deputy Assistant Secretary (two years) and District Administrator (two years)	1976 – 1980
Senior Associate, The Research Group, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia	1976 – 1976
Director, Division of Employment Security, Florida Dept. of Commerce	1972 – 1975
Staff Director, Community Affairs, Florida House of Representatives	1971 – 1972
City of Miami	1965 – 1969
Budget Director, City of Miami, FL	1969 – 1971
Local Government Analyst, Florida Legislative Reference Bureau	1966 – 1969
Budget Analyst, City of Miami, FL	1965 – 1966

Background

Mr. White's most recent position was Interim Assistant Manager in the City of Lancaster, California, a suburb an hour north of Los Angeles in California's High Desert region. The City's population is 145,000, and it has approximately 875 employees, including contracted fire protection and law enforcement services which are part of the City's budget. The City's total funds budget was $270 million, with a general fund budget of $61 million. The three most important issues facing the City are:

- Maintaining public safety;
- Promoting economic development; and
- Maintaining and managing an adequate water supply.

Interview Comments

Mr. White was born in Coral Gables, went to Coral Gables High School and is eager to return to city government in South Florida where he still has family. Coral Gables is the ideal size. It is a place where leadership and personal engagement are important. He knows Dade County and worked for the City of Miami earlier in his career. His most recent assignment in the City of Lancaster, California, a full-service city and a suburb to Los Angeles, has many similarities to the challenges faced by Coral Gables. He welcomes the opportunity to apply the management concepts he has mastered over his career and make a significant contribution to the City.

As a manager, Mr. White is inclusive and encourages transparency. His communication style is to open. He studies the issues, gathers information, and makes decisions proactively. He delegates with confidence, giving guidance when needed. His management philosophy is founded on trust and mutual respect.

Employees who have worked with Mr. White have been comfortable with his management style. For example, within three weeks of becoming Interim Executive Director of the VanWezel Performing Arts Hall, employees noted a marked increase in their level of involvement and they became more energized and engaged. When he began his service in both Fairfax and Sarasota Counties, he found it necessary to assume a stronger, more decisive role because the situations demanded it. Both organizations needed reorganization and procedural improvements to increase efficiency. He set high standards and expectations. As time went on and the situation improved, he reverted to the style he is more comfortable with – collaborative and inclusive.

Elected officials would describe Mr. White as highly energetic, knowledgeable, and very trustworthy. They recognize him as being very capable and reliable. They also know they can depend on him to represent and protect, not only the local government's interests, but also their interests to the extent possible.

In terms of strengths, Mr. White points to his experience and judgment. In the Commission – City Manager form of government, he knows the limits of his decision-making authority. He also knows when to seek direction from his elected officials. His relationship with his elected officials and supervisors has been very strong because he makes a point of having ongoing contact with them.

Mr. White cites his impatience and frustration with the pace of progress as one of his weaknesses. He also becomes frustrated when people allow themselves to be stymied by barriers rather than finding ways to work through them. While he always remains calm, he monitors and assesses those situations closely. He can lose confidence in employees' abilities if they are not proactive and not seeking solutions.

One of Mr. White's greatest achievements was the transformation of Sarasota County. He took an unsophisticated and disjointed operation and turned it into a high performance organization capable of delivering the best possible services. Over the ten-year period that he was there, the County grew

significantly. It consolidated the fire department and built a new water system. He helped develop a sophisticated human resources function. The budget system he put in place won national awards and became a model for others. Internally he was able work with the staff to establish, accept and work towards common goals. As a result, the employees worked together harmoniously and enjoyed their work.

Earlier in his career, Mr. White was successful because he came up with the right answers. Employees approached him with questions, and he simply supplied answers. Over time, he learned that leadership style does little to inspire an organization or develop its employees. Staff members need to contribute and take ownership. As a result, over the past 15 years, his style has changed and he now focuses on the growth of both the individuals and the organization.

When asked, Mr. White responded that yes, he has had to fire several employees. As a leader in large organizations, he frequently does not know them personally. However, he has also had to fire some who reported directly to him. He has found he must be clear about what his expectations are and give people a fair chance to meet them. When under-performance is the issue, employees are given an opportunity to improve. If they are unwilling or unable, Mr. White discusses other positions in the organization where they might be more successful. He has empathy for personnel in such circumstances and is fair in his dealings with them. In cases of wrongdoing or breaches of ethics, there are, however, no second chances and the person's employment is terminated immediately.

Mr. White has always had an outstanding relationship with the media and has never been treated unfairly by them. He believes that, if the press is treated with suspicion or mistrust, they will respond in a like manner. He respects them, and they respect him. He is forthright and timely in his responses. Throughout his career, reporters have responded extremely well to this approach and have been fair.

In terms of embarrassing situations in his personal life, about seventeen years ago, while with Sarasota County, he was out-of-state on vacation and was ticketed for D.U.I. Because his vehicle was used for both personal and professional purposes, the incident received coverage in Sarasota County. He was humiliated and embarrassed but also extremely contrite. The Board supported and stood by him. He stayed with the County for five more years and continued to be successful.

Mr. White views some of the challenges facing the next Coral Gables City Manager as:

- Maintaining stability;
- Managing redevelopment;
- Continuing to provide quality services; and
- Resolving labor/management issues and negotiating agreements.

If selected to be Coral Gable's next Manager, Mr. White will spend his first six months:

- Determining the expectations of the Commission;
- Assessing the organizational structure and the expectations for it;
- Making decisions which will align reality with those expectations; and

- Working with the unions to resolve labor contracts.

In his leisure time, Mr. White enjoys physical activities such as running, playing tennis, and going to the gym. He also enjoys reading and spending time with friends.

Reason for Wanting to Leave his Current Job

Mr. White left Fairfax County to return to Sarasota County and began work as a consultant so that he could care for his ailing mother, who has since passed away. He has worked in interim assignments at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall and as Assistant City Manager of City of Lancaster, California. He now wants to re-enter city government on a fulltime basis and in a capacity that is compatible with his past experience and accomplishments.

Most Recent Base Salary

$208,000 base salary while in Lancaster.

Adjectives or phrases Mr. White used to describe himself:

- Thoughtful,
- Energetic,
- Ethical,
- Friendly,
- Open, and
- Dynamic.

Interviewer's Impressions

Dynamic, enthusiastic and very well spoken. Friendly, very capable and confident in his abilities. As a Coral Gables native, he feels this position would allow him to come full circle.

Prepared by:

Mary Greenwood
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Reference Notes
John Wesley White

Governor Parris N. Glendening – Former Governor of Maryland, currently President
Smart Growth Leadership Institute, Washington D.C.
(202) 207-3355

Governor Glendening has been a colleague of Mr. White's for 30 years. The two met while attending Florida State University and have remained friends. Governor Glendening was Mr. White's immediate supervisor for four years when he was the County Executive of Prince George's County, Maryland.

Mr. White's is an excellent administrator. Governor Glendening was reluctant to see Mr. White leave Maryland and tried several times to entice him back to work with him.

Mr. White is highly respected for his integrity. Maryland politics can be quite difficult to navigate but he did so without anyone ever questioning his integrity. He also has a total commitment to his profession that is difficult to find. He is particularly innovative in the area of public leadership.

Elected officials respect Mr. White's careful sense of nonpartisanship. He recognizes that politics do have a part in government but approaches the issues with professionalism and candor. He is forceful but warm and has a quiet strength.

Mr. White constantly made efforts to build networks and develop professionally. Governor Glendening observed great growth in this area.

Mr. White is an excellent communicator. His writing is succinct and well thought out. Prince George's County is a high profile location as it is adjacent to the nation's capital. Mr. White worked very well with the community amidst political pressures due to location.

Mr. White is decisive and stands behind his decisions but he takes the time necessary to gather the facts, is never rash and makes the right decision.

In terms of embarrassing situation, Mr. White was not involved in any during his tenure in Maryland. While in Sarasota County, he was cited with a D.U. I. while on vacation in Georgia. He continued to work for the County and had the support of the Board.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Forceful but warm,
- Quiet strength,
- Professional,
- Great friend,
- Respected, and
- Having integrity.

Strengths: Integrity and total commitment to his profession

Weaknesses: None identified.

The Honorable Karen E. Rushing – Clerk of Circuit Court, Sarasota County, FL – (941) 861-7605

Ms. Rushing has been Sarasota County's elected comptroller and auditor for 19 years. She worked with Mr. White for ten years.

Mr. White was hired because the County was looking for a strong leader and recognized that his credentials were surpassed by few. He brought professionalism and structure to the organization. He is highly ethical, truthful and forthright.

Ms. Rushing noted that in the beginning, communication between the two needed improvement but as time went on, she recognized his constant efforts improve in this area. They shared a very productive work relationship. At one point, Mr. White felt it was necessary to take on some of Ms. Rushing's responsibilities. She disagreed with his assessment. They politely took the matter to a public arena but when it appeared that she would prevail, he put a hold on the proceedings. The two privately came to a joint decision and appeared as a united front. Ms. Rushing is impressed with his good judgment. Mr. White works well with all levels of staff and the general public.

Mr. White demonstrated his strong problem solving abilities by finding an appropriate location for the new library which was a highly controversial issue. He communicated to landowners the positive impact the facility would have on them individually and on the community. They collectively agreed to land swaps so that the library could be placed in the downtown area.

Mr. White has the background to make routine decisions swiftly and the experience to know when to ponder an issue. He possesses the courage to implement changes especially in matters of hiring employees. He places people in areas where they will be successful.

Ms. Rushing has long admired Mr. White's communication skills. He brilliantly crafts arguments and speaks with authority and poise.

In terms of embarrassing issues, while employed by the County, Mr. White was stopped for a D.U.I. violation. He made ample penance to the Court and the Board.

As the Boards changed over the years, their needs also changed. They wanted a more collaborative Administrator. Mr. White left soon after this decision.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Friendly,
- Studious,
- Courageous,
- Wordsmith,
- Highly ethical, and

- Truthful.

Strengths: Highly ethical, truthful, and forthright

Weaknesses: None identified.

Robert L. Nabors – Esq., Nabors, Giblin, and Nickerson, P.A. – Tallahassee, FL – (850) 224-4070

Mr. Nabors is the former County Attorney of Brevard County, FL. His firm provided legal aid to Sarasota County on many occasions. Mr. Nabors and Mr. White have been colleagues for 30 years.

Mr. White is one of the major league players in Florida government. Mr. Nabors can not recall another Florida manager with the depth of experience that Mr. White has accumulated. He is a no-nonsense manager who displays an outstanding work ethic.

His hands-on management style has been highly effective in leading organizations. He possess the ability to judge and nurture talent in employees; thereby building a strong organization from the inside out. His background in Human Resources gives him a refreshing outlook on hiring.

Mr. White's greatest strength is his in-depth understanding of government. He is also strong in the areas of budget and community outreach.

Mr. White is pensive when making decisions but does not hesitate to tackle a problem.

Mr. Nabors has tried to recruit Mr. White on several occasions. Mr. White is a unique individual that any organization would benefit greatly from.

Mr. Nabors is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. White.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Qualified,
- No nonsense,
- Unique,
- Hands-on,
- Effective, and
- Friendly.

Strengths: In depth understanding of government as well as budget and community outreach.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Robert S. LaSala – County Administrator, Pinellas County, FL, (727) 464-3377 and former City Manager of City of Lancaster, CA

Mr. Lasala has been Mr. White's colleague for 25 years and a former subordinate (Deputy County Administrator) in Sarasota County. In 2007, Mr. LaSala hired Mr. White to be the Interim Assistant City Manager in Lancaster, CA.

Mr. White is one of the most dedicated public servants Mr. LaSala has had the privilege of working with. He has the highest ethics and professional standards. He is hard working and incredibly bright. He is very strong willed and at times stubborn. This trait has been moderated over the years and is no longer an impediment. This trait was offset it with his numerous strengths.

Mr. White has an in-depth, analytical mind and thinks strategically in matters of policy formation, etc.

In working with elected officials, Mr. White is patient, respectful, and thoughtful. He listens very well and is careful to respect their roles and responsibilities. He is highly informative and cognizant of their needs.

Mr. LaSala was impressed with Mr. White's ability to develop an issue on paper. He is an outstanding writer and public speaker.

As his superior, Mr. White not only kept Mr. LaSala up to date on issues, he explained nuances and educated him along the way. In communicating with the public, Mr. White is patient and genuinely concerned with getting the government's message across.

Mr. White is a trouble shooter who cuts to the chase when solving problems. He is decisive and implements changes quickly. He will never hesitate to make day to day decisions, but does give more complex issues greater reflection.

In the progression of Mr. White's career, he has undergone a metamorphosis. He came to appreciate the benefit of engaging people in the decision making process. He experienced growth in organizational development and people skills. A strong willed individual, he recognized the shortcomings of this approach and overcame it. His style is now collaborative and he focuses on the development of individuals within the organization in order to improve the organization as a whole. He is not an extrovert but possesses a quiet, friendliness that is inviting.

Mr. LaSala has offered Mr. White numerous job opportunities and would relish the opportunity to work with him again. While some may perceive Mr. White's age as an impediment, it should be noted that his age has given him a wealth and depth of experience that is surpassed by few. Further, he is a highly energetic individual who will work effectively for a long time to come. Mr. LaSala is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. White.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Dedicated
- Sharp
- Analytical mind
- Troubleshooter
- Quiet dignity
- Hard working

Strengths: Intense dedication to public service and highest standard of ethical and professional standards.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Michael Sitting – Executive Director, Florida League of Cities, FL – (800) 342-8112

Mr. Sitting has been a colleague and observer of Mr. White's work for 25 years.

Mr. White is honest and a man of his word. These qualities, among others, have gained him the respect of his peers. He is incredibly knowledgeable and excels at dealing with complex issues and differing personalities.

Mr. White is an excellent communicator. He possesses a great sense of humor, is articulate and has strong body language. He is able to keep those he works with well informed.

A highly intelligent leader, Mr. White can digest information quickly and make smart decisions. He does not do so irrationally or to the detriment of others.

Mr. White is one of the best in his field and particularly in Florida. If given the opportunity, Mr. Sitting would gladly hire Mr. White.

Mr. Sitting is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. White.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Honest
- Participatory
- Well respected
- Man of his word
- Knowledgeable
- Articulate

Strengths: Ability to deal with complex issues and differing personalities

Weaknesses: None identified.

The Honorable Charley Richards – Former County Commissioner, Sarasota County, FL
(941) 350-8300

Mr. Richards supervised Mr. White for eight years and was President of the Florida Association of Counties.

Mr. White is an excellent Administrator. He has a high degree of ethics and strong organizational skills.

Mr. White brought Sarasota County from mediocrity to a high level of performance. The County's budget process was archaic. He improved the process and won awards for his program which became a model. He oversaw a major library building program as well as the construction of numerous public parks and facilities for the elderly. The County consolidated utilities and brought $300 million worth of utilities from developers into the County's control. Mr. White's tenure was an exciting time for Sarasota County.

Mr. White worked very well with the elected officials. He made it clear that he worked for the elected body as a whole and not for individuals. Some elected officials were not happy with this but the majority appreciated his resolve.

The administrator prior to Mr. White was obligated to the development community and as a result was not effective in his job. Mr. White steered clear of this issue but as a result did not have a strong outside group of supporters. While some of the elected officials would have liked to see more outside support for Mr. White, they understood that his focus was on the internal structure of the organization. He worked long hours and dedicated himself to the organization.

Mr. White and Mr. Richards enjoyed an excellent working relationship. Mr. White kept him well informed and communicated with him regularly. He gave the same treatment to each of the elected officials equally.

With the expansion and development of County Utilities, Mr. White did an excellent job in caring for the new utility customers. He developed programs to ensure customer satisfaction among the public.

One of his many innovations was a computer based, trunked radio system which is used by emergency services. The system, which was competitively priced by Motorola, became a model for the industry. The system has served the County well in the emergencies they have faced.

In making decisions, Mr. White gives them due deliberation but does not mire or hesitate in making them. He accomplishes tasks in an appropriate time frame and stays on task.

During his tenure in Sarasota County, the County Attorney challenged Mr. White after being fired. The case was dismissed and Mr. White was cleared of any wrong doing.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Nice guy
- Innovator
- Leader
- Professional
- Highly ethical
- Experienced

Strengths: High degree of ethics and great organizational skills

Weaknesses: Did not build an outside network of supporters.

The Honorable David R. Mills – Board of County Commissioners, Sarasota County, FL
(941) 378-0011

Commissioner Mills was Mr. White's immediate supervisor for seven years.

Mr. White is an extremely hardworking manager. He is dedicated and thorough. Commissioner Mills and he worked well with one another. He is consciences of the elected officials' role in the organization and respects boundaries.

Two of Mr. White's strengths are his understanding of the planning process and his knowledge of finance.

Commissioner Mills would have liked to see Mr. White be more vocal about the amount of work that he produced. He is not boisterous and has a quiet dignity which serves him well. However, he repeatedly produced copious amounts of work within a short time frame leaving some to believe that the work was effortless. He is one of the hardest working Administrators the County has had but many still so not realize the amount of work that went into all of his projects.

Mr. White is very open and honest in his dealings with the public. An excellent public speaker, he expresses himself well. In fact, after a recent address by the current County Administrator, one of the members of the construction community who was openly opposed to Mr. White commented that he would gladly welcome Mr. White back. Few can compare to Mr. White's ability to communicate.

Because of his tremendous background in government, it is not necessary for him to labor over decisions. He has often already faced similar situations and has no problem making decisions even when they are not popular.

Mr. White introduced very strong criteria and an interview process that improved the hiring process. He has the ability to judge character and makes good decisions in hiring.

In the last year of Mr. White's tenure, elections introduced three new Commissioners. During elections, a group of developers who felt that Mr. White prevented them from reaching their full potential and promised to support one particular candidate if he would move to fire Mr. White. The candidate accepted their support and was elected. The new Commissioner enlisted the support of the other new Commissioners and together they pursued Mr. White. Mr. White left shortly after the election.

In terms of embarrassing situation, in the mid 1980's Mr. White was involved with a D.U.I. charge while on vacation. He continued to work for Sarasota County and was supported by the Board.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Reserved
- Pleasant
- Easy to talk to
- Quiet confidence
- Hardworking
- Thorough

Strengths: Understanding of budget and the planning process

Weaknesses: Did not promote his efforts enough.

David L. May – presently President, Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce, CO – (970) 482-3751

Mr. May and Mr. White have been professional associates for 15 years. Mr. May was the President of the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce for nine years.

Mr. White did an impressive job of changing the County from average and behind the times to a progressive, professional organization. As a professional government administrator, he is highly experienced. He is very professional and demonstrates character and integrity. Another of his greatest attributes is his courage, even in a highly charged political environment.

Mr. White is respectful of his role and the role of the elected officials. He can be very determined and pursues a path without apology until the Board charters a different course. He leaves the decisions and the limelight to the elected officials.

Mr. White is an excellent writer. While he is not gregarious, he is a natural communicator. He was especially good at keeping the Chamber informed in the areas of economic development which was one of their key focuses.

Ultimately, Mr. White was asked to leave Sarasota County. The County needed a change in direction. Mr. White did an excellent job and left with a great deal of dignity. This was not an embarrassment to him or the organization in any way.

As for embarrassing situations, during his employ with the County, Mr. White was stopped for a D.U.I offense. He was very forthright and honest about the event to the public and demonstrated remorse for his actions.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Confident
- Self assured
- Individualist
- Professional
- Bright
- Dignified

Strengths: Professionalism and Integrity

Weaknesses: None identified.

Ronald Ted Smith – Chairman & CEO, Bookworld Companies, Sarasota, FL – (941) 758-8094

Mr. Smith and Mr. White have been professional associates since Mr. Smith moved to Sarasota County more than 15 years ago. They have consulted for one another and share a mutual admiration.

Mr. White is the best manager that the County has had and furthermore, the best manager Mr. Smith has ever seen. Mr. White is thougtful and never shoots from the hip. He is extremely patient and listens very well.

Mr. White has a command of the English language that is second to none. He handles the media beautifully.

One of his greatest attributes is his ability to solve problems. An innovator in his own right, he noted that there were numerous water and sewage companies in the County and so he consolidated them all.

Mr. White's staff members are respectful of him. A man of his intellect can often be forbidding but Mr. White is very welcoming and warm. He is socially charming and a good friend to have.

Mr. White is very work centered and puts his profession first. He would be an asset to any organization. Mr. Smith has tried to persuade him to work for him on several occasions.

Mr. Smith is unaware of any potentially embarrassing or controversial matters involving Mr. White.

Six Adjectives or phrases used to describe Mr. White:

- Thoughtful
- Patient
- Good listener
- Respected
- Professional
- Socially charming

Strengths: Dedication to his profession and ability to listen

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by:
Alayna Weiss
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for John Wesley White

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	Records Found 1) 1990 Georgia DUI Violation **DISPOSITION** = Undetermined as the record appears to have exceeded the time allotted for maintaining its contents 2) 2001Virginia Speeding Violation **DISPOSITION** = Dismissed
County	
Sarasota County, FL	No Records Found
Fairfax County, VA	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found
Georgia	No Records Found
Virginia	Record Found – See Nationwide Criminal Records Report above

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Sarasota County, FL	No Records Found
Fairfax County, VA	No Records Found
Federal	Records Found 1) 1999 - Civil Rights Violation Lawsuit filed against Sarasota County including Mr. White. **DISPOSITION** = Dismissed with Prejudice 2) 1994 – Environmental Matters Lawsuit filed against Sarasota County including Mr. White **DISPOSITION** = Dismissed

Background Check Summary for
John Wesley White

Motor Vehicle Florida	Record Found – 2006 – Following too closely Citation Listed **DISPOSITION** = Guilty; 3 Points off License
Credit	Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

Internet Research

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
November 15, 2006

Interim Van Wezel chief looks ahead
Some worry the arts hall will have trouble booking talent for its next season.
Author: *MIKE SAEWITZ mike.saewitz@heraldtribune.com*

The acting executive director of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall on Tuesday assured members of a city-run advisory board that the hall will move forward, filling key positions and finding talent to perform in the 2007-08 season.

Praising the hall's staff and pledging to bridge communication between City Hall and the Van Wezel, **John Wesley White**'s words come little more than a week after the city manager fired the hall's popular executive director, John Wilkes. "Even in the area of booking, I think we will be successful," said **White**, a former Sarasota County administrator who admits he has little experience in the entertainment business.

One member of the Van Wezel advisory board called this a "serious crisis situation" for the theater, which has lost three top employees since the city began investigating abuses there this year. The worst blow came with the firing of Wilkes, who was viewed as the key cog in bringing talent, money and audiences to the purple theater.

City officials say Wilkes misused city resources and filed improper travel expense reports. The greatest opposition to his firing came from members of the advisory board and the nonprofit Van Wezel Foundation, as well as others in the arts community.

Members of the city advisory board said little about Wilkes' firing Tuesday, but stayed encouraging as they chose new board leadership and questioned **White** about the immediate future.
White said it will likely be next year before the city selects a replacement for Wilkes. The city is interviewing candidates for other positions that came open after top Van Wezel employees resigned during the investigation.

About half of the booking for the 2007-08 season has been taken care of, he said. **White** plans to meet with City Manager Michael McNees today to discuss how the hall will continue to go about securing acts.

At the beginning of Tuesday's meeting, longtime Van Wezel booster Harvey Rothenberg formally terminated his lifetime membership on the board, a decision he originally made in protest of city officials' treatment of Wilkes.

Calling the advisory board a "paper board," Rothenberg criticized what he called a "massive disconnect" between the city manager's office and the Van Wezel. Some members said they felt "disenfranchised" as recent decisions about the Van Wezel seemed out of their hands.
"This board has been left out," said advisory board member Paul Thorpe.

The members say they want better communication with both city officials and members of the foundation board. Foundation members have been lobbying city commissioners to discuss the idea of converting the city-run arts hall into a nonprofit entity.

The commissioners want a consultant to study whether it could be beneficial to have a nonprofit group manage the hall. The city advisory board expressed a desire to be involved in the selection of Wilkes' replacement.

Members appointed a new chairwoman, Delia Smith-Orth, who said she is enthusiastic about increasing the advisory board's role as the hall enters a transition period.

Advisory Board member J. Deet Jonker, a retired executive with the Radio City Music Hall, said he thought about resigning as things got worse for Wilkes. But he said his resignation "wouldn't do the hall any good." He said the success of the hall is worth fighting for. "This is the pride and joy of the city," he said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
March 26, 2004
Separate line on tax bills might help rein in sheriff's runaway budget
Author: *Rod Thomson*

For as long as I have lived here, the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office has been a growing budget monster, devouring ever more of the overall county budget. The battles between former County Administrator **John Wesley White**, County Commissioner Bob Anderson and Sheriff Geoff Monge are legendary.

The emphasis on the sheriff is defensible on a couple of levels. Law enforcement is one of the key duties of government. Providing a safe, secure environment for the citizenry is one of the central reasons for government existing. The sheriff not only is in charge of prevention, investigating and arresting the bad guys, but for keeping them jailed as well. Also, the public simply demands it. There is the perception, even in a relatively safe community such as Sarasota, that crime is a problem and getting worse. People are primed to pay more if it means more personal security. So in those senses, Sheriff Bill Balkwill and his predecessors have a foundation for believing there is a mandate from the people to spend whatever is necessary.

The problem that has arisen is twofold. For one thing, Balkwill is increasing spending at a considerably faster pace than even Monge did - no small feat.

In his final four years in office, Monge averaged 7.7 percent annual increases, according to the county budget department. Those stressed the overall budget, but they look restrained in comparison to Balkwill's average 10 percent increases in the first three years of his administration. Balkwill has taken the sheriff's budget from less than $56 million to about $73 million. His primary defense for the striking increase is the new jail coming on line. But that cannot account for a 30 percent hike in three years - which would have been considerably higher had the county commissioners actually granted Balkwill all that he asked for.

Second, there is a systematic disconnect. The sheriff sets his budget and makes his request for funding it to the County Commission. There is no downside to him asking for the moon. But he cannot guarantee any amount of money, and must make do with what the commission provides, which has been pretty generous.

On the other hand, the county commissioners must collect taxes and turn the money over to the sheriff without having any control of the spending. So they are accountable to the taxpayers for taking money, but not accountable for spending it in the Sheriff's Office. This allows the unhealthy situation of finger pointing. Whenever there is a problem, the commissioners can claim that it is the sheriff's responsibility. But the sheriff can point the finger back at the county and claim that his office was under-funded.

At the same time the sheriff's budget under Balkwill has climbed, the County Commission, with Administrator Jim Ley at the helm, has been forcing county departments to actually try to reduce spending.

So the County Commission is looking to rein in Balkwill's budget this year, which in fact means reining in what commissioners approve for him. Recognizing the political realities in the sheriff's budget, Ley has suggested capping the budget at the local rate of inflation. That may help, although it would probably require some sort of multiplier for population growth. But a more fundamental change might be worth considering: Connect taxing and spending as much as possible.

The County Commission could create a special taxing district that breaks out the levy for the sheriff, making it separate on people's tax bills from the general fund millage rate.

That accountability in itself would have a moderating effect on his spending, eliminating the need for arbitrary capping gadgets and setting the stage for the benefits of making the sheriff more liable to the taxing public for his spending.

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Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
August 2, 2002
City taxpayers losing the benefits of an admirable firefighting merger
Author: *Rod Thomson*

Six years ago, the city of Sarasota and Sarasota County agreed to merge their duplicative fire departments under the authority of the larger county operation.

The goal was to create efficiencies by eliminating the overlapping coverage along the boundary lines. The plan called for gradually lowering the city's tax rate as the county took over the fire department operations and imposed a fire assessment on the city residents.

It was one of the best examples of selfless good government you will find. The city was giving up some authority -- something seldom found in government -- and the county was taking on extra work. But now it seems that the savings for taxpayers locked into that agreement are being continually unlocked.

After an initial reduction, the city's property tax rate has been inching back up at the same time that property values have soared, pouring more money into city coffers because so much of downtown and other retail and commercial areas are exempt from the Save Our Homes cap.

In addition, the fire assessments the county levies remain in place because the firefighting service remains. The net is a heavier tax burden on city taxpayers. That was not supposed to be the case.
Eliminating the fire department saved the city about $8.5 million annually. The city's tax rate was 5.3390 in 1995, the year before the fire departments were merged. By 1999, the rate had dropped all the way to 2.1051, according to the city finance department.
The property tax had been slashed in half.

But in 2000, it was hiked upward again to 2.4926 and now the city is proposing increasing it again, to 2.7692. That would not seem unreasonable until you realize that the taxable value in the city skyrocketed 16 percent before we even get to the tax increase on top of it.

The city's general fund budget was $37.1 million when the fire department was merged with the county. But now, only seven years later, the general fund budget is proposed at $41.4 million, shooting well past what was saved by no longer operating a fire department. And it is a hard increase, because much of it goes toward hiring more employees who become an ingrained part of each future year's expenses. Of course, there also are the subsidies for theatrical entertainment, baseball, golf and other leisure activities.

A nod must be given toward the significant health insurance expenses the city is facing. The increase is 31 percent from this year, but in raw dollars it comes to about $350,000 - only a portion of the increased spending and something that every other public and private entity is burdened with, too.

Merging the fire departments was a good government plan hatched under former County Administrator **John Wesley White**, former City Manager David Sollenberger and somewhat visionary city and county commissions.

But if the city keeps expanding on the robust base of soaring property taxes, then it may have been for naught. What was saved through fire department efficiencies will have been spent on a swelling city staff elsewhere -- and all on the backs of about the same number of taxpayers.
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St. Petersburg Times
October 5, 2001
Administrator hopeful known as an innovator
Author: *LISA GREENE*

NOTE: This is the last of four profiles of the finalists for the Pinellas County administrator job. County commissioners are scheduled to interview candidates next week and make a choice Oct. 12.

John Wesley White spent 10 years running Sarasota County. Now he wants to work on the north side of the Sunshine Skyway. "Pinellas has a really solid staff and a reputation of solid governance," he said. "It's the kind of environment where you can do some creative things and add value."

During his 10 years in Sarasota, **White** oversaw the development of a new water treatment system, settlement of a long-running lawsuit with local cities, an overhaul of the county's then-antiquated sewage treatment plant, voter approval of a penny sales tax, city-county consolidation of fire, parks and other services and upgrading of the county bond rating. He spent a year as president of the National Association of Counties and won a national award for management innovation. And then, in 1997, commissioners forced him out of office. With four of five commissioners against him, **White** quit rather than be fired.

"The board asked that I be the most visible person on many (controversial) projects, so I became a point of controversy," he said. After commission elections, "the new board wanted to put that controversy behind it. They just wanted a fresh start."

A 1997 Sarasota Herald-Tribune article gives a similar account. The newspaper said **White** didn't do enough to "deliver on community relations" but also was "caught in the middle of shifting policy directives" from commissioners. "Vague perceptions carried more weight than his concrete accomplishments," the paper said.

Today, **White** is director of public works and environmental services in Fairfax Co., Va., a Washington suburb of 975,000 residents. The new department was formed to devote more attention to environmental protection and stormwater planning. **White** also oversees solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment and construction.

"John's been a real help to me," said Rob Stalzer, deputy county executive there. "Whether it's public works or totally unrelated, I use him as a sounding board all the time." Stalzer and others described **White** as a smart, innovative thinker who gets results. Even former Sarasota County Commission Chairman Bob Anderson, who was one of those ready to fire **White**, said he did "a wonderful job" there. "He literally turned around Sarasota County government in a positive way," Anderson said.

Anderson also said he wasn't concerned by a blot on **White**'s record - a 1989 DUI conviction while **White** was on vacation in Georgia. **White** called it a "really bad personal mistake" that led to personal growth. Anderson said **White** doesn't have a drinking problem.

Anderson and current Commissioner David Mills, **White**'s last supporter there, said **White** became a convenient scapegoat during commission elections and wasn't able to recover. "It's kind of the nature of that job," Mills said.

Mills has a point. Around the country, the average county administrator stays in a job five years. Anderson and Mills said **White** would do well for Pinellas. "With a county as big as Pinellas, you need somebody who's got experience actually running a county," Anderson said. "You really can't afford a learning curve. You need somebody who has experience and knows state government."

- Times staff researchers Cathy Wos and Caryn Baird contributed to this report.

Washington Post
September 19, 1999

Va. Neighbors Stew Over Lake That Got Away
Author: *Josh White*
Michael D. Shear; Washington Post Staff Writers

Residents out for an early-morning stroll around Lake Barton in Burke Centre yesterday were in for a rude awakening. The lake was gone. All 11 acres of it. Drained like a bathtub. In its place was a desolate mud flat on which rested two exposed beaver dams.

"This is just sad," mourned Eve Herold, 42, as she watched a family of ducks trudge through the thick muck to get a few bread crumbs. Herold, who recently moved onto Lakeside Oak Lane--or, as she put it, "Lakeside ha-ha Oak Lane"--precisely because of its water view, said Barton "is the focal point of the community. This was a beautiful lake. Now it's just mud. I don't know anyone who would want to look out over this. . . . They completely denuded the lake."

They would be Fairfax County public works employees, who decided on Wednesday, in conjunction with state officials, to lower a few of the county's artificial lakes in anticipation of torrential downpours from Hurricane Floyd. That afternoon, they opened the floodgates on Barton's 25-foot-tall dam. So far, so good.

At the height of the storm Thursday afternoon, rainwater was filling the lake as fast as lake water was draining out, according to **John Wesley White**, director of the county's Department of Public Works and Environmental Services. By the time Floyd left the area that night, **White** decided it was too windy and dangerous to send employees back to shut the gates. "A decision was made, for better or worse, not to send crews out in the night," **White** said. "It was just too unsafe to do that. It's really unfortunate for the sake of the homeowners. But I think it was properly motivated."

When crews returned to Lake Barton on Friday morning to close the gates, there was some water left, two small pools about five feet deep, **White** said. By evening, even that was largely gone, and under yesterday's bright sun, sections of the mud were beginning to dry and crack. "When I got home, I looked out and saw that the lake had basically vanished," said Herold, adding that she could hear catfish flapping around in the low water. "We were just flabbergasted." There were no reports of problems at the other lakes that were lowered.

At Barton Lake, where resident Marty Murdock saw "turtles as big as laundry baskets," some neighbors said yesterday they understood the logic behind opening the floodgates, but many were upset.

Craig Musick, an official for the Burke Centre Conservancy, said the homeowners group was not consulted beforehand. "I can tell you unequivocally that we never recommended it," he said. "If we had been asked, our position probably would have been to take the lake down no more than about three-quarters and then stop, so that we could be safe and protect the habitat for wildlife."

But conservancy executive director Sharon Goodrich said: "The county attempted to do its best in bad weather. If the dam had gone over and there had been flooding, people would have been quite upset."
County-owned Lake Barton is, or was, in the middle of the 5,800-home community, a popular spot for strolling, biking and fishing. Geese, ducks and heron were often spotted, along with deer and opossums.

"The ecosystem that was there yesterday has been destroyed for the most part," Herold said, fuming.
Even as many along the East Coast were still bailing out their basements yesterday in Floyd's aftermath, Burke Centre residents looked out over their dry lake bed, where a sign stuck out of the mud reading "Caution--Deep Water," and demanded their lake back.
Officials said it will take some time to refill the lake, which drains into Pohick Creek and eventually into the Potomac River.

"It won't be a matter of days, it will be weeks," **White** said. Exactly how long depends on how much rain falls, he said. "The natural flow of the stream will eventually fill it. If we get more rain, it will fill faster."

That news didn't mollify Herold. "The only solution they've put together is to walk away," she said, "and that's not acceptable."

Peg Futrell, who was attracted to Burke Centre by the lake's beauty, said yesterday that she's glad she's not selling her place right now. "If I were looking for a home and I looked out and saw a mud flat like this, I definitely wouldn't buy it," she said. "This whole community is a very beautiful habitat, and that isn't beautiful."

Staff writer Michael Leahy contributed to this report.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
November 23, 1998

COUNTY'S TOP EXECUTIVE GETS 3-YEAR CONTRACT
Author: *Laura Higgins STAFF WRITER*

A year after Jim Ley arrived from Nevada to take over the top post in Sarasota County government, his bosses agreed to give him a three-year contract as the county administrator.

The move this month by the Sarasota County Commission was an unusual step for a board that generally has employed its administrator on a year-to-year basis.

Although the county charter still allows the commission to terminate the administrator's contract at any any time with a four-fifths vote, the commissioners say the move was intended as a vote of confidence for the work he is doing now, and to send a message that they intend to support Ley for some time. The contract also means it would be far more costly to the county if he were to be terminated.

Such strong support early in Ley's tenure is to be somewhat expected. Commissioner Bob Anderson, for instance, has called it a ``honeymoon period.'

But the commissioners also say Ley, 49, has shown himself to be exactly what they hoped he would be when he was hired - a manager with a far different style than his predecessor, **John Wesley White**, and one willing to make dramatic changes.

Commissioner Ray Pilon calls the difference between **White** and Ley ``night and day." **White** held the top job for a decade in Sarasota before resigning in 1997 when four of five commissioners, three of whom campaigned on a promise to change administrators, made it clear they were ready to fire him.

While **White** used a top-down management style, Ley has embraced a '90s technique that empowers his subordinates to make key decisions in their departments, Pilon said. ``When Mr. **White** came here, his style of management and the development of a bureaucracy was what this county needed, because it didn't have one," Pilon said. When Ley was hired, ``we needed to go to a less layered, less bureaucratic government with employees empowered to make decisions and customer service as a first-line issue."

One of the most dramatic changes planned by Ley is a move to consolidate the county's 23 departments into eight ``business centers" to make county government more accessible, understandable and simpler to use for taxpayers. The plan is untested at this point. Ley estimated it will take two to three years to fully put it into place.

Still, it's a direction the commissioners say they wanted. The massive reorganization is part of the reason why the board chose to give him a longer contract. ``The number one priority when he was hired was to reorganize county government and get us going in a more efficient, accountable means as a service provider," said Commissioner Shannon Staub. ``I think this warrants an outward expression

from the board that the board's commitment is long-term. ``The message we can send out to the community and employees is that we're behind this man, we're behind this leader leading the organization into this. It's one of more stability, more security," Staub said.

White left behind an impressive list of accomplishments, according to the same commissioners who forced him to leave, from restoring the reputation of the office of county administrator and lowering the county's credit rating to driving consolidations of city-county services.

At the time of his departure, Anderson praised **White** as perhaps the most capable and knowledgeable county administrator in Florida. But by the end of **White**'s tenure, he had become a favorite target of blame for those unhappy with county projects.

Anderson, Pilon and Staub all ran on a campaign for change involving the county administrator. Anderson said Ley has ``garnered public support." ``We had a problem before with public perception about the value of our county administrator," Anderson said. ``Jim Ley has been able to work with the public. . . . He has also been very willing to look at any suggestion to determine if services provided could be better or cheaper, and that includes privatization."

Commission Chairman David Mills said the administrators' contracts have traditionally been year-to-year, but Ley felt it was important for the board to show a long-term commitment.

He said Ley and **White** are ``two totally different people," and he believes that **White** was a victim of politics in a year that saw a high percentage of turnover of county administrators in Florida. **White** was recently hired as director of public works in Fairfax County, Va., a suburb of Washington, D.C., with a population of 920,000. Mills is pleased with Ley's work so far. ``I think things are going very well," he said. ``I'm pleased with Mr. Ley's performance and the way the county is moving along."

Ley said he hopes his tenure in Sarasota County will last longer than three years. **White**'s lengthy stint in the post was one reason he came here. ``One of the things that attracted me to this county was it had a history of stability," Ley said.``I've found the people very accepting and friendly, the staff and board extremly supportive. Obviously, the environment and quality of life is desirable. It's a great place to be." Ley said he hopes Sarasota is his last stop. ``I'm in the last third of my career. I always wanted to be in a coastal area, and I'd like to be here until I retire."

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
March 18, 1998

DEVELOPERS' SUIT: COUNTY PUNISHING US SARASOTA COUNTY OFFICIALS DENY THAT THEY HAVE INTENTIONALLY CAUSED DELAYS FOR THE PALMER RANCH DEVELOPMENT IN RETALIATION FOR PREVIOUS COURT ACTIONS.
Author: *Cherie Jacobs Lane and Victor Hull STAFF WRITERS*

Palmer Ranch Development Ltd. has escalated its long-running fight with Sarasota County, filing a federal lawsuit that accuses county officials of engaging in a conspiracy to punish Southwest Florida's largest development.

County officials have intentionally caused delays for the ranch in retaliation for its decision to file circuit court actions against the county two years ago, said Larry Kellogg, the development's attorney. ``There has been a retaliation of slowing things down, making it . . . almost impossible to get things done," Kellogg said Tuesday. ``The County Commission is apparently never going to let us have another piece of development in Sarasota County."

Unlike the previous circuit court suits by the ranch - which questioned how the county collected impact fees and the crossing of railroad easements - the new federal suit says the county violated the development's constitutional rights.

The suit names Sarasota County, County Attorney Jorge Fernandez, Assistant County Attorney Alan Roddy, Transportation Director John Good-knight and former County Administrator **John Wesley White**.

The county commissioners, who last summer rejected a settlement offer from ranch President Hugh Culverhouse Jr., were surprised and angered by the federal suit.

Commissioner Shannon Staub called it a ``crying shame that it came out of the blue. It's the pits."

Commissioner Bob Anderson said he felt that the ranch's previous offer to settle had been ``a joke." The commissioners agreed to hire outside attorneys to defend the county and the employees named in the suit.

The federal suit contends county officials:
* Intentionally delayed the design and construction of Honore Avenue, limiting access to parts of the ranch.
* Forced the ranch to go through a tedious, unnecessary application process for every minor change in its plans, including the moving of shrubs a few hundred feet.
* Discontinued negotiations with Seminole Gulf Railway that would have arranged for permanent easements over tracks, allowing the developer access to the eastern portions of the ranch.

Fernandez, the county attorney, called the lawsuit ``egregious." Regarding the specific allegations, he said they are ``wholly and totally without merit."
The County Commission meeting Tuesday gave the two sides a fresh item to fight about.

The commission refused to grant the ranch special permission to develop its latest phase, called Silver Oak, without legal permission from Seminole Gulf Railway to cross railroad tracks. Anderson said he didn't want ``to create any more problems" over an issue that's already in litigation. But Kellogg labeled the decision a new retaliation against the ranch.

The battle is important to the county not only because of the ranch's size - 10,000 acres of central Sarasota County that will eventually hold 10,500 homes - but because the litigation could cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

In July, Culverhouse offered to settle the suit for $25 million. The commission unanimously rejected the proposal. There have been no negotiations since then. The origins of the dispute date to 1984.

Palmer Ranch agreed then to build certain roads and make other improvements. Ranch officials later said the county is required to reimburse the development, either in cash or by eliminating impact fees. Ranch officials said the county has purposely changed road construction schedules so that it won't have to reimburse Palmer Ranch.

County officials said that Palmer Ranch agreed to build the roads and is owed no compensation. They branded the litigation as an attempt to force taxpayers to pay for roads that exist only because of the ranch.

In addition, Palmer has sued the county over rights of way across railroad tracks on the ranch. The county contends that Palmer failed to secure permanent easements for streets crossing the railroad that divides its development, as required by contract.

Those suits - especially the impact-fee suit - spurred the county officials to retaliate with a ``flagrant abuse of power," according to the ranch's federal suit.

Goodknight and **White** could not be reached for comment Tuesday. Roddy declined to comment.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
September 14, 1997

AGENCY'S WARNING WAS TAKEN LIGHTLY A CONSERVATION PLAN TO PROTECT SCRUB JAYS IN SARASOTA HAD BEEN SHELVED BECAUSE IT WAS DEEMED ``LOW PRIORITY.''
Author: *Gordon Russell STAFF WRITER*

Sarasota County administrators risked ostensible civil penalties - or even criminal charges - when they decided not to complete a habitat conservation plan for threatened Florida scrub jays. The federal Fish and Wildlife Service had requested such a plan in warning letters to county officials sent in 1991 and 1994. So, were county leaders pressured by developers to avoid protecting land? Or were they cowed by the potential cost of completing such a plan? It doesn't appear so.

According to Robin Hart, assistant director of the county's Natural Resources Department, a plan would have been virtually free, because local scrub jay expert Jon Thaxton already had completed most of the research. Also, a countywide scrub plan would have made developers and single-lot owners happy. By completing a plan acceptable to the Fish and Wildlife Service, the county would have been able to issue permits without subjecting builders to lengthy - and costly - federal reviews.

Manatee and Charlotte counties, which have smaller but still substantial numbers of Florida scrub jays, also received warning letters from the agency. Neither county has completed a habitat conservation plan. But the Fish and Wildlife Service credited both counties for their attempts to work with the feds to give scrub jays a fighting chance.

Charlotte County gives land owners who wish to develop on scrub habitat two options, according to county environmental specialist Dale Beter. They can take their plans to FWS, or they can preserve and manage a certain amount of the scrub on their property - generally the same amount as they wish to clear. Also, Charlotte's new comprehensive plan - which has yet to be adopted - calls for a habitat conservation plan for scrub jays, Beter said.

FWS agents came to Manatee County last summer after learning that lots in the Pommelo Park subdivision containing scrub habitat were being cleared for development. It was not clear whether any jays were harmed, and no citations were issued. But county officials met with FWS to avoid a similar situation in the future. ``We've made headway in Manatee County since then,'' said Deborah Manz of FWS. ``We told them they have to tell people to be aware of scrub habitat when they're building, and that they need to call us. And they were agreeable to that.''

In Sarasota, county leaders apparently have taken a dim view of protecting scrub jays. A conservation plan for jays was seen as a ``low priority'' by former County Administrator **John Wesley White** and former Deputy County Administrator Bob LaSala, according to a department memo.

The staff at the Natural Resources Department had asked for permission to complete a conservation plan after receiving the warning letters from FWS. But the idea was ``shot down'' by LaSala, according

to summaries of telephone conversations between FWS agents and the county Natural Resources Department.

LaSala, now city manager of Sunnyvale, Calif., recently said the decision stemmed from ``workload issues" at the Natural Resources Department and ``competing priorities." There were also legal questions. The Endangered Species Act is a federal law, and county legal counsel Alan Roddy says he doesn't believe the county is required to enforce it.

Finally, the county was reluctant to get sucked into property-rights battles, particularly in South Venice, where lots containing scrub have been platted for development for decades. But records show that Resources Department employees thought the conservation plan was both feasible and required by law, and they tried hard to persuade LaSala to authorize it.

Hart spoke several times with Dawn Zattau of Fish and Wildlife in early 1994, and the two talked about how to overcome the unwillingness of county leaders to complete a plan. ``We discussed . . . how the threat of LE (law enforcement) action can do wonders to promote the process," one phone log says. But county administrators didn't take the threat seriously.

A summary of a February 1997 conversation between Hart and Fish and Wildlife biologist Mike Jennings reads in part: ``I indicated FWS was drafting letter outlining county liability and need to stop issuing permits. She said they had seen similar letters and nobody at her level could or would do anything to resolve the issue - we haven't backed up the threat yet."

Jim Ley took over as Sarasota County's administrator last month, replacing **John Wesley White**, who resigned in January.

Ley worked on two habitat conservation plans in his previous job as deputy county administrator of Clark County, Nev., including a complicated one designed to preserve multiple endangered species.
Ley agrees with Roddy that the law clearly makes protection of endangered species a federal responsibility. But he's open to the idea of a scrub jay conservation plan.

It may be too late for Sarasota County's jays, but jay expert Thaxton and Natural Resources biologist Hart think the plan would give the birds a chance. ``We'd be in good shape to still do it," Hart says. ``Of course, we'd have been a lot better off doing it five years ago."

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
March 15, 1997

ADMINISTRATOR'S DEDICATION PRAISED JOHN WESLEY WHITE WRAPS UP HIS LAST DAY AT WORK AFTER 10 YEARS AS A SARASOTA COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Pink message slips remained neatly stacked on **John Wesley White**'s desk Friday - more phone calls to be returned.

In fact, Sarasota County's longtime county administrator was still wrapping up so much business during his final few days that by Friday - his last official day on the job - he hadn't started packing up his office. ``I'll have to do it over the weekend,'' he said. ``I just haven't had time.'' To some - even those who forced him out of office - that dedication is no surprise. ``John had committed to the board to keep in top gear until the day he left and he has done just that,'' said Commission Chairman Bob Anderson, who was a leader in ousting **White**.

Maybe it's because they feel it would be like speaking ill of the dead, but since his ouster few people have had bad things to say about **White**. ``The general work product coming out from John's office was been exemplary,'' Anderson said.

White resigned Jan. 10, when it became apparent during a special meeting to evaluate his performance that four out of five commissioners were ready to vote to fire him.

The primary reason seemed to be that the county needs a new kind of administrator. **White**'s personality fit the commission's needs when he was hired in 1987. But the County Commission has changed, in people and in attitude, and a majority thought a fresh start was in order.

Anderson, who was in that majority to fire **White**, said that the right man for 1987 is not the right man for 1997. ``Moods and times change. Even the best of administrators will find themselves in untenable situations,'' he said. ``**John Wesley White** was the right man for the better part of the past 10 years.''

The mood for many people in the county offices Friday was somber. While **White**'s personality may not engender a lot of warm affection, there are people who were clearly attached to him and loyal.

The office employees gave him farewell gag gifts and a plaque with a long inscription from Theodore Roosevelt on the importance of the man in the arena - not the critics.

One secretary volunteered in passing: ``It's a sad day.''

Still, many think **White** will land on his feet. He is a finalist for the county administrator job in Collier County.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
February 19, 1997

STREET WON'T BE CLOSED TO ADD LIBRARY PARKING ANGLE PARKING IS TO REPLACE PARALLEL PARKING ON SECOND STREET IN ORDER TO ADD SPACES.
Author: *Victor Hull REGIONAL REPORTER*

Closing Second Street in downtown Sarasota would not solve any parking shortage that arises from a new central library, the County Commission concluded Tuesday.

The commissioners abandoned the idea after County Administrator **John Wesley White** told them that it would actually reduce the number of parking spaces available near the library, which is planned for the Five Points site.

The city of Sarasota has agreed to institute angle parking on Second Street instead of parallel parking. That should create a few more parking spots, officials said.

The County Commission had decided last month to ask the city to close several hundred feet of Second Street. The commissioners believed that the street space could be converted to a parking lot, which would save them from having to buy expensive downtown land for additional parking.

But city officials were worried that closing the Second Street-Central Avenue intersection could hurt nearby businesses and clog traffic flow. The proposal also ran into trouble after designers sketched a plan for how the closing would work. A traffic circle needed to allow vehicles to turn around on the dead-end street would eat up about 10 parking spaces.

Leaving the street open and converting it to parallel parking would result in 219 spaces in the library parking lot and nearby streets. Closing Second Street would leave 209 spaces, officials said.

The board unanimously agreed not to pursue the street closure. They decided to move ahead with the current plan, which calls for a library parking lot and the remainder of parking to be on the streets in the vicinity.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
February 7, 1997

ADMINISTRATOR'S ASSESSMENT: COUNTY IN GOOD SHAPE< FUTURE WON'T BE A SHOCK< JOHN WESLEY WHITE SAYS A RELATIVELY LOW MILLAGE RATE BENEFITS SARASOTA COUNTY
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

With a low property tax rate and fewer social problems than many communities, Sarasota County is poised to handle the onslaught of responsibilities that will descend from the federal and state level, according to outgoing Sarasota County Administrator **John Wesley White**.

White said during a Tiger Bay Club meeting Thursday that when the county's property tax and special assessments are added together, Sarasota County has the second- lowest rate on the west coast of Florida. And if Lee County, which has the lowest, charged its residents directly for garbage pickup instead of having residents pay the hauler, Sarasota County's would be the lowest.

The county has been criticized for relying too heavily on special assessments - such as for storm-water drainage and fire protection - rather than simply making that part of property taxes, which are tax deductible.

But **White** said that Sarasota's relatively low 3.84 millage rate that has been a result gives the county flexibility to handle increased social responsibilities. ``I can assure you we will have fiscal demands placed on us in the next five or 10 years and you will be thankful, I believe, that the county has been prudent in the use of its resources and has a diverse approach to its revenues," he said. ``We have a very fortunate circumstance here."

The Florida Constitution caps counties' maximum property tax rate at 10 mills, one mill being equal to $1 per $1,000 of assessed value.

White contrasted the county's situation with other counties, such as Hillsborough, which is at the state's maximum tax limit of 10 mills.

Hillsborough, with greater social needs than Sarasota County, will have far fewer options for raising money to take care of those needs, he said. ``I don't know how those governments are going to pay for what the federal government is going to dump on local governments," he said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 29, 1997

INTERIM ADMINISTRATOR TO GET RAISE, PROMOTION
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

The Sarasota County commissioners approved an agreement Tuesday that will nearly double Jeanne Teel's salary when she becomes interim county administrator. It also ensures a promotion for her, to deputy administrator, when the new county administrator is hired.

The commissioners' 4-1 vote, which directed departing County Administrator **John Wesley White** to promote Teel and give her the raise, came in spite of one board member's objections.

Commissioner David Mills said it violated the county charter, which states that the county administrator shall: ``Select, supervise, set compensation for, and suspend or dismiss all persons other than the county attorneys employed within the Board of County Commissioners." ``It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that a vote of the board telling the administrator what to do is over and above what the charter allows," Mills said.

While Commissioner Jack O'Neil voted with the majority, he appeared to agree with Mills. ``I have no ability or desire to usurp . . . a professional administrator," said O'Neil. He added after the meeting that the decision should have been left to **White**. But the other commissioners did not believe it was a violation.

For one reason, their vote was to ``recommend" the promotion to **White**. ``I don't feel we are usurping Mr. **White**'s authority," said Commissioner Shannon Staub. Staub sees it as the result of negotiations between Commission Chairman Bob Anderson and Teel over the compensation she wanted to take on the interim administrator's role.

The wording of the ``recommendation" satisfied County Attorney Jorge Fernandez that the vote did not violate the charter. He said **White** doesn't have to promote Teel. But **White** said he will do so because that is what the commission wants. ``In good conscience, I would not voluntarily put Mrs. Teel in as a deputy county administrator," he said. ``Nor do I feel it is proper to tie the hands of the next administrator with more middle managers."

In fact, **White** demoted Teel in 1991 from deputy county administrator to director of community relations for South County as part of his attempts to reduce bureaucracy and eliminate most deputy county administrators.

The vote Tuesday sets Teel's annualized salary at $100,695. She earns $55,562 as head of customer service for the commissioners. She will be paid the higher amount beginning March 14, when **White** leaves, and until the new administrator is on board. When the new administrator is hired, she will become a deputy county administrator at the salary that **White** sets.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 19, 1997

INDEPENDENCE WAS OFFICIAL'S UNDOING THE FORMER COUNTY LEADER SAYS HIS GO-IT-ALONE STYLE LED TO MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING HIS TENURE AND EVEN MORE DISAPPOINTMENTS.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Massaging his jowls with unusually large hands, **John Wesley White** squinted in thought: What is he most proud of in his decade-long tenure as Sarasota County administrator? ``It will surprise you, frankly," he said, piercing blue eyes twinkling with the delight of a surprise about to be sprung. ``One of the things I feel best about is the street tree program." Trees?

For 10 years **White** was one of the most powerful men in Sarasota County; arguably the most powerful. He battled over regional water supplies, landfills in environmentally preserved areas, a central library, expanding county government, consolidating services with the city and reorganizing government. And in the end, he's most proud of trees along streets? Easily.

It was a quick call for a man who does not readily fit the pigeonhole that many critics would like to place him in. Sure, he can be autocratic, bureaucratic, gruff, arrogant and meeting-bound. He knows it. But in some spindly, little leafless trees planted along Beneva Road in 1988, he saw the beauty of the lined roadway that today is punctuated by maturing oaks and flowering crape myrtle. He saw it, he pushed for it. He went out on a limb, so to speak. ``That was a real dogfight to get that commission to accept the proposition of spending money on street trees. You would also be surprised how controversial it was with the public." Many people could not see the softening the trees would bring to that harsh traffic corridor. ``Every time I see it, I feel good about it," he said. ``I know that without the decision on my part to include it in the budget, to advocate it with commissioners . . . to find ways to continue to support it, I know that it would not have made it."

That self-assured methodology and personality behind it created the street tree program. And that same independent mindset undid the county administrator. He's really not much of a collaborator.
Standing alone

White offered his resignation during a special meeting Jan. 10 when he realized that four of five commissioners were ready to fire him. It was the second time the commissioners sought to oust him since 1992. But he could not dodge this attempt.

In the ensuing days, he worked out his resignation, then had to endure commissioners reneging on the agreement Tuesday. Some commissioners found the price tag for the resignation higher than they expected when they gave it a nonbinding nod Jan. 10. But **White** waived the $30,000 sick-day portion, and his resignation was accepted unanimously. Through it all, he did not collaborate with a personal lawyer. The commission, however, made full use of County Attorney Jorge Fernandez and his staff.

The individualistic, go-it-alone style that succeeded with trees left him lonely and vulnerable on many other issues.

In his office is a large photo of a lighthouse with huge ocean waves crashing around it on three sides. Standing outside the door, dwarfed by the furious waves, stands a lone lighthouse keeper. The angry seas threaten to sweep him away. ``I can certainly identify with him," **White** said quietly, pursing his lips. It's a favorite picture. But he wonders, in retrospect, if he should identify with it so much.

In his latest bid to keep his job, **White** told commissioners that he wanted to become more attuned to the community. He wanted to collaborate with others more and take the pulse of the Sarasota community.

Apparently, it wasn't empty rhetoric, just difficult for him to do. On his full bookshelf sits; ``The Theory of Collaborative Behavior." He said that despite being forced to resign, he still wants to get out in the community more. ``Every time I've reached out and had some involvement with a community group, I've gained some insight from it," he said. For instance, he held monthly community coffees for a long time. But he stopped a couple of years ago when his schedule became too hectic. He regrets it.

In his organization-minded way, he even created a list of about 30 prominent people that he wanted to touch base with regularly. He created a matrix where the more involved they were with county affairs, the more often he planned to meet with them. He worked it all out on vacation - which says something about his doggedness - but never implemented it. ``The urgent always prevails over the important," he said, shaking his head ruefully. ``I was right on target."

He expects to stay in local government administration somewhere and use a more community-minded approach.

Disappointment

White's biggest disappointment was not buying the old Maas Brothers site at the corner of U.S. 301 and Main Street when it was for sale for a song. That time, he couldn't make his vision happen.

The county needed expansion space for a new judicial center and new administration building. It had the money from the 1 percent sales tax. **White** envisioned a grand county government complex that created an entrance to the downtown core and operated efficiently. ``Not only would it have had a profound effect on the quality of county government, but a profound beneficial effect on the downtown landscape of Sarasota," he said. ``And that was one where I really put myself out there. It was clearly my proposal. And I took a lot of heat for it."

Alone.

Before buying the property, one commissioner wanted the county to consider putting the new county administration center in a mid-county location. During the couple of months it took to do that, the Maas Brothers site was bought by two prominent businessmen connected to the Argus Foundation. **White** and the commissioners saw the political handwriting on the wall. For the county to buy it at that point, giving the men a profit, would have looked like powerbrokers lining each others' pockets with taxpayer money. The opportunity was gone.

Now, a Cobb Theatres 20-screen mega-plex movie theater is being built on the site. The county administration building is in the old GTE building on Main Street, several blocks away. And the judicial center is being built on a relatively small piece of land east of the old administration center. Whenever **White** sees the judicial tower going up, he sighs. ``Dozens of things have been disappointments in time, but they all pale in significance to that one," he said. ``I'm even feeling badly talking about it now, it is such a disappointment."

Diffused power

White's got an insight about Sarasota County powerbrokers. There really aren't any. That may bruise a few egos, but he said he just hasn't seen or felt them. And surely he would have. ``I think we have a very dispersed, almost to the point of being nonexistent, power structure here in town," he said. ``There is not a small cadre of people that have significant influence . . . It might surprise some of them to find that out."

Individuals carry weight in certain topical areas, he said. But unlike other communities where some old families or a particular industry dominate, Sarasota is new and its business character remains tourism. Most people are from somewhere else. And in an age when top company executives transfer around the country, the combination has left a power vacuum in Sarasota County's private sector.

``If you take this and contrast it to any other community that I'm aware of, there are more points of influence and they count for a proportionately smaller piece of the total pie," he said. ``There isn't a dominant half-dozen or so, in my judgment." That vacuum gives individual commissioners and the county administrator more power - and more latitude to act on their consciences if they so choose.
Water and garbage

Sarasota County grew by 60,000 thousand residents to 311,000 since **White** became administrator - a population larger than the entire city of Sarasota. All those new residents needed water and a place to dump their garbage. And those two aspects of local government created his biggest individual challenges.

Tops among the two was getting the Carlton Tract water supply pumping water after years of controversy and court battles. He said the issue created a classic political and practical challenge for local government. ``It had every element that makes things hard," he said. Those elements included a community divided over the merits of the project, technical questions about how it would work, myriad regulatory hoops to jump through and a dedicated cadre of opponents.

In **White**'s eyes, the last group is not to be confused with a divided community, where people on both sides sincerely disagree but are willing to try to work something out. He said the committed cadre, which also developed over the landfill location, tries anything within their power to scuttle the project, regardless of the cost to the public.

Insulated confidence

November's election resulted in two new commissioners committed to ousting **White**. But he insists that he has not been looking for work. He did not want to psychologically place himself part way out the door of county administration, he said.

He still thought going into the meeting Dec. 10 that he had a good chance of persuading a majority of commissioners to keep him on.

Few observers thought there was a snowball's chance in Sarasota of that happening.

His assessment harkens once again to his isolation. If **White** had reached out more to the community and been in collaboration with more people, perhaps he would have known that his time was up.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 15, 1997

COUNTY OFFICIAL OFFERS TO FORGO SICK-DAY BENEFIT THE NEARLY $30,000 FOR UNUSED SICK DAYS IN JOHN WESLEY WHITE'S RESIGNATION PACKAGE CAUSED A STRAIN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

The Sarasota County commissioners balked Tuesday at the cost of County Administrator **John Wesley White**'s resignation package.

Nearly $30,000 for unused sick days hit them like sticker shock, and for the better part of the day the whole resignation issue hung like a cloud over the commission chambers. Betrayal was felt on both sides.

But the cloud suddenly dissipated at the end of the day when **White** removed the $30,000 obstacle by making an offer to forgo the sick day benefit while retaining the rest of the plan.

The commissioners then voted unanimously to approve the resignation package that keeps **White** as administrator for 60 days and gives him his four-month severance package along with employee benefits for four months.

The package totals $56,000, about $16,000 more than it would have cost to simply fire **White**. The $16,000 difference is in the benefits package.
In return, **White** can guide a few critical issues through to completion during the next two months and help start the transition to a new administrator. ``I'm glad I salvaged some part, but obviously I'm disappointed,'' he said after the meeting.

White offered his resignation Friday when it became apparent during a special meeting that four commissioners were ready to fire him. As part of the resignation, he offered to stay on for 60 days to finish some projects.

He made those offers contingent on getting his severance pay, which by contract is equal to four months, or $40,000, and asked that it be spread over four months so that he would be allowed to keep his benefits going during that time. Everyone seemed to have warm, fuzzy feelings over Friday's offer, which Commission Chairman Bob Anderson called ``an extreme act of statesmanship.'' But a major glitch arose.

The four-month period when **White** would be kept on quasi-employee status gave him more than 10 years employment with the county. That meant he would have been entitled to half-pay for the sick days he did not use. **White** didn't get sick much the past decade. The payout came to $29,600. Along with the other benefits, that made the cost of the package about $46,000 - more than double his straight severance package.

White came back at the end of Tuesday's meeting and offered to waive the sick days. While that settled the issue on the surface, wounds were inflicted and the effort to make the parting clean and friendly was stained.

While Commissioner Ray Pilon voted for the package, he still was clearly unhappy with the benefits **White** was receiving. He had proposed keeping **White** for 60 days and then giving him the $40,000 severance pay that is contractually due if he is fired.

Commissioner Shannon Staub said she felt ``betrayed" because of the size of the sick pay, but she would not say who she felt had betrayed her. For his part, **White** just as clearly felt betrayed by the attempts to deny him a portion of the package that everyone had agreed to Friday. ``I tried to be as specific as I could Friday," he said after the meeting. But he had not calculated anything, because he was still confident he would be retained. ``I was a little surprised the value of the sick leave was as high was it was," he said. So were the commissioners.

Englewood Sun (FL)
January 11, 1997

White resigns as Sarasota's top administrator
Author: *STEVE REILLY*
Staff Writer

Sarasota County will be looking for a new county administrator. After 10 years serving as the top administrator, 55-year-old **John Wesley White** resigned his position Friday afternoon.

White did not need a weatherman to tell him which way the wind was blowing during a commission workshop Friday. Four of the five commissioners said they thought it might be time for the county to have a new administrator.

The workshop was called specifically to consider **White**'s role as administrator. "I do believe, even with all my shortcomings, I have some things to offer the county," **White** said. "Sparing you all the agony of going through any kind of contentious vote and debate vote, by recognizing your will, I am prepared to offer my resignation." Among his requests, **White** asked for 60 days to help the county with the transition.

Ironically, **White**'s characteristics that got him hired may have been the very same characteristics that lost him support from the board.

In 1987, Chairman Bob Anderson said afterwards, the county was making a transition from a "do-nothing" county to one facing major urban issues, such as consolidation of services. **White** succeeded Ed Maroney whom Anderson described as "having a lot of problems." The county wanted and found a strong administrator in **White**, Anderson said.

But at the workshop Friday, although each of the commissioners recognized **White**'s strengths as a person and administrator, some of those characteristics that made him a strong administrator then may have led to his downfall.

Whether a reality or a perception, Commissioner Shannon Staub said it seemed as if **White**, sometimes, was deciding policy and not carrying out board direction fully. Staub and Anderson said the board told **White** to move forward with the restoration of the Venice train depot with the Florida Department of Transportation and the city of Venice. The perception is, both commissioners said, that the county staff was "dragging its heels."

White said he recognized some of the misperceptions and considered some of the commissioners' criticisms as valid. With only generalized direction from the board, he said, his implementing of policies might be misinterpreted.

However, the major stumbling block mentioned Friday was communication, both with commissioners and the public at large.

Anderson, Staub and Commissioner Ray Pilon all indicated that on the campaign trail, they heard from citizens how **White** was viewed as not caring about citizen participation. All three also said they felt a new administrator was needed for the board to build public consensus for the issues it faces.
"I think we need a fresh perspective," Staub said.

During their discussion, commissioners considered gaining public support of an extension to the county's 1-percent infrastructure sales tax as critical. Several board members concluded **White** could prove a liability in an effort to gain public support.

While acknowledging **White**'s belief that he could adapt his style to meet board and citizen expectations, Staub said the county needed a person with strong communication skills.

White did have a staunch defender in Commissioner David Mills. At one point, when it became apparent which way the majority was heading, Mills read **White**'s accomplishments in public service, starting from when a then 28-year-old **White** served as Miami's budget director. Mills also thought the county would not be able to find a new administrator of **White**'s stature without paying more than the $120,000 salary **White** receives.

From the start, Mills expressed his support for **White**. When Anderson suggested at the outset to have a vote on **White**'s employment, Mills compared a vote to back-room politics. "All that is missing is the smoke of a smoke-filled room," he said.

Commissioner Jack O'Neil agreed with Mills; if the board was to vote, it should be done in the full light of a regular Tuesday meeting. O'Neil later described himself as "reluctantly" supporting **White**'s termination.

The commissioners and **White** will still have to work out the details of his severance pay and of the transition. Commissioners plan to begin working on those details after the next meeting.
White offered his assistance to find his successor.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 11, 1997

COUNTY EXEC RESIGNS< JOHN WESLEY WHITE QUITS HIS JOB AS ADMINISTRATOR OF SARASOTA COUNTY BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS CAN FIRE HIM FROM A SEAT THAT HAS BECOME HOT.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Perceptions seemed to be everything in the removal Friday of long-time Sarasota County Administrator **John Wesley White**. **White** resigned after realizing four of the five commissioners were ready to fire him during a special commission workshop on his future at the county's helm. The simple perception was that some segments of the public did not trust **White**'s administration.

White's personality and style played a role in that. But part of the perception may also be due to a County Commission that wavered on key issues and seemed to leave its administrator dangling.

For instance, the commission vacillated repeatedly over where to put the central library and how large to make it. The public felt betrayed by county government over promises made for use of the 1-cent sales tax to build a new library. That generated enormous heat, much of which **White** absorbed while trying to carry out changing policies.

The commission authorized a public education campaign about the threat of leaking septic tanks along Phillippi Creek, and then pulled the plug on the campaign as residents of the Southgate community reacted angrily when they realized what they would pay for sewerage service.

Once again, **White** and his administrators were caught in the middle of shifting policy directives from the elected commissioners. They took immense criticism.

On both issues, **White** admits the public relations were bungled. What he doesn't say is that the library and sewer shifts were not all his fault.

A lot of **White**'s criticism came ``because, without public policy from (the) commission, he filled the vacuum by taking that role," said Kerry Kirschner, executive director of the pro-business Argus Foundation. Then, if something blew up, it was **White**'s fault, he said.

White resigned Friday, offering to stay on for 60 days and getting his severance package of four months' pay - $40,000. Ironically, accolades flowed - just before the commissioners let **White** know he was about to be fired.

Consider: When a moderator asked the commissioners to list the pluses for keeping **White**, the list was enormous. It included restoring the reputation of the office of county administrator, lowering the county's credit rating and driving consolidations of city-county services - an action credited with saving taxpayers' money.

Commission Chairman Bob Anderson praised **White** as maybe the most capable and knowledgeable county administrator in Florida. Even new Commissioner Shannon Staub complimented **White**'s abilities.

They then joined Commissioners Jack O'Neil and Ray Pilon in saying it was time to get a new administrator. Only Commissioner David Mills wanted to keep **White**.

The minuses connected to keeping **White** were somewhat vague: difficulty extending the 1-cent sales tax because of public perceptions that the administration cannot be trusted, building consensus on neighborhood issues because of perceptions, losing the ability to re-build public confidence because of the perceptions.

In the end, those vague perceptions carried more weight than his concrete accomplishments. ``The community feels the time has come. I'm reflecting those views," Staub said. After the meeting, she added: ``He didn't take care of his PR." O'Neil put it more bluntly afterwards: ``I think he's a sacrificial lamb."

Who drove the perceptions?

Thirty or so people packed the small meeting room Friday, and nearly every one represented a group that had an ax to grind with him at some time during the past nine years. **White**'s inability to deliver on community relations left him defenseless. O'Neil described him as ``a sacrifice for the dissidents in the room."

There were the Argus people, who think **White** has let government grow too big, too fast, and who don't like the impact fees he implemented at commission direction. Ditto for the home builders association and chamber of commerce people.

Also in the room were the Southgate folks opposed to the central sewerage proposal for the area.
There were the library patrons who feel **White** sold them out on the location and size of the new library and have wanted his head on a bookshelf for some time. There was former Sarasota County Property Appraiser John Mikos, who has had a running, personal feud with **White** for many years.

There were various community activists who have grudges against **White** for other decisions or actions. Nearly all of these people could be found at many community meetings during the fall political campaign, agitating their issues and making **White** a focal point of the campaign that saw the elections of Anderson, Pilon and Staub.

The political candidates heard recurring complaints of an ``Imperial Administration," one with an arrogant indifference to the general public. The three concluded **White** had to go. Pilon and Staub promised he would go and those promises were accepted widely and warmly. ``Those who do participate certainly help shape the issues and help bring things to the forefront," Staub said.

And so regardless of whether the perceptions matched reality, the commissioners decided the county would be better off with a new administrator. Even O'Neil said, ``I think we'll have a more cohesive commission.'' At least it may be perceived that way.

WHITE'S PAST
John Wesley White in the news: May 4, 1987

John Wesley White was hired as Sarasota County administrator, replacing Ed Maroney. **White** was formerly the chief administrative officer of Prince Georges County, Md. **White** began a shake-up of county government that continued for several years.

He eliminated the position held by Personnel Director Champ Brahe and hired a friend and former colleague, Hilton ``Skeet'' Surrency as personnel chief. He feuded with then-general counsel Wallace Storey. Storey resigned in 1988, charging that **White** meddled in legal affairs. In 1990, **White** placed Chris Chronis, the interim finance director, over then-Budget Director Lou Mikos, the son of Property Appraiser John Mikos. A John Mikos-**John Wesley White** feud continued. 1989

White was arrested and convicted of drunken driving while visiting the mountain resort town of Helen, Ga. He was driving a county truck assigned to him for personal and professional use. In the car with him were Surrency and then-Fire Chief William Drymon.

1990
The Argus Foundation and builders groups successfully fought a building moratorium proposal in the county.

August 1990
White was considered for a spot in state government during Lawton Chiles' race for governor. But **White** said he had no plans to change jobs. At the time he said: ``I've got a job to do and if I start making contingency plans, I won't be nearly as effective for as long as I am here.''
March 1991

In a preliminary vote, the commissioners voted 3-2 to fire **White**. David Mills, AnnMarie Hill and Wayne Derr - the three newest members on the board - cast the votes against **White**. Bob Anderson and Charley Richards supported him. **White**'s drunken-driving arrest in 1989 was given as one of the main reasons for the attack. But critics blamed him for the growth of county government while revenues and state funding declined. They also criticized him for low staff morale and for moving too slowly on recycling.

Mills blamed him for a lawsuit filed against the county by former Personnel Director Brahe. Brahe's position was cut by **White** in 1987. Brahe charged that he was fired so that **White** could hire his friend, Surrency, to replace him. But **White** maintained that the position was replaced by one carrying greater responsibilities. Brahe lost the lawsuit in May 1992.

Major groups did not take sides. They were The League of Women Voters, the Gulf Coast Builders Exchange, Sarasota Board of Realtors, the Growth-restraint and Environmental Organization, ManaSota-88, the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, the Better Government Association, the Sarasota Council of Neighborhood Associations, the Sarasota County Civic League and Save Our Bays.
The Taxpayers Association supported **White**.

April 1991
The commission voted 3-2 to keep **White**. Commissioners Mills and Hill voted to fire him. Chairman Derr switched his vote. Derr had instructed secretaries to keep a tally of calls and letters for and against **White**. Most people told Derr to keep **White**. Derr said he initially voted to fire **White** to bring the issue before the public for discussion. **White** said he would change his style as an administrator by delegating more authority and by spending more time trying to build consensus among the county commissioners.

June 1992
White did not receive a pay raise. His base salary remained at $97,904. Instead, the county made a $14,000 contribution to his retirement account. His contract entitled him to a $10,000 contribution. But **White** asked them to contribute the additional money to cover withdrawals from his retirement fund that he made when he switched jobs earlier in his career.

July 1992
White was named president-elect of the National Association of County Administrators. His term began in 1993.

May 1993
White proposed a $52 million courthouse complex on Ringling Boulevard. It was supposed to handle the judicial needs of the county until 2010.

September 1993
Commissioner Anderson launched an attack on **White**.
The Argus Foundation, supported by the Home Builders Association, started a dump-**White** campaign. The Gulf Coast Builders Exchange, a 350-member group, joined the effort. The group is a chapter of the Florida Employers Exchange, which has 1,100 members in Sarasota. **White** was criticized for the growth of county government staff and property tax increases. The Sarasota Chamber of Commerce fell short of calling for his removal but cautioned that the commission needed to be more accommodating to business interests.

Argus said it had the support of most members of the County Commission. But Argus' plan backfired when word leaked out. Four out of the five commissioners took responsibility for the budget and vowed to reform the bureaucracy. The commissioners were Chairman Derr, Mills, Richards and Eugene Matthews.

November 1993
White received a $4,100 raise, making his salary $102,000. He was told by the County Commission during a public evaluation to streamline county government. Two commissioners, Anderson and Mills, threatened to remove him in six months if his work didn't improve. The commissioners wanted him to start the budget process earlier. They complained about the growth of the county staff, turnover of managers and **White**'s failure to meet weekly with the commissioners. The evaluation was five months late. On a scale of 1 to 5, **White** scored 3.18.

December 1993
White scaled back plans for the county judicial center and proposed a $19.8 million expansion plan instead.

May 1994
White won an award from the League of Women Voters for being ``accessible and accountable to the public."

June 1994
The County Commission approved **White**'s plan to overhaul county government. The plan abolished or consolidated eight county divisions and eliminated 24 management positions.

January 1996
The city and county fire departments merged, winning praise from city and county officials. Police and emergency communications followed.

May 1996
Groundbreaking was held for the 11-story judicial center. The 126,700-square-foot center was budgeted at $33 million.

June 1996
A panel of three federal judges in Atlanta rejected an appeal by environmentalists over permits issued for the landfill site east of Interstate 75. The legal battle over the site, formerly known as the Walton Tract, had been going on since December 1994, when environmentalists' lawsuits halted construction. The landfill is adjacent to the Myakka River State Park. The federal ruling was an affirmation of a district judge's decision in 1995 that cleared the way for Sarasota County to begin construction of the landfill.

December 1996
The commission - ending an issue that started in 1985 - reaffirmed its decision to locate the central county library at Five Points.

Jan. 10, 1997
Faced with four votes against him - including the two newly elected commissioners - **White**, 56, resigned as county administrator.
- Compiled by Yolanda Rodriguez

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 10, 1997

WHITE'S FATE RESTS IN DETRACTORS' HANDS THREE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HAVE CRITICIZED THE ADMINISTRATOR. TODAY HIS JOB IS ON THE LINE.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Today could spell the end of longtime Administrator **John Wesley White**'s tenure at the helm of Sarasota County government.

The five-member County Commission, which includes two newcomers who campaigned against **White** and a chairman who has long called for his removal, will hold a workshop on **White**'s future employment this morning. ``There appears to be a majority of the board that feels we need to make a change in the work that is done or the people doing it," Chairman Bob Anderson said Thursday. ``The commissioners who ran in the campaign were pretty definitive."

One of those commissioners is Shannon Staub, who promised during the campaign that she would move to dismiss **White**. She defeated then-Chairman Eugene Matthews, who supported **White**. She appears ready to keep her promise. ``Now, more than even before, we have an opportunity and the timing is right to do it. I think it would be the best thing for the commission and county government," Staub said. ``My feeling is I would be prepared to vote and be prepared to make a motion. But it won't be pleasant."

New Commissioner Ray Pilon, who also campaigned against **White**, said he is willing to vote today on the question. But he would not say how he will vote, only that he will keep an ``open mind."

White has been under fire many times in his nine years as administrator, surviving an attempt to fire him in 1992. While praised as capable and competent, he is criticized for making decisions on issues that commissioners feel should be brought to the commission for policy direction. At times, he has been referred to as the sixth commissioner.

The county will be using Herb Marlow as a moderator. He is a Gainesville consultant who worked with the commission three years ago in a goal-setting session.

White said he hopes the commissioners will give him time to show he can work with them. ``It's my hope that they will try to come up with a precise definition of their expectations of me and give me some guidance as to how I can do my job to their liking," **White** said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
January 9, 1997

COURT RULING FAVORS OPEN GOVERNMENT SARASOTA COUNTY MUST HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS BEFORE APPROVING REZONING SETTLEMENTS.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

In what many people say is a victory for open government, the 2nd District Court of Appeal has ruled that Sarasota County illegally rezoned a developer's property in 1995 to settle a court dispute.

The County Commission holds public hearings on rezoning, allowing people to testify for or against the request. If the request is denied and the developer sues the county, the lawsuit is often settled out of court, and the commission approves the settlement without another public hearing. The lack of a second chance for public input is what the appeals court ruled was illegal.

Because the ruling has a significant impact on county government, the appeals court has asked the Florida Supreme Court to review the case.

County Administrator **John Wesley White** had mixed feelings about the ruling. ``We can settle almost any kind of a lawsuit in the best interest of the public, but in this particular category, we have to do extra steps," he said. Those extra steps involve reapplying for the rezoning, publishing advanced notice of rezoning public hearings and holding the hearings. ``But certainly it makes for better public policy," **White** said. ``You're torn between spending the taxpayer dollars to prolong litigation and going through the formal process that the other side is not willing to wait for," he said.

One commissioner said he feels vindicated. ``I've argued continually over the years that these settlements should be subject to public hearing," Chairman Bob Anderson said. He considered it unfair to residents who had participated in the public hearings to not have any say in the final zoning. ``It's a healthy decision and further involves the public in decision-making," he said.

Here's the background.
In 1990, Wen Chung requested that 11 acres he owns on the west side of U.S. 41, north of Beneva Road, be rezoned to allow condominiums or apartments to be built. The County Commission denied the request, and Chung filed a lawsuit against the county.

In June 1995, the County Commission approved a settlement agreement that granted the rezoning with stipulations about what could be built and how. The trial court approved the agreement. But Elling O. Eide intervened in the settlement. He has been in a long dispute with the county over property adjacent to Chung's and the neighboring Holiday Harbor Homeowners Association, which also intervened.

After a hearing, the trial court rejected the settlement. Chung then filed an appeal, arguing that the trial court had erred in reversing the settlement.

The appeals court ruling, filed Dec. 27, stated: ``The county's settlement agreement here presents a case of improper contract zoning. Although the County Commission approved the settlement at its regular meetings, it bypassed the more stringent notice and hearing requirements for a rezoning."
The judges had reservations about the effect on the county's ability to solve issues out of court but found that the public interest outweighed that.

``We are concerned about impairing local government's ability to settle litigation. On the other hand, we can envision developers filing an unacceptable plan for rezoning, appealing its denial, and then obtaining approval of a modified plan by settlement agreement before satisfying the public notice and hearing requirements," the judges wrote.

Charlotte Sun (Port Charlotte, FL)
December 14, 1996

Heat turned up on Venice volunteer firefighters
Author: *STEVE REILLY, Staff Writer*

Has the South Venice Volunteer Fire Department outlived its usefulness? That's a question posed to Sarasota County commissioners and one which they are scheduled to discuss Tuesday.

In a report to the board, County Administrator **John Wesley White** asks commissioners if the time has come to have the county's own fire department take over the services of the volunteer department. "While volunteer fire service is rich in tradition, today's urban volunteer fire departments are constantly confronted with the increasing challenges of unpredictable and shrinking revenues, ever increasing calls for service ..." **White** said in his report. He goes on to point out growing challenges volunteer departments face with increased and unexpected demands.

The South Venice Volunteer Fire Department has already faced a financial crisis, triggered by diminishing contributions. It turned to the county for help in 1993. At the time, the board created a municipal service taxing unit to help stabilize the department's revenues.

Differences over renewing the county's contract with the volunteer department inflamed the issue and now bring it back to commissioners. The county and the South Venice department have failed to reach an agreement.

White now has offered the board three options to consider:
* continue financing the South Venice volunteers through the MSTU;
* expand the county's existing Fire-Rescue District and provide those services through the county's own fire department;
* expand the fire district and contract services of the volunteer firefighters.
One of the outstanding issues has been firefighters' pay. According to **White**'s report, the South Venice firefighters have been averaging more than 90 hours weekly for a stipend between $2.95 and $4.13 per hour.

If the county continues its support of the volunteers, **White** suggests the firefighters should be paid at least minimum wage, currently $4.95 an hour, and overtime. He also said a station would operate 24 hours a day with four qualified firefighters.

However, that scenario would cause a shortage of $89,414, based upon the department's existing budget of $390,000. To make up the shortfall, residents served by the volunteers would also see an increase in their tax assessments, possibly from $25.64 annually to $32.23.

The increased costs would be even more, if the firefighters were paid $6.73 an hour, the Fair Labor Standards Act's suggested minimum rate for firefighters.

White dismissed his third option as not viable, since it would incur increased costs and also tax county resources.

What **White** sees as the best option is to have the county's professional fire department serve South Venice. He said the department could do the job from its station at the South County Annex, off State Road 776, and its Center Road station.

White also suggests the county's assessments would be less for residents, paying $12.56 for 1,500-square-foot homes to $31.82 for homes with more than 2,000 square feet.

The volunteer department and the MSTU advisory board overseeing it will have an opportunity Tuesday to offer their side.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
October 23, 1996

COUNTY CHIEF IS PRAISED, PANNED ALTHOUGH THE SARASOTA COMMISSIONERS AGREED TO GIVE JOHN WESLEY WHITE A RAISE, THEY DISAGREED ON HIS FUTURE AS A LEADER.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Sarasota County Administrator **John Wesley White** won high praise from most of his bosses Tuesday, along with a $5,000 raise. ``I think Mr. **White** has been an effective leader for Sarasota County," said Commissioner Dave Mills, who recommended increasing **White**'s annual salary from $115,000 to $120,000. The commissioners approved that unanimously.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being outstanding and 1 unsatisfactory, the commissioners rated **White** a 3.67. His highest score was 4.8 for professional reputation. The lowest was 3.0 for citizen relations and policy and administration.

But all is not rosy for the 10-year county administrator.

Commissioner Bob Anderson, a vocal critic of **White**, did not participate in the evaluation, although he voted for the raise. He suggested that a workshop be held on the county administrator's performance after two new commissioners are installed in November.

Commissioner-elect Shannon Staub, who said during her campaign that she would make the motion to fire **White**, said Tuesday that she favored the workshop. But she's not sure what it would accomplish. ``There's a lack of confidence, a lack of trust in Mr. **White**," said Staub, who sat in the audience during Tuesday's meeting. ``I don't know how you change to regain that trust." Her contention has been that a new board, heading in new directions, requires a new county administrator.

Ray Pilon agreed that the workshop is worthwhile. But he, too, has been critical of **White** during the campaign. Pilon, a Republican, faces Democrat Fredd Atkins in the Nov. 5 election to fill the seat that Commissioner Charley Richards is leaving.

Atkins was not at the meeting and could not be reached for comment later Tuesday.

Mills presented a long list of accomplishments during **White**'s tenure, including consolidation of departments with the city of Sarasota; health-care coordination countywide; a comprehensive recycling program; the judicial center now under construction; expansion of youth recreational facilities; and some of the highest construction standards in the state.

Anderson, however, said those accomplishments were due to County Commission action and leadership. Richards responded: ``To say the credit goes to this board is an insult, frankly." For his part, **White** was humble, saying he wants to make the necessary changes to remain at the helm.

``I perhaps have ventured too far into areas of political debate, and I need to change that," he said. ``I want to grow, and I want to grow here in this job."

Charlotte Sun (Port Charlotte, FL)
October 5, 1996

Sarasota makes wish list
Author: *STEVE REILLY, Staff Writer*

Sarasota County Commissioner Jack O'Neil's message to state legislators is simple and direct. "Do no harm," O'Neil said. "Don't make our lives harder, and remember who you serve when you get to Tallahassee."

Sarasota County commissioners will review Tuesday a county wish list prepared by County Administrator **John Wesley White**. This year's list, **White** said in his report to the board, recognizes the state faces fiscal restraints, due to federal cutbacks, and does not make as many "standard" requests for higher funding to various programs.

When the list is adopted by the board, the county will first send its concerns to the Florida Association of Counties and then to the local legislative delegation later this fall.

Among the priorities he would like to see, O'Neil said he would like local legislators to support bills that would allow partial year property assessments. The way state law stands now, he said, an incoming home or property owner can avoid paying taxes up to two years. "It's a question of fairness," O'Neil said, citing how new residents and other property owners use the county's infrastructure.

Chairman Gene Matthews shared O'Neil's concerns about partial year assessments. He also said he would also like to see state legislation that would free up comprehensive planning amendments, such as the county's RU-27 amendment, from being stalled by legal challenges.

The RU-27 is a multi-facet planning and land use amendment to the county's comprehensive plan, but it is now be held up for adoption by three challenges dealing with specific issues, Matthews said. He described the entire amendment as being "held hostage," possibly for years.

The top concerns of the two commissioners are not the only ones in the proposed "wish list." Some of the other concerns and suggested legislation include:

- to support legislation that will provide adequate funding and matching grants for beach restoration and renourishment projects;
- to oppose any legislation that would pass on the financial responsibilities Medicaid to local governments through block grants or other means;
- to support legislation that would increase funding for comprehensive school health projects;
- to support additional funding for juvenile justice programs and other youth programs;
- to support continued funding for Preservation 2000, a land acquisition program that allows local governments to buy and preserve environmental and other significant properties;

- to support local governments' rights to develop and impose impact fees on new development;
- to support mandatory drug testing for life guards and other public safety officials;

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
September 27, 1996

E-MAIL MEMO ADDS CHAPTER TO LIBRARY SAGA THE MEMO IMPLIES THAT OFFICIALS DIDN'T WANT THE PUBLIC TO HEAR ABOUT A LIBRARY DEAL UNTIL AFTER THE SEPTEMBER PRIMARIES.
Author: *Michael Pollick STAFF WRITER*

An e-mail message between two Sarasota county executives suggests that officials deliberately delayed public discussion of their deal to sell the former Mission Harbor library site until after the Sept. 3 election.

The electronic memo has become a key element in a lawsuit filed Thursday against Sarasota County by the Friends of Selby Public Library.

The volunteer group seeks an injunction against arrangements now being finalized that would allow the county-owned property to be marketed to a developer through a Boca Raton law firm.

The Aug. 14 message from county construction projects chief Robert Cobb to county general services administrator Steve Cork said that a city-county agreement to market the property had been drafted.

Cobb said in the note to Cork that their boss, County Administrator **John Wesley White**, had already reviewed the agreement. He also said that **White** had asked an assistant county attorney to coordinate plans with the city, and planned to go public with the agreement at the Sept. 10 County Commission meeting. Cobb warned that the agreement was ``not to surface before Primaries."

Once the primary vote was over, the county and city proceeded quickly to ratify the deal. The city commissioners held their meeting as the election polls closed Sept. 3, and the county commissioners voted Sept. 10 without taking public comment. ``We wound up, basically, with an agreement reached behind the scenes," contends Robert Turffs, attorney for the Friends. His suit maintains that the city-county marketing deal is invalid because it was reached in violation of the state's Government-In-The-Sunshine laws.

The intention was to ``railroad the decision through as quickly and quietly as possible," the lawsuit says. ``Really? That'll be an interesting challenge of proof," said **White**. ``Because I'm not aware of any elected officials that have participated in any discussions on that matter." **White** said that discussions, such as the e-mail, between staff members are ``not a violation of anything."

City commissioners could not be reached for comment.

At the Sept. 10 meeting, four of the five county commissioners voted to get rid of Mission Harbor. Of those four, two will no longer be in office as of Nov. 19. Chairman Eugene Matthews lost his seat to Shannon Staub in the Republican primary. Charley Richards did not run for re-election. His seat is up for grabs between Fredd Atkins and Ray Pilon on Nov. 5.

Friends president Harriett Oxman said that ``two lame ducks" were ``thwarting the public will."

The Friends' 750 members help run the current Selby Public Library, west of U.S. 41 at Sixth Street. Their lawsuit is aimed at stalling the library construction process that has already begun on three acres in the heart of downtown Sarasota known as Five Points.

The 11-acre Mission Harbor site, northeast of the corner of U.S. 41 and Sixth Street, has been appraised at $3.1 million.

The county bought Mission Harbor - a failed residential development - for $2.05 million in October 1992. The purchase was financed with a 1 percent sales tax levy that was passed in part on the promise of a new central library.
I
n November 1995, the commissioners voted 3-2 to shift gears and buy the smaller library site downtown from Riscorp insurance company CEO Bill Griffin.

Griffin owns an adjacent three-acre development site occupied by an empty bank building and parking lots. He put that property on the market last week for $4.5 million - almost twice the $2.5 million he paid for it in October 1993.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
September 4, 1996

ELECTION WILL ALTER POLITICAL LANDSCAPE THIRD LIBRARY, WHITE MAY BE OUT FOR COUNTY COMMISSION, THE WINNERS ARE SHANNON STAUB, BOB ANDERSON AND RAY PILON.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

New faces on the Sarasota County Commission could mean a new direction for the county - and a new face at the county's helm.

Tuesday's primary results mean that the planned third branch library southeast of the city is probably dead and that the downtown library may grow - and the site may even move. The results also suggest that the $72 million Phillippi Creek septic tank removal plan will almost assuredly shrink.

Shannon Staub's defeat of Commission Chairman Gene Matthews in the District 3 Republican primary means a majority of county commissioners probably now favor ousting County Administrator **John Wesley White**.

Longtime Commissioner Bob Anderson's victory over challenger Donald Drechsler further cements that majority as Anderson has been one of **White**'s most consistent critics. ``We're going to have to handle that right off the bat," Anderson said.

In the third race, Ray Pilon's victory over Wally Sheil in the District 1 primary puts more pressure on **White**, even though Pilon will have to face Democrat Fredd Atkins in November. **White** was criticized by almost every candidate during the campaigns.

However, he survived just such a mood in 1992, when the commission voted 3-2 to fire him. Under the county charter, a 3-2 vote requires a two-week waiting period and then another vote. On the second vote, new Commissioner Wayne Derr switched sides and **White** was kept on.

Staub was blunt Tuesday with her views on the administrator: ``I think he's going to be released from his contract, if everybody stands by what they said in the forums." **White** said Tuesday night that he wants to work with whatever commission is installed in November. ``I really haven't had any substantive conversation with any of them," he said. ``It's always been my assumption that there would be some discussion of their expectations before they will make up their mind."

With 100 percent of the precincts reporting, Pilon had 68.6 percent of the Republican vote to Sheil's 31.4 percent in District 1.

Staub had 60.7 percent of the vote among Republicans, vs. 39.3 percent for Matthews in District 3. Anderson had 55 percent of the Republican vote compared to 45 percent for Drechsler in District 5.

The future of the county administrator is only one of several issues affected by Tuesday's vote. Here's a look at where the county may be headed with the new makeup on the commission:

* Library: Five Points site could get bigger; Mission Harbor has outside chance.
The library has ping-ponged back and forth like few other issues. The new commission needs to decide whether it will move forward with the current plan of a 72,000-square-foot central library at Five Points and two more libraries east and southeast of the city. Anderson has long been a proponent of moving the library back to the Mission Harbor site and making it 100,000 square feet. Staub also prefers that option, but not at the risk of encumbering the county with major bills or legal problems.
But with her defeat of Matthews, the plan for a third library southeast of the city will likely disappear as that was pushed primarily by him.

* Growth: Holding the line - probably.
The massive and complicated question of dealing with Sarasota County's continued growth may never go away. But the commission will have to make some major decisions in coming years. Not the least of these will be the continued pressure to open up areas east of Interstate 75 for development. The net result of Tuesday's election on this issue may be neutral. Anderson's re-election means a constant voice for maintaining the urban boundary where it is. Pilon would consider moving it if that's what a community group studying the situation recommends. And Staub comes down somewhere in the middle, but she is anxious to get some sort of plan in action. ``Growth is happening, and we're not controlling it or managing it," she said.

* Phillippi Creek: Shrink the plan, but move ahead.
The county has been considering a controversial $72 million plan to remove thousands of septic tanks along Phillippi Creek and in other parts of the county in hopes of cleaning up the polluted creek. Critics contend the pollution is overstated and that there is not proof it is coming from septic tanks. Many of the candidates have been sympathetic to those criticisms. But recent preliminary results suggest a worrisome amount of pollution. It was an issue that drove many people to the polls.

Linda Capierseho, 47, owns a home in South Gate and her biggest issue was the sewer debate. ``Until they actually decide that Phillippi Creek is polluted by the septic tanks, I don't want them to spend all the money for sewers," she said.

Staub has opposed the large-scale plan on the table now, but may be willing to look at a scaled-down version. Anderson thinks the board will take some small steps forward. ``It's clear to me at this point that there are portions of it (the plan) that will move forward," Anderson said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
August 31, 1996

$46,000 SPENT TO EXPLAIN TAX USES< SARASOTA COUNTY IS CONDUCTING A MEDIA BLITZ TO JUSTIFY THE NEW TAX NOTICES.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

A media blitz is under way over Sarasota County taxes. But it is not being conducted by any political groups out to score points with taxpayers at election time. It's being run, and paid for, by your local county government. And more is on the way.

Sarasota County is spending about $46,000 on newspaper advertisements, television infomercials, professional videos and the county expo, all in an attempt to explain how your tax dollars are being spent.

For perspective, that's $6,000 more than is allowed under the county charter for County Commission candidates to spend on their campaigns. Why such a burst of public relations now?

Because the Sarasota County Property Appraisers office mailed out more than 235,000 tax notices last week telling people how much they will have to pay for local government services this year.

Included in those notices will be a major storm-water assessments increase of 62 percent. The county wants to explain that. To educate the public on why that jump is necessary, the county has spent $14,900 on a 9-minute video showing the benefits of the storm-water runoff program.

The program is designed to correct the county's ongoing problem with neighborhood flooding.
The county has aired the video as an infomercial on SNN, BLAB TV and channels 40 and 62, at a cost of $19,000.

Residents will also see a change in their fire and rescue assessments because of the consolidation of those services under county control. To explain that situation, the county recently took out two full-page advertisements in the Sarasota Herald-Tribune, at a cost of $8,200. That was done right about the time the non-ad-valorem assessments were mailed.

The county also ran its annual county expo at Sarasota Square Mall recently. Most of the employees working it were on salary and did not incur overtime. The hourly employees at the expo will be given overtime. Still, the booth leases cost about $1,600 and advertisements in the Herald-Tribune and Channel 40 cost another $2,200.

All of this is an attempt to tell taxpayers how their money is being spent, particularly in controversial areas. ``The county hasn't done a very effective job of communicating what it's doing," said County Administrator **John Wesley White**. But he is ready to change that. ``We need to be doing more to sort of explain our stewardship to the taxpayers," he said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
August 3, 1996

WORKERS' PAY-SCALE ERROR LASTS 5 YEARS THE COUNTY SAYS IT WON'T GIVE THE WORKERS BACK PAY AND IS PUTTING THEM ON PROBATION TO RECEIVE THE RAISE.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Perhaps a glass that's half empty is better than nothing for many Sarasota County heavy-equipment operators. But that empty half is really irritating them.

County officials admit that they made a mistake not categorizing about 30 heavy-equipment operators at higher pay levels in 1991. After a slow initial response, they corrected that Wednesday by upgrading the landfill equipment operators, giving them the pay raise they should have received at least five years ago.

But the county is refusing to pay the workers the difference between their pay and what they should have received during those five years, and is putting them on probation to receive the raise. ``We have a general practice of not awarding back pay," said County Administrator **John Wesley White**, who made the decision after talking to the employees. ``It's just a bad practice to be adjusting retroactively."

White said that employees' duties often change gradually over time and it is difficult to determine when their status actually changed to a different pay category. While he admits that may not be true in the case of the equipment operators, he said that granting the back pay would be setting a precedent for an avalanche of less valid claims.

But the equipment operators aren't buying it. ``They have admitted a mistake, like a 51/2-year mistake . . . but we're not going to get any back pay," said Peter Schmidt, who has been driving a semi-truck from the Venice transfer station to the Bee Ridge Landfill for seven years. ``We deserve this. We're entitled to it and we have it coming."

The problem began in 1991 when the county reclassified its equipment operators as class ``one," ``two" or ``three."

Class one is the lowest pay for operating the simplest machinery, such as tractor mowers, and ranges from a starting salary of $15,714 to a maximum of $23,167. Class three represented the top pay for operating the most complicated machinery, such as large backhoes, and starts at $19,297 and goes to $28,841. Schmidt said that to add insult to the lack of back pay, the county is requiring all of them to be on probation for six months.

White explained that the probationary period is county policy whenever someone is ``promoted," which is technically what is happening with the equipment operators. The purpose of the probationary period is to make sure an employee can do the job.

Schmidt finds that ``ridiculous." ``I've been seven years on this job. Now they're going to put me on probation to see if I can do this job," he said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
June 28, 1996

ANTI-WHITE FERVOR UNITES COMMISSION OPPONENTS
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Dumping on Sarasota County Administrator **John Wesley White** has now become a regular feature in the races for three County Commission seats.

White was an absentee punching bag at the Tiger Bay Club meeting Thursday, where County Commissioner Bob Anderson and his two opponents in the Republican primary, Chuck Barrowclough and Don Drechsler, criticized **White**'s leadership.

Anderson reiterated his view that **White** needs to be replaced because he is setting policy and filtering information to the commissioners. ``I've lost confidence,'' he said.

Barrowclough, who until a few months ago worked for the county, agreed that manipulated information was being given to the commissioners and that the county needs a new top administrator. ``A lot of the information coming to the board is policy developed by the county administrator'' rather than the commissioners, he said.

Drechsler said **White** has been out front on issues when he should have been taking his cue from the commissioners. ``He's been leading county commissioners and not county commissioners leading him,'' he said.

Anderson, a 16-year veteran, was roundly criticized by his opponents for the growth in county government and debt during his tenure. ``I don't think the problem is that we tax too little, but that we spend too much,'' Drechsler said.

Anderson defended the growth, pointing out that a chunk of it is explained by the fact that the county has taken over several functions that used to be done by cities, such as fire rescue and parks, in the hope of providing efficiencies for all taxpayers.

Charlotte Sun (Port Charlotte, FL)
June 16, 1996

Silence overrides Anderson's complaints over political policies
Author: *STEVE REILLY, Staff Writer*

The silence of his fellow Sarasota County commissioners left Bob Anderson standing alone in his call to protect county employees' political rights.

No second could be found among board members Tuesday to Anderson's motion that additional language be added to the county's existing code protecting employees' rights.

Anderson's concerns were first raised after County Administrator **John Wesley White** wrote a memorandum in March to county department heads and administration staff, asking them to restrain from becoming politically involved. Anderson has insisted the board do a formal review of the county's policies. "I believe our responsibilities impose special obligations upon us to avoid political activity of any type," **White** wrote, underlining "of any type."

White reiterated Tuesday he did not intend to hinder employees from exercising their constitutional rights. He said he had issued the memo to department heads, only targeting leading members of county staff, to maintain a decorum of professionalism.

The suggested language had been suggested by the county attorneys and said "nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to prohibit any person from expressing his opinion on any candidate or issue, or from participating in any campaign during his off-duty hours, so long as such activities are not otherwise in conflict."

Other commissioners might not have thought the additional language was needed, but Anderson said afterwards he felt the added language was needed to protect the county from the potential infringement of employees' rights -- whether one employee or all employees. Clarifying policies could keep the county out of court for civil rights infringements, he said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
June 15, 1996

WHITE RESCINDS HIS MEMO, COUNTY COMMISSIONER BOB ANDERSON SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH THE LETTER IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, HE IS `NOT IMPRESSED' WITH ITS TONE.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

County Administrator **John Wesley White** rescinded his controversial memo on political activities Friday in hopes of putting an end to the issue.

The move came just three days after the Sarasota County Commissioners refused to take any action to change county personnel policy in a way that would have refuted the memorandum. ``It's feeding a lot of rhetoric still," he said. ``I'd rather not have it continue to be a vehicle for political mischief."

County Commissioner Bob Anderson called the letter **White** issued Friday ``a step in the right direction" but said he was not impressed with its tone. ``The wording of the memo does not give me a great deal of comfort," he said. ``I still feel the personnel policy needs (protective) wording added."

The portion of the March 8 memo that touched off the controversy stated: ``I believe our responsibilities impose special obligations upon us to avoid political activity of any kind." **White** underlined ``of any kind."

Anderson said that was an infringement of employees' First Amendment rights, and other commissioners agreed a few weeks ago that the memo should not have been written. But when Anderson tried to get the personnel policy changed on Tuesday so that the offending portion of the memo would be specifically banned, he did not get a second to his motion.

White's memo, issued Friday and rescinding the earlier one, reads, in part: ``There is a certain degree of irony that my desire to keep us out of politics has furthered some politics. It is unfortunate that my effort to call you voluntarily to a high level of professionalism has been so misconstrued."

White said the original memo was ``only marginally desirable in the first place" and that he hoped to move beyond the issue.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
June 10, 1996

COUNTY WORKERS MAY GET RIGHTS GUARANTEE
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Sarasota County employees may have more freedom to participate in political activities after a County Commission meeting Tuesday.

The commissioners could endorse a change in county policy that spells out employees' rights to be part of campaigns, rallies and other political events in their off-duty time.

The change stems from a controversial memo sent out by County Administrator **John Wesley White** in April. It directed employees not to be part of any political activities. But the change also highlights the growing public battle between **White** and veteran Commissioner Bob Anderson, who strongly objected to the county administrator's memo and wants a policy that counters it.

It is no secret that Anderson, too, would like to see a new county administrator, but he has not always found support for his opposition to **White**. This time, however, he may not be alone in objecting to **White**'s action.

The controversial part of the memo read: ``I believe our responsibilities impose special obligations upon us to avoid political activity of any kind." **White** underlined ``of any kind."

Some commissioners considered that an infringement on employees' constitutional rights to assembly and free speech. In May, they decided to discuss making changes in the county's personnel policy so it is clear on the issue. County Attorney Jorge Fernandez is offering the following insertion into the county's political activities policy: ``Nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to prohibit any person from expressing his opinion on any candidate or issue, or from participating in any campaign during his off-duty hours, so long as such activities are not otherwise in conflict with the provisions of this section." Such provisions include employees not using their government positions for political advantage or taking bribes.

The language would effectively overturn **White**'s memo.

Anderson said the wording is just right. ``We didn't want to be out there violating constitutional rights," he said. And he added that it should protect the county from any civil rights lawsuits. ``If we let that memo stand, I think we could expect (legal) action from our employees," he said. **White** called the proposed change ``unnecessary" and potentially harmful. ``In this context, it sends essentially the wrong signal of desiring political activity," he said.

Interested?
The Sarasota County Commission will discuss a revised political activities policy during its regular

meeting at 9 a.m. Tuesday on the first floor of the Sarasota County Administration Center, 1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
May 29, 1996

BUDGET PLAN SHOWS SLIGHT INCREASE
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

County Administrator **John Wesley White** on Tuesday presented the Sarasota County commissioners with a proposed budget that calls for spending $30 million more than this year's figure.

The $520 million plan, which calls for adding 58 new county workers, can be met without raising the county's property tax rate, **White** said.

He explained that while the budget figures show a $56 million increase when compared to last year's numbers, the county would have to raise only $30 million in additional revenue because of a bookkeeping phenomenon related to the way state and federal money must be counted.

The additional $30 million is needed to meet normal increases in the cost of doing business - about $15 million - and the cost of absorbing the city's fire department - also about $15 million.

White described his budget proposal as ``restrained" given the above explanation of increased costs. He puts the increased operating expenses for the budget that covers the same services as last year's at about 3 percent.

The increase is all in the $400 million operating budget, which covers the county's day-to-day expenses. The capital budget, which includes public improvements such as roads, buildings and equipment, is almost identical to last year's at $120 million. The proposed budget does add services and hence employees and costs.

For instance, the county will open new parks in Nokomis and North Port this year, requiring eight new positions. Four building inspectors are proposed because of the increasing building activity and the goal of next-day inspections, and employees will be added in mosquito control, bus maintenance, library support and traffic control and the Sheriff's Department.

The budget also stakes out $1.4 million to bring technology in the county's library system up to date, including adding 300 computer terminals around the county, Internet access and on-line databases. He proposes keeping the millage steady at 3.8424. That translates into about $3.84 per $1,000 of assessed property value, or $288 on a $100,000 home with a $25,000 homestead exemption.

That can be accomplished, in part, because of Sarasota County's strong economy and growing tax base. The increase from the property tax base alone provides another $1.5 million. The rest of the spending increase is covered through several sources, from city transfers for the fire department to sales tax revenue and state and federal money. The commissioners will hold public workshops on the budget June 17, 19 and 21.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
April 26, 1996

VOTERS TO DECIDE FATE OF SALES TAX< SARASOTA COUNTY LEADERS PAINT A BLEAK PICTURE OF THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE TAX.
Author: *Victor Hull REGIONAL REPORTER*

Sarasota County voters will be asked next spring to extend a local sales tax that has generated tens of millions of dollars over the past seven years for roads, libraries, schools, a justice center and other improvements.

The 1 percent tax, also known as the ``infrastructure surtax,'' is scheduled to expire in 1999. Unless it's extended, the county will be faced with dramatic cutbacks in road building or increases in gas, property and other taxes, the county commissioners concluded in a workshop meeting Thursday.

Voters have already rejected extending the tax once, by an overwhelming 2-1 margin in 1994. But the County Commission, attributing the defeat to a poorly planned campaign and a failure to specify how the additional revenue would be spent, voted unanimously Thursday to try again early next year.

The commissioners didn't set a referendum date. Nor did they discuss how long the tax might be extended, although one county official said it would presumably be for another 10 years. The board debated putting the issue on the ballot during this November's presidential election, but feared it would be obscured by the dozens of local, state and national races as well as a crowd of proposed state constitutional amendments that will be before voters this fall. ``This really needs the full attention of the electorate,'' said Commission Chairman Gene Matthews. ``They need to know the full ramifications of it. It's a quality of life issue.''

County leaders painted a bleak picture of the future without the tax. The county already faces a deficit for routine road maintenance and operations because each year, more roads are added to the transportation network. By the year 2000, patching potholes, operating street lights and traffic signals and other expenses are expected to exceed the gas tax revenues needed to pay for them by $1.2 million or more per year.

But without an extension of the sales tax, or other alternatives, the county will be forced to cancel planned improvements to overcrowded roads such as Cattlemen, Lockwood Ridge north of Fruitville and McIntosh south of Bee Ridge, Administrator **John Wesley White** reported.

In addition, $3.2 million worth of road resurfacing, intersection improvements, bridge replacement and other work annually would be in jeopardy. And officials have identified $22 million worth of needed sidewalk improvements for which no funding source is currently available.

The county has the option of increasing the local gas tax by up to a nickel per gallon. But White recommended that the county save that option for continuing increases in long-term operation and maintenance costs.

The 1 percent surtax, levied on top of a 6 percent sales tax charged by the state, is generating about $32 million annually, with half of it going to the unincorporated county, a quarter to the School Board and the rest divided among the cities of Sarasota, Venice and North Port, based on population.

Sarasota County could generate the same amount of revenue produced by the sales tax annually, **White** said. But it would take seven or eight years of increasing the tax rate at the maximum amount allowed by law to reach that level. ``It's going to be up to voters in the end to decide what kind of community they want in the future," Commissioner Bob Anderson told a luncheon meeting of the Tiger Bay Club on Thursday.

Anderson said that before next year's referendum, the county, cities and schools will each develop an accounting of how they've spent the sales tax revenue so far. Then, they'll compile a list of projects on which the money from the sales tax extension would be spent.

In a foreshadowing of the debate that's likely to come over the sales tax extension, frequent commission critic Dan Lobeck accused the commission during a Tiger Bay club meeting of passing the costs of growth to general taxpayers through sales and gas taxes by cutting impact fees, which are assessments levied against new construction. Lobeck is head of the local Growth-restraint and Environmental Organization.

But home builder Lee Wetherington, who joined Anderson on a panel discussing impact fees at the luncheon, countered that new residents shouldn't bear the full brunt of building new schools, justice centers or fixing roads because of past growth. ``There has to be a balance of funding acceptable to the county," Anderson said.

Sarasota County was one of the first to take advantage of a state law designed to help local governments catch up with years of rapid growth. Voters approved the 10-year tax by a narrow margin in 1988. It took effect Sept. 1, 1989.

Last year, the commission discussed a referendum in this year's March presidential primary, but decided the timing wasn't right. Commissioner David Mills argued Thursday in favor of holding the referendum in November, when voter turnout is typically higher.

But a majority of the board decided it would be better to wait until the public could focus more on the tax, and until the ``pain" of road construction now underway has subsided.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
April 12, 1996

DISPUTE OVER FUNDS INTENSIFIES
Author: *Patty Allen-Jones STAFF WRITER*

Coastal Recovery Centers Inc. and Sarasota County are wrangling over more than $2.5 million that Coastal says the county owes it for treating people with alcohol, drug abuse or mental health problems. Coastal officials have prepared a lawsuit, but say they will negotiate with the county one more time before going to court.

``I think that it's the culmination of a fairly long-term disagreement about funding," County Administrator **John Wesley White** said Thursday of the possible lawsuit. ``In some respects, it's the best way to get this whole thing solved." **White** says the county doesn't owe Coastal any money.

Coastal is a nonprofit agency that is contracted by the state Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services to operate substance abuse and mental health programs in Sarasota County.

As part of the contract, Coastal operates the Crisis Stabilization Unit on 10th Street, a 24-hour emergency residential psychiatric center. It's where authorities take people into custody for psychiatric observation without their permission under the Baker Act.

Coastal claims state law requires the county to pay 25 percent of the cost of providing these services, but the commission has ``consistently refused" to pay the full amount. Coastal also receives money from the state, private donations, grants, insurance reimbursements and client fees. Coastal says it is owed money for treatment since August 1990, when it contracted with HRS to provide substance abuse and mental health services.

The agency has been meeting with county officials for two years in an effort to settle this dispute, says Fritz Drybrough, president of Coastal's board of directors. Each time, however, the county seemed to be ``stonewalling," he says.

White says the law calls for a ``local match" of funds but doesn't specify where the money must come from.

County Commissioner David Mills says Coastal's programs are invaluable, but the agency hasn't proven the county is responsible for providing funding. ``Show me in black and white where it says that," Mills says.

Drybrough says a meeting between the two sides is scheduled for April 22.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
April 12, 1996

COUNTY OFFICIAL TRANSFERS SECRETARY HE DID SO AFTER HER HUSBAND ANNOUNCED HE WAS RUNNING FOR COUNTY COMMISSION.
Author: *John Hill STAFF WRITER*

Correction:******CORRECTION********
The following correction was published on April 13, 1996: Kathleen ``Casey'' Pilon is an administrative assistant in Sarasota County government. An article Friday gave an inaccurate job title.

Her boss runs Sarasota County government. And her husband, after the November elections, might be her boss's boss. So where does that leave Casey Pilon?

County Administrator **John Wesley White** on Wednesday transferred Kathleen ``Casey'' Pilon, his 52-year-old secretary, to a new job.

Pilon's husband, Ray, has announced his candidacy for the County Commission. **White**, who reports to the commissioners, said he doesn't think it would be appropriate to have the spouse of a commission candidate working in his outer office.

The transfer followed a memo **White** issued to his staff last month warning them to avoid political involvement. **White** said the memo and Pilon's transfer weren't connected. ``I would have made the decision with Casey if that memo never would've been written,'' **White** said.

White characterized the memo as a ``higher'' ethical calling to the top 20 members of his staff, and acknowledged that he neither had - nor sought - the authority to strip off-duty employees of their legal right to campaign. Casey Pilon said Thursday she will try to undo **White**'s decision. ``I'm between a rock and a hard spot,'' Pilon said. ``I want to follow the rules and do what's right, yet I want to support my husband. To this day, I don't understand this policy.''

In a memo March 8, **White** noted that the responsibilities of top county staff warranted restraint ``beyond what is expected'' of other public employees.'' This, he explained, meant ``avoiding attendance at any political events, not contributing, assisting, working or speaking on behalf of any issue or candidate for any office, or any other such activity.''

Florida law allows public employees to take part in political campaigns, provided they don't use work hours, equipment or offices. County charters cannot supersede Florida law. ``Certainly employees are free during non-work hours to engage in political activity,'' said Mike Cochran, an attorney with Florida's division of elections. **White** said the nature of Pilon's job - working in his outer office - might be ``uncomfortable'' for other candidates and county employees. He downplayed the gravity of the memo - ``in retrospect, it was a mistake . . .'' - but he said he had no intentions of modifying it, either.

``It was well-intentioned but mishandled effort," he said. ``And I don't want to mishandle it any further."

Today, meanwhile, is Casey Pilon's last scheduled day in **White**'s office. On Monday, she reports to the Transportation Department. She'll help residents get street lights and newly paved roads.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
March 20, 1996

DEVELOPER SUES OVER IMPACT FEES THE STAKES ARE HIGH IN THE LAWSUIT FILED AGAINST THE COUNTY BY PALMER RANCH DEVELOPERS.
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Palmer Ranch developers have filed a class - action lawsuit against Sarasota County that could undermine the county's impact-fee system and cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

County officials said Tuesday that most of the terms Palmer Ranch is claiming to be unfair were accepted by the developers in a 1984 plan.

The lawsuit, filed last week in circuit court in Sarasota, makes the following charges:
* The county is assessing fees for road impacts in addition to requiring the ranch to build other roads.
* The county uses the road fees for improvements elsewhere in the county.
* The road fee system may be unconstitutional and in violation of state law because it treats large and small developments differently.

Palmer Ranch, the largest development in county history, is generally considered a model development with a good reputation, including being environmentally friendly. ``This is our last resort. Developers don't like to sue local jurisdictions," said John Cook, a Sarasota lawyer representing Palmer Ranch. That's because developers constantly have to work with the county to get permits and re-zonings to develop their property.

County Administrator **John Wesley White** said, ``they're trying to hold up county taxpayers." Besides, he said, they agreed to the conditions they are now suing over. ``It was clear at the time of their (development) approval what their obligations would be," **White** said. ``Now, they're kind of reneging."

Palmer Ranch is a 5,200-acre development in central Sarasota County operated by the trust of Hugh Culverhouse in Tampa. Developers are scheduled to build 10,500 units, and have built about 3,500 since 1986.

The developers also have built roads and drainage systems and given them to the county, donated land for parks and schools, plus paid fees to cover the impact of its development on roads and parks, all totaling $21 million. And they still have a lot of other improvements to make.

The lawsuit claims that the county was planning to build some of those roads, such as the part of McIntosh Road that goes through the ranch but took them off its list after the Palmer Ranch development agreement in 1984.

The ranch also pays impact fees like all developers through a formula designed to estimate the impact of its development on existing roads. Those fees are supposed to cover the costs of improvements to roads made necessary by the increased use from the new developments.

The lawsuit contends the impact fees are not fair because the ranch already has to build some roads for the county. By requiring both, the lawsuit suggests the county is double-dipping. It also states that because the impact fees go into a pot for all of north county, they often are not spent in the area near the development - the impacted area. For instance, the money might be used on the Tuttle Road widening, a long way from the ranch. ``They don't drive on those other roads?" asked Dennis Wilkison, assistant planning director for the county.

Palmer Ranch is known as a Development of Regional Impact, or DRI, because of its large size. It was through a DRI document that the county negotiated the donation of roads, drainage, school land and other properties. But the lawsuit states that under state law, the county can't treat a DRI differently than smaller developments, which often do not have to donate land. Wilkison's continued response: ``But they agreed to it."

County officials do not think the lawsuit has a solid legal foundation and believe they will ultimately win. But the stakes are high.

Firstly, Palmer Ranch is expected to spend about $35 million on land, roads and fees, including the $21 million already spent, that will be controlled by the county. Secondly, Palmer Ranch is seeking class-action status for its suit, which, if granted, would mean the legal action would apply to developers throughout Sarasota County. The county's liability could be enormous. Thirdly, the county's impact-fee system, which currently brings in about $5 million annually for road construction, could be crippled. ``If you don't have impact fees, Sarasota County's road program comes to a screeching halt," Wilkison said. With the seriousness of the matter in mind, the Sarasota County Commission Tuesday approved hiring the law firm of Nelson, Hess, et al., to help defend the county.

``If they were successful in all they're trying to do, it would be very serious," **White** said.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
March 11, 1996

COUNTY MAY FIGHT RULING ON UTILITY
Author: *Rod Thomson STAFF WRITER*

Top Sarasota County officials want to appeal a jury's $17.5 million price tag to buy Atlantic Utilities, despite the fact that the county would have to pay all the legal fees involved.

That price was $4 million more than the county's top offer.

``We believe there was a significant error in the proceedings to justify the appeal,'' said County Administrator **John Wesley White**.

He suggested that if the county wins the appeal at the 2nd District Court of Appeals in Lakeland - which would prohibit Atlantic Utilities from using a certain type of utility valuation method - the county could see a verdict even less than the $13.5 million final offer the county made.

As part of a huge sewer and water centralization effort, the county pursued condemnation of the utility in 1994, after Atlantic officials said they did not want to sell the company. The county won the right to condemn the utility in May 1995, but the two sides could not agree on a price on the 2,000-customer operation southeast of the city of Sarasota.

After a Circuit Court jury in Sarasota put a value of $17.5 million on the private utility company Feb. 23, the county was left with three options:
* Follow through with the purchase for $17.5 million;
* Withdraw entirely and pay Atlantic's legal fees;
* Appeal the decision.

White said he came to the final decision after huddling with county attorneys and those the county has hired to represent it in the case. They convinced him that the county stood a good chance to get the price reduced if the appeals court agreed to deny the disputed valuation method.

However, the county also wants to reduce the price and block the valuation method because there are several more private utilities it hopes to purchase to put together the countywide system.

White will make his recommendation to county commissioners in detail during Tuesday's regular meeting.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
February 10, 1996

COUNTY OFFICIAL DROPS LAWSUIT THE SUIT OVER MOVING PART OF HIS OFFICE HAD BEEN CRITICIZED AS A SILLY WASTE OF TAXPAYERS' MONEY.
Author: *Laura Higgins STAFF WRITER*

Sarasota County Property Appraiser John Mikos decided Friday to drop his lawsuit over office space. Mikos filed the suit a week ago, contesting a plan that required him to give up part of his prime first-floor office space and move relocate half of his staff to offices on upper floors.

County Administrator **John Wesley White**, who was the named defendant in the suit, had called the lawsuit ``absolutely silly."

The two men signed a settlement agreement Friday, but Mikos appeared to have gained little as a result. ``In the final analysis, it's essentially what we had asked him to do," **White** said.

Mikos is being asked to give up a portion of his first-floor space to make room for the Tax Collector's Office, which is housed in the space that the county rents on Main Street.

Mikos will receive a net increase in square footage but half of his staff must move relocate to the fourth and fifth floors of the old County Administration building at Ringling Boulevard and U.S. 301. The move was originally planned for this weekend, but Mikos filed the suit asking a judge for an injunction preventing the move. He contended that it the move could cause a delay in preparing the tax rolls and would generate ``constant movement" of staff and visitors among several floors.
Mikos said he had ``no comment whatsoever at this time." He did not know how much the suit would end up costing. ``I don't know yet. I haven't received the bill," he said.

Bob Turffs, the lawyer who represented him in the suit, said the property appraiser believed the original plan would have shut his office down for a month.

Mikos needed additional computer equipment, estimated to cost between $7,000 and $10,000, to ensure the move wouldn't disrupt his office, Turffs said. That will be provided as a result of the settlement, he said.

Mikos also believed that the proposed move was not legal, since the county commissioners had approved a different plan in June 1994 that called for Mikos to remain in his space, Turffs said. But on Tuesday, the commissioners adopted the new plan.

White said that now that Mikos is cooperating, the relocation should begin in the next two to three weeks.

Sarasota Herald-Tribune (FL)
February 6, 1996

OFFICE SHUFFLE REVEALS DARK PLOT
Author: *TOM LYONS Comment*

Sarasota Property Appraiser John Mikos left out all the good stuff in the lawsuit he filed against County Administrator **John Wesley White** late last week. Luckily, Mikos had not been so boringly legalistic two days before, when he talked about the real dirt behind the feud. ``What I think it is is sort of a vendetta against this office," Mikos said then.

Against him personally, Mikos meant. He insisted that his chain is being yanked, and that **White** is doing the yanking, as a payback for all the ways Mikos has hassled **White** over the years. But Mikos might have trouble making this case. It isn't as if a horse head were left in his bed or a bomb wired to Mikos' plat maps.

All **White** and county staff did was plan, as part of a juggling of office space, to move a large part of the property appraiser's operation from the ground floor to two upstairs floors of the old County Administration Building this weekend.

That is such a big deal to Mikos that he will seek an injunction to bar the move. His suit argues that the change would cause inefficiency, mainly by forcing staff members to ride elevators all the time to confer with each other.

Not too impressive? How about this? The move could trigger financial calamity if the disruption delays completion of the tax rolls.

That, of course, just might end civilization as we know it. But since **White** says Mikos' office would actually be back up and running by Monday morning, the doomsday scenario looks a bit preposterous. So does this seem like a really silly waste of legal fees? If so, you don't understand the dark conspiracies that elected officials must guard against.

Don't fall for arguments that the planned move is a routine, reasonable way for **White** to ration ground-floor space so that the tax collector can also offer ground-floor access to the public.
Actually, Mikos said, this forced move is **White**'s revenge. For what? Well, lots of things.

Mikos freely said that he didn't like **White** from the minute **White** became county administrator in 1987. Mikos sized him up as a spendthrift who bounced from government job to government job all over the country, devoting himself to bloating bureaucracies.

So Mikos soon became a regular critic. He even wrote to the County Commission in 1990 to say that **White** and the commissioners should be charged with malfeasance if **White** was not forced to provide more details in proposed budgets.

That same year, Mikos heard that **White** had been popped for DUI up in Georgia. The property appraiser decided he was just the guy to investigate.

Soon, Mikos happily presented the arrest paperwork to the County Commission, hoping for fireworks. The commissioners, as usual, declined to pay much attention to Mikos.

Anyway, Mikos has yanked **White**'s chain plenty, or tried to. Once, **White** was goaded to the point that, in an interview, he compared Mikos' attacks to the random bites of ``a mad dog."

But **White** said he doesn't think Mikos really believes that all that ancient history is related to the moving plan. ``I've gotten smarter as I've gotten older and I don't want any feuds with John Mikos," **White** said Monday. ``I'd do almost anything to avoid them, if I could."

Bradenton Herald, The (FL)
July 20, 1993

SARASOTA ADMINISTRATOR CHIEF OF NATIONAL GROUP
Author: *Herald staff report*

Sarasota County Administrator **John Wesley White** became president of the National Association of County Administrators during the group's annual meeting in Chicago on Sunday.

The association is the professional management affiliate of the National Association of Counties. Its membership includes more than 500 county administrators nationwide, including Sarasota and Manatee counties. **White** previously served as one of the organization's regional vice presidents. He has been active in groups promoting professionalism in public management.

The Tampa Tribune
February 17, 1993

Tax increase looms near for county
Author: *CRAIG S. PALOSKY; Tribune Staff Writer*

SARASOTA - The county might need to raise property taxes this year to meet growing service demands, County Administrator **John Wesley White** told commissioners Tuesday. "Sometime within the next year or two, we'll probably have to look at it," **White** said. "We've had the same property tax rate for six years, and yet we've continued to make improvements and expand services."

White said he would not know whether he would recommend a tax increase until he reviews budget requests from the various county departments this spring.

The county's tax rate has held steady at $3.65 per $1,000 of assessed property value since 1988. County officials have relied on other revenue sources, rising property values and cost-cutting measures to balance its budget, **White** said.

But costs for law enforcement, social services, parks and other county departments have risen steadily, making an increase likely in the not-to-distant future, **White** said. "It's purely a theoretical situation at this point," **White** said. "I just wanted to let the board know."

Several commissioners said they hoped to avoid a tax increase but needed more specific information before deciding whether that's possible. "It would be a last resort only," Chairman Wayne Derr said. "I'd look at budget cuts first." "I'd be against any increase," Commissioner David Mills said. "We ought to be able to keep it the same."

About $52 million of the county's $342 million budget comes from property taxes. Sales and gasoline taxes, state aid, utility fees and other sources account for the remainder.

Under the existing tax rate, the owner of a $100,000 home that qualifies for the state's homestead exemption pays $273.75 annually in county property taxes.

The county last year eliminated 52 jobs, more than half in the parks department, to balance the budget without a tax increase. More cuts this year might be difficult to absorb, **White** said.

The Tampa Tribune
September 26, 1992

Dump dug up; fine possible
Author: *PHILLIP THOMPSON; Tribune Staff Writer*

Sarasota County could be fined by a state environmental agency for digging up garbage at what is now a public park and then burying it elsewhere on the site, a state investigator said Friday.

A county contractor dug up garbage that was under the 17th Street ballpark, a former dump, during the construction of an entrance road, said Sandra Tippin, an environmental specialist with the state Department of Environmental Regulations [DER]. The trash was dumped on an undeveloped portion of the park, where it later was covered with dirt by county parks officials, she said.

The disposal violated several state statutes, the department said in a warning letter to County Administrator **John Wesley White**. But **White** said Friday he isn't certain the county violated any laws, despite what the department says. ""We've got a lot of discussion to do [with the department] before I acknowledge there is any violation," he said. ""If it is a violation, I think it's a fairly . . . innocent violation and probably not one that has much environmental consequence," he said.

Parks Department Assistant Director Liz Warren said Friday she was told not to talk about the incident. "I have some directions I've been given by [Parks Director] Walt Rothenbach: He is the only one who can comment on this situation," she said. Rothenbach was on vacation.

Sarasota County could be cited with penalties up to $10,000 for every day the violations persist, the letter said. Tippin plans to meet with county officials in October to discuss plans for properly disposing the waste.

Meanwhile, DER officials are trying to determine if the garbage poses any health or environmental hazards. They've got some valid concerns," said Mike Stillinger of county pollution control. ""It would be in the county's interest to take samples."

Tippin said she doesn't know how much garbage was dumped at the park, so she's not certain if the situation poses a health hazard, or if the environment has been harmed. "I want them to do more assessments" of groundwater and soil contamination, she said. ""The county parks department is working to get everything taken care of. They're trying to do what's appropriate."

County parks officials told DER two years ago the dump was there, and together they developed a plan to test soil and groundwater, **White** said. Tippin was checking on the progress of those tests in June when she happened to discover the violations. "From what I understood, they [the contractors] couldn't get a stable road base, so they excavated the solid waste to get a stable base," Tippin said.

Tippin said the contractors piled the trash on an undeveloped, fenced-off section of the park, north of the ball fields and within 200 feet of a canal.

Workers used equipment to spread out the trash and cover it with dirt, she said. "I guess they thought if they spread it out and put dirt over it, they thought it would be all right," Tippin said. ""But it wasn't enough dirt."

White said he didn't know how long parks official had planned to leave the refuse there.

When asked if the contractors had permission to dig out the garbage, **White** replied, ""I don't believe so. I don't think anybody really realized what was under there. I don't know."

The landfill once was operated by the city of Sarasota, before it was closed about 1970 and the property was turned over to the county, said Bill Lederman of the county solid waste department.
The landfill was closed before the state began regulating and monitoring dumps, he said.

The Tampa Tribune
September 10, 1992

County to ponder budget
Author: *A Tribune Staff Report*

Sarasota County commissioners tonight will hold the first of two public hearings on the proposed 1992-93 budget.
C
ounty officials will discuss the proposed $341 million budget at 7 p.m. in the South County Administration Center, on U.S. Highway 41 near Jacaranda Boulevard.

The county also has scheduled a 7 p.m. workshop Sept. 24 at Sarasota Middle School.

County Administrator **John Wesley White** proposed the budget to the commission in July. This year's budget is $349 million.

Under the proposed budget, which takes effect Oct. 1, the property tax rate remains at $3.65 for every $1,000 of taxable value.

The tax would generate $51 million.

The budget includes a decrease in the average garbage bill, from $140 to $114.

White also cut back library hours, employees and services to shave $3.1 million from the budget.
The budget also includes a $1.3 million increase for the sheriff's office, bringing that budget to $29.5 million.

Sheriff Geoff Monge plans to hire 10 officers, replace 41 vehicles and start new programs, including community policing units.

The Tampa Tribune
September 2, 1992

Appraiser wouldn't take "no' for answer, went to higher authority
Author: *PHILLIP THOMPSON; Tribune Staff Writer*

Property Appraiser John Mikos went over county officials' heads when he persuaded a state agency to get county money for raises for his employees, said County Administrator **John Wesley White**.

At **White**'s request Tuesday, county commissioners unanimously agreed to ask the state Department of Revenue to reconsider its decision to increase Mikos' budget for the 1992-93 budget year, which begins Oct. 1.

The department required the county to increase Mikos' budget by $127,000, which **White** said it has the power to do. The county already allotted $3.2 million in its proposed $336 million budget. The department also governs the tax collector's office. "They [state officials] approved it without any facts at their disposal," **White** said. ""They perceive the rest of county government is doing what Mikos is doing [in seeking increases]. "It's an issue of fair treatment," he said. "Why should one elected official set himself apart from the others?"

Mikos did not return telephone calls to his office Tuesday afternoon.

"He already asked the board for the increase," **White** said. "Then he goes to the state and doesn't tell the county what he's doing."

During a July meeting, Mikos asked the county commission to set a standard for pay increases for county employees so he could include it in his budget. But the county refused, saying they couldn't set a standard until they began budget hearings this month. Mikos said his situation was unique because the revenue department required the pay-raise percentages along with his budget in early August.

Mikos, who has about 70 employees, would have had to forgo raises if he didn't get the department's budget increase. Mikos, who has butted heads with commissioners before, argued with county officials at the meeting - to no avail. He wouldn't comment later if he thought the commission was stonewalling because of past conflicts with him.

Nevertheless, **White** said the county can't afford the increase. ""It doesn't matter if it's $127,000 or $1 million; it over budget." All other county departments ""have to absorb the cost of pay raises within their existing department budgets," **White** said. ""It's a way of squeezing more money out of the budget."

Bradenton Herald, The (FL)
July 15, 1992

$336 MILLION SARASOTA BUDGET DOESN'T RAISE PROPERTY TAX RATE
Author: *Kenwyn Caranna, Herald Staff Writer*

County Administrator **John Wesley White** recommends the county spend 3.67 percent less next year - but the property tax rate will remain the same.

White on Tuesday presented a proposed budget of $336,635,248 for fiscal year 1992-93 at the Sarasota County Commission meeting. The budget is about $12.8 million less than this year's adopted budget and anticipates reductions in garbage fees.

The millage rate of 3.65 mills would remain the same as the previous four years. One mill equals $1 for every $1,000 of assessed property value.

The county's taxable property value has increased by 4.82 percent. Although it is lower than the 6.88 percent average over the past five years, the increase still means the county will collect more property tax money. ``Property taxes are less than 20 percent of the budget,'' **White** said.

A reduction in the number of capital improvement projects (roads, bridges, buildings, etc.) is the primary reason the proposed budget is lower, **White** said. Gas taxes, impact and utility fees and general revenue pay for capital improvements.

The Sarasota County Sheriff's Department budget would increase by $1.3 million to $29.5 million. The increase would add 10 positions and fund two new community policing units in Siesta Key and north Sarasota County.

Depending on negotiations with waste haulers, garbage rates are expected to decrease an average of $26.04 for residential districts and $11.32 for multi-family and mobile home districts. The tentative budget also calls for borrowing $1.073 million and adding to it $947,000 from current revenues to implement stormwater improvements in the Phillippi Creek Basin. The area was badly flooded during late June.

White credited the county's Position Control Committee - which reviews all vacancies and job reclassifications - and department directors with helping the county reduce its spending.

The county will eliminate 62 positions, nine of which are vacant. Employees in the other 53 positions will be transferred to comparable vacant positions in other departments, **White** said. Most of the personnel cuts are in departments of parks and recreation, natural resources and building and zoning.

Thirty-five positions were added to the payroll, including staff for the new Jacaranda Library, the transportation division and the county attorney's office. The proposed budget also would shorten library operating hours.

The Tampa Tribune
July 2, 1992

Some question officials' absence
Author: *PHILLIP THOMPSON; Tribune Staff Writer*

County Administrator **John Wesley White** and County Commissioner Wayne Derr extended an out-of-town stay last week even though county emergency officials were battling the county's worst flood in decades.

From Wednesday to Friday, **White**, Derr and several other county officials attended a Florida Association of Counties conference in Marco Island, south of Naples in Collier County.

But after the conference, White went to his vacation house in Tallahassee and Derr extended his visit at the Marriott Marco Island resort as a vacation, Derr said.

Meanwhile, county emergency officials were evacuating flooded Sarasota subdivisions such as Colonial Gables and Colonial Oaks. "When you know the county is in trouble, you should get back here," Commissioner AnnMarie Hill said Wednesday. ""I think it's sad on that Saturday the county administrator could not even be found for the emergency meeting."

Hill said: ""He's the one over all the department heads - that convention could have been put off."
Hill said the county was fortunate to have competent county officials handling the disaster in **White**'s absence. But she added: ""What if these teams needed direction? What if they needed to make an emergency expenditure?"

White said he left the conference Friday afternoon, then went to Tallahassee. Why he went ""is really none of your business," he said. "I have full confidence in my [emergency] people doing their jobs," **White** said. He said he kept in contact with county officials, but added if he had been in Sarasota, he would have given few, if any directions. "It would be an unmitigated fiasco for a five-person board or a county administrator to . . . try to direct public safety professionals during an emergency."

Hill also said she was concerned about Derr's absence because the commission needed a quorum to declare a state of emergency Saturday. "We are the ones who have to state we are declaring a state of emergency so the county can get state and federal assistance," Hill said. "I wasn't aware there was an emergency meeting," Derr said. ""I've got a telephone in my car; I would have been available. Had I been requested to come back, I would have [done so] immediately. "There was no need to as far as I was informed. I felt comfortable staying there." Derr said he checked out at noon Saturday. He said he had planned on staying there throughout the weekend with his wife, Fran, after the conference ended.
It rained for most of the conference, he said, but "when the sun came out [Friday afternoon], I decided to stay one more day."

County Emergency Management Director Gregg Feagans was "in charge," Derr said.

"Things were under control," he said. ""I was available to come back, but there was no need for me to come back."

Derr said that when he returned to Sarasota on Saturday, ""the first thing I did was drive through Colonial Gables and Colonial Oaks to see what kind of flooding was there." Then he went to the emergency operations center, and spent the rest of the day there, he said.

Commissioners David Mills, Robert Anderson and Charley Richards also attended the conference, which featured seminars on government issues such as landfill regulations and stormwater management. County Attorney Jorge Fernandez and Transportation Director John Goodknight also were at the conference.

Those five men returned Friday. Hill did not attend the conference.

Hill said she was at the emergency management center on Friday answering telephones, then rode with rescue workers during the evacuation of Colonial Gables and Colonial Oaks.

The Tampa Tribune
May 31, 1992

White wins legal battle over firing
Author: *PHILLIP THOMPSON; Tribune Staff Writer*

Champ Brahe spent the last 4« years trying to prove County Administrator **John Wesley White** fired him to give his job to an old friend. After little more than an hour of deliberations, a jury told him he was wrong.

In what both sides called a ""long and difficult" case, Brahe quietly walked out of court Friday night after a jury denied him $150,000 in a civil rights lawsuit against **White**.

Brahe, the former county personnel director, said he learned one thing from the trial: ""You don't fight the county in their own back yard." He said he doesn't know if he will appeal.

In **White**'s first year as administrator in 1987, he laid off Brahe as director of the personnel division that September, the only casualty of a countywide reorganization plan enacted by **White**. **White** said he laid off Brahe because he was replacing the personnel division of the central services department with a personnel department, which would have broader responsibilities.

Brahe later claimed he was set up so **White** could hire current Personnel Director H. ""Skeet" Surrency, who was **White**'s assistant in 1974-75 when they both worked for the state. **White**, county officials, and other supporters celebrated outside the courthouse after the trial. "I'm very pleased. It's been a very long process," **White** said. "It's not easy to have all those negative things said about you."

Brahe sued **White** individually for $108,000 in back pay, $8,212 for mental pain and suffering, and $33,750 for punitive damages. Brahe also had named the county in the lawsuit. But Judge Robert Boylston on Thursday awarded Brahe just $1 on that claim due to a procedural error in a county hearing. The county commission later held a hearing and rejected his claims.

During closing arguments, Brahe's attorney, W. Russell Snyder, called **White** an ""arrogant and callous oppressor" who abused his power to get what he wanted. "We've had . . . Irangate, S&L-gate, and Rubbergate. Now we have "Cronygate' at the hands of **John Wesley White**," Snyder said.

Lamar Matthews, **White**'s attorney, retorted that Brahe had dragged the battle through a series of lawsuits and hearings - failing each time. "What happens when you file everything, you've lost each time, but you still have venom in your system?" Matthews asked. ""You file a civil rights suit and you file for punitive damages."

After the trial, Synder said he hasn't determined what other legal recourse Brahe has. The defeat was "a bitter pill to swallow," Snyder said. ""I've just seen there really isn't a remedy for employees in Florida. We need some [state] statutes to give abused employees some rights when they are put out on bad faith."

Neither **White** nor Brahe said they knew how much their legal bills are. But county tax money will pay for **White**'s legal bills, since he is covered as a public official, he said.

The Tampa Tribune
October 23, 1991

Sarasota County nixes merit raise review
Author: *PHILLIP THOMPSON; Tribune Staff Writer*

Commissioner Ann Marie Hill's request for a list of county employees' merit pay raises met with a wall of opposition from other commissioners and the county administrator Tuesday. Hill requested that County Administrator **John Wesley White** compile the list to see if the raises are distributed equitably. "It's our job to approve salaries," she protested. ""I want to see what's going on."

White denied her request, saying the information wasn't readily available and that it would cost too much of the county's time and money to provide it for her.

The other commissioners backed him. "To let you go on a fishing expedition to see if an employee got too high a raise would be a violation of our charter," Commissioner Robert Anderson said. "The management down to that level is the administrator's responsibility," said Commissioner Charley Richards. "It's not in our power to deal with that." Richards said county government has auditors and personnel staff to make sure merit pay raises are handled properly and fairly.

But Hill said the commission should keep a watchful eye. "It should be a function of our job. I want to know and it should be given to me," she said. Hill said a review of the list may expose flaws in the merit pay scale system. Employees can receive raises up to 9 percent based on a performance score. But Hill doesn't like the scoring method. "I feel the current system promotes cronyism," she said during a break at Tuesday's meeting. "I want to see if particular favorites are getting raises. I'm not looking at any particular employee, I'm looking at the whole system," she said.

She added that the 9 percent raise - or even the average 5 percent raise - is too high because many businesses are giving no more than 2 percent. "I'm sure taxpayers are outraged by the system of 0 to 9 percent. The market isn't even dictating we have the ability to provide such a raise," she said. She also wants to see a list of employees whose jobs have been reclassified, which many times amounts to a promotion.

However **White** said if such a list doesn't exist, he's not obligated to create one. He added he didn't see what good the information would do. "I don't feel I have to commit my staff if the board doesn't ask for it," **White** said. ""When it comes to the expenditure of money, my judgment is the direction of the board." But **White** said he didn't know how much the search would cost. He did say it would take ""several days" time. **White** also said that under the Florida open records law, he's not required to compile information from records. If Hill wants the information, she'll have to look through each county employees personnel file herself, he said.

Hill said she will look through the files if she has to. "If (the commissioners) don't want to work with me, fine. I'll go through every one of those files," she said.

White said the county does have a list of employees' performance scores, which the raises are based on. But he said later he didn't offer the list to Hill because, "she didn't ask for it."

The Tampa Tribune
April 10, 1991

Sarasota County to keep White
Author: *JOHN GIBEAUT; Tribune Staff Writer*

John Wesley White kept his job Tuesday as Sarasota County administrator. County commissioners voted 3-2 to retain **White** in his $100,000-a-year job, with Commissioner Wayne Derr again providing the swing vote - this time in the opposite direction.

Derr had voted against **White** March 12 in the first of two ballots required to fire the administrator, but he changed his mind and supported the administrator Tuesday. Derr's vote came as two other commissioners allied against **White** tried to persuade him with incorrect assertions that **White** committed a felony by having an improper license plate during a 1989 drunken-driving arrest and that county policy bars from employment people with drunken-driving convictions. "I've received phone calls from some who have attempted to intimidate me into voting to fire Mr. **White**," Derr said, reading from a prepared statement. ""I refuse to be intimidated. There is too much at stake to make a decision based on fear. "There are people out there who don't like **John Wesley White**," Derr said. "It comes as no surprise. Mr. **White** isn't afraid to disagree. I don't want a yes-man for county administrator. Do you?"

He declined later to name anyone who attempted to intimidate him.

Derr voted with commission Chairman Charley Richards and Commissioner Bob Anderson to keep **White**. Commissioners David Mills and AnnMarie Hill voted to fire him.

Derr had conducted an informal public opinion poll to determine whether residents wanted to keep or dump **White**. Of nearly 700 letters and telephone calls, 62 percent said **White** should stay in the job he's held since March 1987 and 38 percent said he should be fired. "My decision today is not based solely on the calls and letters, but on my best judgment as well," Derr said.

Mills and Hill criticized Derr for conducting the survey. "This is something we don't need," Hill said. ""What this has done is put the community in an uproar."

As it became evident, however, that the votes weren't there to fire **White**, Mills said he would be willing to work with him. "I am not a vindictive person," Mills said.

Said Hill: "I can work with anybody, but I will voice my opinion."

White, 50, said he remains prepared to work with all commissioners, including Mills and Hill, who had been adamant about firing him since the fall election campaign. "There certainly won't be any lack of effort on my part," **White** said. ""I will be just as dutiful and diligent with those two as with any other member of the board."

White was arrested on the drunken-driving charge in October 1989 in Helen, Ga., while in a county vehicle assigned to him.

In an effort to sway Derr, Mills ticked off a list of county job openings that require a background check for drunken-driving convictions. "We don't want anybody cleaning our kennels who has a DUI," Mills said.

But **White** said the county policy, instituted after his own arrest, was to screen prospective employees who may be driving county vehicles and is not intended to be an automatic bar to employment.

Hill claimed **White** had committed a felony because the Ford Bronco he was driving when he was arrested had a regular Florida license plate, not a yellow county tag. She also accused him of violating the state's public records law by returning a draft of a study on county legal services to a Pennsylvania consultant, who said he destroyed it. "I don't know what other proof we have to give to Mr. Derr," Hill said.

The Florida license for **White**'s Bronco had been legally transferred from the car of former County Administrator Ed Maroney, and the tax collector's office renewed it every year for three years until it was learned that administrative law - not criminal law - requires the vehicle to bear a county tag, **White** said.

The state attorney's office declined to file charges regarding the Pennsylvania consultant's report.

Hill also ran into criticism after she blamed **White** for the increasing cost of county government. "Spending is a policy set by this board," not **White**, Richards reminded Hill.

As Richards tried to cut Hill off and bring the question to a vote, he was interrupted by Wyatt Bishop, a potential 1992 commission candidate who has started a petition drive to stop the county's massive Carlton Reserve water project. "Go ahead, Charley, live it up," Bishop shouted from the audience.

Richards pointed at Bishop and threatened to eject him from the room. "You can be ejected, too," Bishop shouted back.

The Tampa Tribune
March 26, 1991

Should he stay or should he go?
Author: *JOHN GIBEAUT; Tribune Staff Writer*

One file in the Sarasota County Commission office is titled ""Fire **John Wesley White**." Another is titled ""Retain **John Wesley White**."

If the county administrator's job were a popularity contest, **White** was winning Monday by a ratio of nearly 2-to-1. Of 229 letters, cards and telephone calls to commissioners about his job status, 143, or 62 percent, said **White** should keep his $100,000-a-year-job.

Commissioners voted 3-2 March 12 to fire **White**, and they must vote again April 9 if he is to be dismissed. Commissioner Wayne Derr, who cast the swing vote to fire **White** in the first round, has said he wants to hear from voters before deciding whether to cast a second vote against the administrator. "I'm going to wait a while," Derr said Monday. "I figure we've got a little time to go. Calls are still coming in both ways."

White had little to say about Derr's opinion poll. "What am I supposed to say?" he asked. ""I'm trying to avoid checking the numbers. I think it is interesting."

Most of those supporting **White** said they could find nothing he has done wrong. **White**'s 1989 arrest on a drunken driving charge while his county vehicle in Helen, Ga., is a personal mistake and should not be held against him, supporters said. But the arrest was the primary reason cited by those who said **White** should go.

Commissioners David Mills and AnnMarie Hill led the effort to fire **White**, citing the increasing cost of county government, the arrest, low morale and personnel problems among county employees.

Two county employees who want **White** out said in anonymous letters that their co-workers had been asked by supervisors to call commissioners in support of **White**. "I already inquired about that and was told categorically that it was not true," White said. **White** said in a recent interview that it would be improper for him to lobby to keep his job. "I certainly do not want it on those terms," he said Monday. "For me to coerce, or even to encourage that, would be inappropriate."

Hill said the mail and phone calls won't influence her vote. "With the background I have on him, I would not feel right as a commissioner keeping this man in county government," she said.

The Taxpayers' Association of Sarasota County, while supporting **White**, also said commissioners should state a reason if they fire the administrator. In casting his vote, Derr said he believed **White** was doing a good job but he should be fired without cause in the interest of keeping the peace.

Firing **White** without cause would make him eligible for three months severance pay and unemployment benefits after that runs out. "We believe there should be an established procedure and a justified cause to remove this administrator, who has had to deal with some very difficult matters recently," the Taxpayers' Association's board wrote. ""We deplore the method and timing used in this decision and urge the commissioners to reconsider their decision when voting the next time on this matter."

While commissioners would have to make any change in the firing procedure, **White** said in his case he wouldn't stick around if he's not welcome. "In my personal situation, if the majority of the board doesn't want me to be here, then I don't want to be here," he said. "I don't need a legal reason."

Another letter-writer, Ann McGilvray of Sarasota, suggested Hill is the problem and she ought to be the one who hits the road. "He is a professional being tried by a vindictive AnnMarie Hill, who has not gotten oriented on the duties of her job before causing infighting and exercising such poor judgment," McGilvray wrote. "The infighting itself is cause enough to cause a recall, especially when utter disorder and expense can be generated by firing a professional without cause."

Elizabeth Owen, a former member of the county's recycling advisory board, said she has seen **White** do nothing except follow directions from commissioners. "Could it be that directions have been vague, contradictory or not funded properly?" Owen wrote. The drunken-driving arrest should be forgiven and forgotten, said the Rev. James Bailiff, pastor of the First Christian Church, 122 S. Washington Blvd. "My judgment is that he has paid dearly for that mistake and does not deserve to be condemned further," Bailiff wrote. "My hope is that a judgment about his continued employment will not be based on that incident but on the credibility and effectiveness of his work with us."

County employee Tim Brown didn't share that view and said the county's personnel policy states that misuse of a county vehicle is grounds for suspension or firing. A letter of apology from **White** just doesn't cut it for Brown. "I don't believe a letter of apology would have been sufficient if any other employee had been arrested for a DUI ... while driving a county vehicle," Brown wrote to Derr.

Brown asked that his letter be shown to Mills and Hill but be kept from other county officials.

The Tampa Tribune
March 13, 1991

Commissioners vote to fire White
Author: *JOHN GIBEAUT; Tribune Staff Writer*

Three new Sarasota County commissioners teamed up Tuesday and voted to fire County Administrator **John Wesley White**.

White, 50, sat glumly at the commission dais during the 3-2 vote. The firing, which is allowed under a provision in **White**'s contract permitting them to do so without stating a reason, must be affirmed by a second vote in three weeks. "I'm obviously not happy with the result, but I think it's healthy for this institution for this matter to be addressed and resolved," **White** told commissioners.

New Commissioner David Mills led the move to oust **White** from his $100,000-a- year job. "We all have to run for re-election every four years," Mills said, so it's fitting that **White** also should face periodic review by commissioners. **White** was hired March 18, 1987.

Mills and new Commissioner AnnMarie Hill had pledged to get rid of Whit during their fall election campaigns, citing increasing costs of county government and **White**'s arrest on a drunken-driving charge while in a county vehicle assigned to him for business and personal use. Mills also said he was unhappy with the county's slow pace at starting mandatory trash recycling as voters decided in November.

White was the second high-ranking county official to leave this year because of differences with Mills and Hill. County Attorney Dick Nelson in January announced his resignation after 30 years in the post, following criticism of his firm's fees, which totaled more than $1 million last year.

But in **White**'s case, the third new commissioner, Wayne Derr, provided the swing vote to fire him. Derr had said during the campaign that he would keep an open mind regarding **White**'s job. "I have tried to find ways to honestly criticize Mr. **White**, but I can find no glaring examples of incompetence," Derr said. Nevertheless, "we need to unite and heal and stop polarizing the community." He asked that **White** be fired without cause.

Chairman Charley Richards and Commissioner Bob Anderson voted against the firing. They argued that it's critical to keep **White** when the county is completing its massive $91 million Carlton Reserve water project, is contemplating a consolidated utilities system and is embarking on other large-scale public works projects. "Now is the time that we need Mr. **White** more than ever to bring on these changes," Richards said.

Moreover, Anderson said, **White** merely was carrying out a mandate to make changes in county government.

"You can't bring a person on because of their strength and then tie their hands," Anderson said. Commissioners were "about to feed our own personal commitments and egos" at **White**'s expense, Anderson said.

But **White** ran into criticism when he made some of those changes.

Early in his administration, **White** abolished the job of personnel director Champ Brahe, then hired his friend Hilton "Skeet" Surrency to fill a newly created but similar position. Brahe is suing the county over his dismissal.

White also went head-to-head with former general counsel Wallace Storey, who resigned in 1988, accusing **White** of meddling in legal affairs.

As the 1990 budget was being prepared, **White** promoted interim finance director Chris Chronis ahead of budget director Lou Mikos, the son of county Property Appraiser John Mikos. The elder Mikos has accused **White** of cronyism ever since.

The Tampa Tribune
February 20, 1991

Project costs bring strong rebuke
Author: *JOHN GIBEAUT; Tribune Staff Writer*

County commissioners Tuesday told administrator **John Wesley White** to review the county's procedures in paying its contractors, amid questioned expenses claimed by one contractor. "I've lost total confidence in the contracting process in Sarasota County," Commissioner Bob Anderson told **White**. ""I want to see how deep this problem is."

Commissioners asked for the review after **White** refused to pay $21,451 to Barton Malow, the construction manager on the county's massive $91 million Carlton Reserve water project.

Among the expenses was $3,272 for cellular telephones provided to county utilities director Chuck Wigley and engineer Bill Jackson, which were charged as part of Barton Malow's $5.9 million contract.

The county also was billed $8,541 for calls made on those telephones and a third telephone assigned to Barton Malow project manager George Jones.

White sternly reprimanded Wigley last week for skirting county purchasing procedures in having the telephones charged to the company's contract. "This action should serve as sufficient warning that I am unwilling to accept any further lapses in sound management judgment, evidence of impropriety or insensitivity to ethical standards or acts of insubordination," **White** said in a Feb. 13 memorandum to Wigley.

Commissioners held off on proposals to fire Barton Malow and county employees responsible for approving the expenses after **White** said his review of the firm's contract should be completed next week. A separate audit by Circuit Court Clerk Karen Rushing, the county's chief financial officer, is expected by Friday.

Commissioners put Barton Malow on notice last week that they were unhappy with the situation, and advised the firm to contact **White** immediately if any further questions arose about the propriety of purchases. "Any failure to do so will constitute a serious breach of trust which cannot be tolerated," Commission Chairman Charley Richards told Barton Malow Vice President Timothy Davis in a letter Thursday.

Davis could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

Other questioned expenses included $4,446 for a computer, $3,786 in lease payments for Barton Malow's corporate office on Wood Street and $929 for carpeting in a trailer the company uses as its field office for the Carlton project.

White said he expects the list to grow. "I think some of them were submitted in error," **White** said. "Some of them, frankly, defy explanation."

The county hopes to begin drawing up to 12 million gallons of drinking water a day next year from the 24,312-acre Carlton Reserve northeast of Venice.

The project is nearly a decade old, and the county has yet to receive permits to either draw the water or dispose of mildly radioactive brine left over from the treatment process.

More detailed review of expenses could delay the project anywhere from six months to a year past the scheduled March 1992 startup of the water treatment plant, Wigley said. Wigley, who took over as utilities director in July 1989, said only one county employee was assigned to the Carlton project at the time, although the budget called for four employees. Although he accepted responsibility for the billings, Wigley said pressure to complete the job on time and problems finding qualified engineers contributed. "In my opinion, this project was doomed for this type of problem sooner or later," Wigley said. "I'm not giving you an excuse for the lack of review. I'm just giving you a flavor of the atmosphere we had to work in."

Three county employees now are assigned to the Carlton project. "Three is not enough," Wigley said. "One was totally ridiculous to begin with."

Commissioners appeared unwilling, however, to hire new supervisors for the project, although Commissioner AnnMarie Hill suggested that some county employees could be transferred to it.

Washington Post
March 26, 1987

PR. GEORGE'S ADMINISTRATOR GOING HOME
GLENDENING AIDE JOHN W. WHITE LEAVES COUNTY SATISFIED WITH PERFORMANCE
Author: *Matthew Daly; Washington Post Staff Writer*

Prince George's County Executive Parris Glendening will lose the services of a longtime friend and confidant next month when **John Wesley White**, the county's chief administrative officer for four years, returns to his native Florida as administrator of Sarasota County

White, who announced his resignation last week, will leave the $78,620-a-year post April 17, after Glendening's budget proposal is announced and the Maryland General Assembly adjourns. "One of the nice things about **John Wesley White** is that you didn't have to wait to get Parris," said County Council member Jo Ann T. Bell. "You knew you could get through to John and get an answer. It is going to be hard to replace that."

Glendening, who was in Senegal last week leading a seven-member county delegation, could not be reached for comment. But in a statement issued before he left he said that hiring **White** was "one of the best decisions I have ever made," adding that "personally and professionally, I will miss him greatly." **White**'s successor is widely expected to come from within the county government, and speculation has centered on his former deputy, Chief of Staff John P. Davey, as well as current deputies Mary H. Godfrey and Robert O. Duncan Jr.

Also mentioned as possible successors are planning board chairman and former police chief John W. Rhoads, Fire Chief M.H. (Jim) Estepp and county labor negotiator Frank Stegman.

White, 46, a friend of Glendening's since they were students at Florida State University in the early 1960s, came to Prince George's in January 1983 to serve as Glendening's top lieutenant. He says he is satisfied about the job he has done since then. "We charged a lot of hills in a four-year period and were remarkably successful," he said. "I feel good about all of it."

One of **White**'s first assignments as county administrator was also one of his toughest: solving problems at the county jail. A few months earlier, the jail had attracted nationwide notoriety after a series of articles in The Washington Post detailed mismanagement, overcrowding and the frequent occurrence of sexual assaults among male inmates.

At **White**'s urging, police Maj. Michael J. Flaherty was brought in on an interim basis to run the jail. Strict written procedures were established, and the number of assaults was drastically reduced.

Meanwhile, **White** searched for a permanent director and led efforts to build a new facility. Last month, a $43 million "new generation" jail was opened outside Upper Marlboro.

Flaherty, now county police chief, said **White** was "a tough taskmaster" on the jail issue. "He wanted improvements and changes, and we made sure they happened," Flaherty said. "If things were behind schedule, he made . . . sure they were expedited. He didn't accept excuses."

As the man in charge of the day-to-day operation of the county government, **White**, who has a master's degree in public administration, oversees 23 departments and more than 4,000 employees. He and Glendening have "taken a lot of needling about forming a task force to study every issue," **White** acknowledged, "but that is a good approach. You really benefit from getting people involved."

White said the principal difference between the two is that "I tend to be a lot more hard-nosed about issues, and he's much more intuitive."

County personnel director Michael J. Knapp agreed. "Parris is looser," Knapp said. "He's the politician. John is the pragmatist. Together it is a good product."

Another challenge for **White** and Glendening was to revive the county's financial picture, severely hampered by a property tax freeze approved by voters in 1978. Modifying the freeze, known as TRIM (Tax Reform Initiative by Marylanders), was a priority, **White** said. "We were in a Chicken Little situation where the sky was falling," he recalled. "We attacked it the way we attacked everything else . . . full-court press."

An amiable man with wavy, graying hair and a deep voice that carries a hint of a southern Florida boyhood, **White** worked with business groups, unions and others to persuade county voters that TRIM had had an adverse effect on county services. In November 1984, county voters approved a modification of the measure -- in effect, a tax increase -- by a wide margin.

Ironically, **White**'s career in Prince George's ends as it began, with a controversy over the old county jail. The 60-year-old structure, unused since last month, was scheduled to be razed March 14, but preservationists and some members of the Upper Marlboro Chamber of Commerce announced that they were going to lie down in front of the bulldozers. **White** ordered the facility razed March 13.
White said he will be paid about $80,000 a year managing Sarasota County, a well-to-do jurisdiction of about 250,000 in central Florida.

"This is not your classic bureaucratic move up," he said. "My family wanted to go back home.

Caption: Chief administrative officer **John Wesley White** says of his time with the county: "We charged a lot of hills in a four-year period and were remarkably successful. I feel good about it all."

Washington Post, The (DC)
June 15, 1983

John White: Administering P.G. in the New Regime
Author: *MICHEL McQUEEN, Washington Post Staff Writer*

John Wesley White, Prince George's County's top administrator, poked his head out of his office after a full morning of meetings last week, thoughts of lunch and afternoon commitments on his mind. His secretary handed him a pile of phone messages along with the news he was expected to appear in two hours at a reception that had been scheduled only that morning.

"I'm not going. It's not fair. They shouldn't do that," he said of the last-minute invitation. He paused for a moment, shrugged and then grinned. "Well, forget fair. It's not right. But I'll go."

It was a hectic week for **White**, the county's new chief administrative officer, the highest non-elected post in county government. With County Executive Parris Glendening on a 10-day trip to Europe, **White**--for the first time--was left in charge of Glendening's commitments, details of several issues, as well as day-to-day administration.

By midweek, his desk on the northeast side of the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro was strewn with pink phone messages, his in-box stuffed with thick piles of memoranda. But **White**, 42, a professional administrator, seemed untroubled by the added responsibilities. "This is a guy that came in here in December, but he's working on all eight cylinders right now," said county labor negotiator Frank Stegman, another Glendening appointee.

Glendening appointed **White** in January to succeed Kenneth Duncan, 44, a Democrat who served under the tempestuous administration of Republican Lawrence J. Hogan. Duncan, often labeled a "workaholic," was considered a steady hand in an administration sometimes regarded as mercurial and combative, and he maintained good relationships with county employees, many of whom otherwise considered the administration their enemy.

After 11 years in county service, Duncan, who said he wanted to go into the private sector, left with many good friends in government, many of whom privately hoped he would be kept on.

In the six months that **White** has had the $61,500-a-year job, he has impressed department heads and employees with managerial skill, an even-tempered authority, as well as a large dose of personal charm. Other Glendening staff members say he listens well, gives honest answers, grasps issues quickly and moves to resolve problems fast. They say he avoids campaign politics, and when an aide penned a meeting of Glendening's political advisers on his calendar, **White** scratched it out, letting it be known it was not to happen again.

"Of course, Ken is a good friend of mine; I've known him for years," Police Chief John McHale said. "But **White** seems to have a very practical approach; he seems to look at both sides of everything. I'm impressed with his credentials and I like his approach."

"We are very much in sympathy with one another in what we think government ought to be and what society ought to be," Glendening said.

White is the linchpin in what Glendening says he wants to be his style of government--a decentralized approach, with department heads assuming a maximum of authority and responsibility. "Professionalism," is the other administration buzzword, and Glendening has repeatedly said he would like to become the first county executive to succeed himself by providing citizens with a government they regard as efficient and caring.

With a master's degree in public administration and a wide range of professional experiences ranging from budget analysis to environmental health services and unemployment compensation planning, **White** is, Glendening says, the person to help pull that off. "It's what's important to me," **White** said. "Trying to deliver services is what I consider important in my life. While I'm not denying the worth of what other people do, those things have never been important to me. This is what I've always wanted to do."

The chief administrative officer's job is to carry out the policy decisions of the executive. So far, according to Glendening and staff members, **White** has coordinated the administration's reorganization of the economic development program and much of the work related to the transfer of the county's hospital system to a private, nonprofit corporation.

He has been involved with the county's troubled corrections' department, which has been the subject of heavy criticism during all of his short tenure. The county is under a court order to build a new jail to relieve overcrowding at the county's present, poorly designed Detention Center and must hire a new director for that department to replace the previous director, who resigned under fire last winter. In response to a public outcry, the county also is developing a proposal for a jail to hold drunken drivers. Despite the pressure of a court order and intense public interest, **White** has refused to approve schematic drawings for the new jail until officials decide what to do with the old one and how both facilities would be operated. "We were moving very fast, but we didn't know where we were going," **White** said. "A facility is only a house for a program. It makes no sense to build a facility until you know what kind of program there's going to be."

Similarly, in a meeting last week with a representative of the sheriff's department--the chief of which would like to run the new jail for drunken drivers--the two hammered away at details. Would it have to be self-supporting, as the sheriff suggested? "I think we ought to be willing to pay for a program if it's worthwhile, "**White** said.

How long would the program run, who would enter it, what type of counseling would be offered? **White** told the representative, politely but firmly, that the concept proposed by the sheriff was one view and others were needed.

In a dispute earlier in the year over the handling of the corrections chief, **White** advocated what other staff members viewed as the most humane course.

Some staff members wanted to fire corrections head Arnett Gaston outright after criticism of his management of the jail surfaced. But **White** insisted that he and Glendening discuss the problems with Gaston and allow him to decide. **White** maintains that Gaston's leaving was a mutual decision.

During one busy afternoon, **White** met with an architect who has done work for the county, consulted with his deputy John Davey and other staff members and rushed home to University Park to spend time with his 8-year-old son John David. He has a daughter in college and has been married to his wife Frances for 21 years.

White, a Florida native, has worked as budget director of Miami and has held managerial positions in Florida's human services department. Eight years ago, he was fired as director of a department that administered unemployment programs and protection for migrant workers. A Miami News editorial maintained he was fired because he was "a tough, innovative administrator . . . who was too energetic in the performance of his job."

Before coming to Prince George's, he was director of Human Services Planning in Atlanta, administering $3 million in grants annually.

Washington Post, The (DC)
January 19, 1983

P.G. Staff Chief Nominated
Author: *From news services and staff reports*

Prince George's County Executive Parris Glendening announced yesterday that he will appoint **John Wesley White**, former budget director of Miami, as his chief administrative officer. **White**, 42, will become the county's highest ranking staff member when he assumes the $61,500-a-year office in about two months.

White, who recently moved to the county, has held several positions in local and state government. He was Florida's director of employment security and administrator of Florida's health and rehabilitative services department. His most recent position was director of the Department of Human Services Planning for the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Resume

BUFORD R. (RANDY) WITT
3648 Saint Gaudens Rd., Miami, FL 33133
Phone: 305-567-0432 e-mail: brwitt@ifoneinc.com

SUMMARY: Extensive leadership and management experience at all levels. A proven and successful manager and team builder who focuses on strategic planning, benchmarking and results.

EDUCATION: **Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington, DC** (Master's Degree Equivalent), 1989
MA -- International Relations, University of Arkansas, 1974
BA -- History , The Citadel, 1968

EXPERIENCE: Miami, Florida 2003-Present

Co-Founder and President, iFONE, Incorporated, Miami, Florida (2003-Present)
Developed *portable* cellular telephone systems for military and disaster response. First company to deliver a secure cellular portable phone system for the military. Built business from ground up to establish U. S. contracts for military combat operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Chief Information Officer (CIO), Miami-Dade County, Florida (1999-2003)
Selected, after national search, as the first CIO in one of the largest municipal governments in the U.S. reporting directly to the County Manager and responsible for oversight of IT functions in all 30 County departments. Took the county from a fractured computer infrastructure wherein departments could not interface with each other to a cohesive system. Central themes were analyzing *information needs* rather than technicalities and emphasis on *citizen needs* rather than internal needs. Established the office and processes from the ground up including governance, budget, and a programmatic approach to reorganizing information technology (IT). Originated the IT Vision for the County including the e-Government program, the 311 Call Center, electronic document management, network modernization, etc., and aligned them with County business goals and objectives. Focused on teamwork and collaboration by building cross departmental working groups and management of goals and objectives to improve productivity in County functions. Addressed all IT personnel practices including recruitment, personnel development, training, promotions and resource allocations. Worked with department directors and IT managers to implement business strategies for countywide processes. From a standing start, Miami-Dade's IT initiatives were named fourth best in the United States under my watch.

BDM, International, Falls Church, VA 1997-1999

Vice President, Defense Information Systems Support (1997-1999)
Managed a Division of 92 people, at eight locations and $31 million revenue in . the Defense Department contracts, National Guard Bureau contracts, and IT outsourcing activities. Developed migration, development strategies, software and interface solutions for a variety of systems. Directed systems development and integration in support of various military commands Defense Agencies and other organizations.

US AIR FORCE (Retired in grade of Brigadier General, 1997) 1968-1997

Director of Command and Control Communications and Computer (C4) Systems, U. S. European Command, Stuttgart, Germany (1994-1997)
Managed a staff of 103 military personnel; planned and conducted communications and automation operations for all United States military and naval operations in Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa. In this position I reduced contracted headquarters automation support costs by 40%; planned and executed U.S. military communications deployments to BOSNIA, including the Joint Broadcast System, a new concept which I operationalized in this war; and, I originated and we

planned and executed the first communications interoperability exercise with eight former Warsaw Pact Nations (cited personally by the US Secretary of Defense). This was true creativity and this exercise still takes place annually, with over 20 nations participating. During BOSNIA NATO operations, I directed that commercial communications links be established *before* hostilities and this eliminated the need to deploy military personnel to perform those functions. This was a "First." I also personally convinced military leaders to use communications systems instead of on-scene intelligence staffs for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) surveillance and real-time combat intelligence. This required establishment of high speed communications from Bosnia through Europe to Nevada for unmanned aerial vehicle reconnaissance which was interpreted in the U. S for use in command posts in Bosnia and Southern Europe— Another "First," where the unmanned vehicles were flown from Nevada over targets in Bosnia which is now a standard method of operation. This eliminated the need for over a hundred personnel to deploy to the war. Worked extensively in international environment with other nations, for example, I was the U. S. Representative to the NATO Communications Committee.

Director of C4 Plans, Policy and Resources for Headquarters, US Air Force, Washington, DC (1993-1994)
Supervised Air Force plans and policy for C4 Systems; developed manpower and personnel plans for communications organizations; and, supervised Air Force C4 training curricula development. Directed Air Force budget formulation for C4. Originated the Air Force C4 2000-Strategies for force reduction and outsourcing.

Assistant Deputy Director for Unified and Specified Command Support, The Joint Staff, Washington, DC (1992-1993)
Coordinated U. S. communications support for worldwide contingencies and oversaw C4 Systems master planning and Global C4 Assessment. Responsibilities included deploying military tele-communications personnel and equipment to South Florida for recovery operations following Hurricane Andrew.

Director of Communications and Computer Systems, 9th Air Force and US Central Command Air Forces, Shaw AFB, SC (1989-1992)
Served as Chief, U. S. Air Force Communications for DESERT STORM under command of General Swartzkopf. Deployed to Saudi Arabia to manage deployment, engineering and installation and operation of telecommunications and air traffic control for 25 bases in six countries for all flying activities. Directed the wartime efforts of over 2,200 military personnel at 25 bases and supervising operations for the duration of the conflict. In this war we set up communications, RADARs and navigational aids where none existed. I had regular interaction with Middle East military, embassies and staffs across the region, from Yemen to Jordan.

Commander, 3rd Combat Communications Group, Tinker AFB, OK (1986-1988)
Commanded largest communications organization in the Air Force with 1,200 airmen and $60 million of equipment. Supervised the planning of communications, air traffic control systems, and electronic services for worldwide military operations. I restructured the organization and which became the model adopted throughout the USAF. Through Management By Objectives, led turnaround of marginal organization to receive an Excellent Operational Readiness Inspection rating and formal recognition as the Best Communications Organization in the Air Force.

Executive Assistant to the Commander of Air Force Communications Command, Scott AFB, IL (1984-1986)
This Command was responsible for all telecommunications and air traffic control responsibilities worldwide with over 700 organizations and 50,000 personnel. Conceptualized and implemented "COMBAT CHALLENGE," an Air Force tactical C4 competition.

Chief of Headquarters Air Force Programs and Budget Branch for Command and Control, Communications and Computer (C4) Systems (1982-1984)

Managed program prioritization and prepared USAF C4 Systems and personnel funding requests for the President's budget--$5.5 billion budget.

Commander, 1916th Communications Squadron, Pease AFB, NH (1980 to 1982)
Led a 200-person military organization on a bomber and tanker base with 5,000 airmen and provided communications and air traffic control services. Established goals and objectives which led the organization to receive formal award as Best Communications Squadron out of 400 in the Air Force Communications Command.

Various Air Force Assignments, (1968-1980)
Management at progressive levels in headquarters and field units in the US and Germany, Italy, Thailand

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:
International City/County Managers Association (ICMA)
District Director (Florida), The Citadel Alumni Association
Armed Forces Communications - Electronics Association
Air Force Association
Industrial College of the Armed Forces Alumni Association

AWARDS and RECOGNITION:
Air Force Communications Command Commander's Achievement Award, 1988
(Commanded Air Force Group-selected as best in USAF)
Air Force Communications Command Lance P. Sijan Leadership Award, 1982
Air Force Communications Command Commander's Achievement Award, 1982
(Commanded Air Force Squadron-selected as best in USAF)
Various Military Decorations including Legion of Merit (2), Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medals (6), Humanitarian Service Medals (2), Kuwait Liberation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medals, Outstanding Unit Awards, etc.

PUBLICATIONS: *Air Force Tactical Communications in War: The DESERT STORM /DESERT SHIELD Story*, 1991

CB & A Interviews

Buford R. "Randy" Witt

Education

Master's Degree Equivalent, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington, DC 1989
MA, International Relations, University of Arkansas, 1974
BA, History, The Citadel, 1968

Experience

Co-Founder and President, iFONE, Incorporated, Miami, FL	2003 – Present
Chief Information Officer (CIO), Miami-Dade County, FL	1999 – 2003
Vice President, Defense Information Systems Support, Falls Church, VA	1997 – 1999
US Air Force (Retired with Rank of Brigadier General)	1968 – 1997

Background

The population of Miami-Dade County is 2.1 million. The County has 30,000 employees, seven of whom reported directly to Mr. Witt. The total county budget was $5.4 billion. The three most important issues facing Mr. Witt in Miami-Dade County were:

- No overall personnel management plan: Each year employees received an automatic 5% increase and another increase for job performance. The cost of living only went up by 1.4%. No one seemed concerned about the citizen's tax bills. This issue bears some similarity to Coral Gables' pension problem.
- Lack of Coordination: The County had 30 different departments and 18 of those had their own IT divisions. Further, the departments did not communicate with one another and assets were not well managed. Many purchase orders did not go through the procurement department. Warranties were not being used. The whole process needed structure and enforcement.
- Introducing current technologies: Amazingly, when Mr. Witt arrived, the County only had 2,000 computers for its 30,000 employees. Further, many workers were not given computers while managers were often not using theirs. If a manager received an email, his secretary would print a hard copy and put it on his desk. Additionally, the County did not have a voicemail system because the manager wanted a live person to answer the phone. As a result, many calls were going unanswered. When Mr. Witt left, the County had 15,000 computers and a fully operational voicemail system.

Interview Comments:

When asked why he is interested in Coral Gables, Mr. Witt said he finds public service to be more meaningful than making money. For the most part, local governments have good people trying to do good work, but personnel and pay systems are breeding a culture of entitlement. The fact that people in Coral Gables work to support the citizens and the community appeals to Mr. Witt. The second reason for his interest is that he enjoys jobs where he is in charge. He enjoys taking an activity, understanding it completely, setting in place a strategy for

improvement, and working with dedicated people doing all they can to serve their community. Mr. Witt believes that Coral Gables would present that opportunity. After he saw the announcement for the City Manager position in Coral Gables, he attended several Commission meetings and looks forward to taking the Commission's ideas and implementing them.

Mr. Witt describes his style as management by objectives. He likes to set up goals and objectives in a collaborative way and then assign tasks to individuals in a way that permits him to measure their progress. Recognizing the achievements of others is also important. When you operate as an entity and work to get everyone focused on goals and objectives, you can really make progress. In Miami-Dade Mr. Witt came up with the idea of a centralized 311 help center. He got eight municipalities to participate and now it is a simple matter for citizens to ask any question about government, report a pot hole, or alert someone to sprinklers running all night.

Staff members would say Mr. Witt is easy to get along with and has a very relaxed style – even under pressure. He is collaborative and seeks the opinions of others. He is willing to discuss their ideas and is a good listener. He tracks performance and will not let them forget if assignments are not completed on time. He stays relaxed and does not micromanage, but does expect results. Miami-Dade Elected officials would say Mr. Witt is competent and did a good job. He reported to the County Commission regularly. He met with them all and had no problem with any of his elected officials.

In terms of strengths, Mr. Witt is goal oriented and measures performance of government management against its declared objectives. He develops strategies for real improvement and is persistent. He is disciplined in tracking progress towards goals, objectives and operating performance. He gets along well with virtually everyone. He is not a hardheaded or egotistical manager. When he interviewed for the CIO position in Miami-Dade County, he walked into the room and saw 25 people sitting around the conference table. Everyone had two scripted questions and, being a competitive kind of person, he liked the odds.

In terms of weaknesses Mr. Witt jokingly said he wishes he still had his athletic build of a 20 year old. More seriously, patience can sometime be an issue with him. He left the County because he was exasperated with the new manager. While the manager had energy and speaking ability, he also meddled in the day-today operations and was not a positive influence. After a year, Mr. Witt felt it was time to move on and announced he was leaving. However, very shortly the county manager also announced that he was leaving. Mr. Witt now realizes that had him been a little more patient, he might still be at the County. He feels it was the biggest mistake of his career. After nine years in Miami, Mr. Witt has learned that things move slower that he was used to. So, he has developed an understanding and a patience he did not have before.

Concerning his greatest achievements, Mr. Witt thought of small as well large accomplishments. He particularly enjoys recalling the period when he was in command of the Third Combat Communications Group. It had 400 trucks and 500 trailer units with air traffic control radar and navigational aids. The weather gear and all equipment were organized so the Group could rapidly deploy and be operational in barren country quickly. The process involved packing all gear into jets, flying it to the location, setting up and having it fully operational within 72 hours. Although not even a colonel at the time, the four star general sent him to command the Group, a

group which had recently only barely passed its operational inspection and was marginal at best. Mr. Witt was a little frightened by what he was stepping into. He started by redoing the training program. He had the buildings painted and built a brick wall around the compound with large metal gates. After three and a half years, the unit received the award as the best large communications unit in the area.

While firing someone is never easy, Mr. Witt does not feel bad about it. Sometimes it just has to be done. The military is a lot like local government because it is hard to terminate someone unless they break definite rules. If you lie, your employment is terminated. Mr. Witt did that once with an Air Force Academy graduate. He had been on a weight control program and was required to report in and weigh himself. Mr. Witt found out he was doctoring the records and removed him from the Air Force.

Mr. Witt feels the primary issues and challenges facing Coral Gables' next city manager are:

- Dealing with the pension fund: While Mr. Witt is not certain what the answer is, he feels a good plan will get the support of the elected officials and the problem can be fixed;
- Bargaining with unions: Everyone needs to be realistic about what is doable in the present economy. In fact, the economy provides a window to reestablish fundamental baseline agreements with the unions and re-evaluate the compensation system; and
- Managing revenues and costs: Citizens have experienced a downturn in real estate. Foreclosures are significant and overall property taxes have gone up. In the face of this situation, it will be imperative to improve efficiency within the government.

When asked about what he would do in his first six months as the City Manager, Mr. Witt said he is eager to ask the Commissioners what their goals are. After auditing a few meetings he knows they are not nearly as emotional as his previous elected officials (in the County) and seem much more stable. Specifically, Mr. Witt will:

- Visit and assess every department. He will sit down with all department heads as well as staff. He will visit every work center in every department and learn how they are operating. He would call staff together to get impressions of what is going on and where progress can be made.
- Insure all department heads are meeting their goals. For example, he will review police and fire response times, evaluate garbage pick-up and the recycling program as well as water runoff programs, etc.
- Go over new initiatives and determine how to best place the City for the future. Once the goals are established, he will form work groups which cross organizational lines. One example of the benefits of this approach occurred in the County. The building permitting process had 12 steps. As the work groups went through the process, they found several departments were duplicating efforts. Ultimately, the 12 step process was reduced to seven steps and that made a huge difference for the citizens.

The media can be tricky to handle. In the Air Force Mr. Witt went through media training. At Miami-Dade County the media sometimes called him at home. He learned that at times, the best response is, "No comment."

When asked what he does in his leisure time, Mr. Witt noted he is the newly elected District Director for a college he went to. He is now trying to get organized with goals and objectives so he can be effective. He is also the new Finance Committee Chair for his yacht club and is preparing next year's budget. He tries to go walking with his wife every morning and does his own yard work and small projects around the house. For example, he is currently putting a shade screen on a pergola.

Adjectives or Phrases to Describe Himself:

- Leader,
- People oriented,
- Process oriented,
- Goal oriented,
- Team builder, and
- Likes measurable results.

Reason for Leaving Current Position:

See the fourth full paragraph on page 2.

Most Current/Recent Salary:

$195,000 from iFONE. $220,000 with Miami-Dade County

Interviewer's Impressions:

Very capable, honest, open, articulate and conscientious. Although he held the rank of brigadier general, he is down to earth and casual. Truly motivated to serve others and can be trusted to be a good steward of the public's money.

Interviewed by:

Trissa White
Colin Baenziger & Associates

References

Merrett Stierheim - County Manager, Miami-Dade, Florida 305-255-8100

Mr. Stierheim was the manager of Miami-Dade County in 1999 when a national search was conducted to find a Chief Information Officer. Mr. Witt was selected and did an excellent job.

Miami-Dade County had over 30,000 employees in a multitude of departments, which included the airport and seaport authorities. The county computer systems could not communicate with each other. It was not an easy task to bring new technology to some departments. Mr. Witt met with a great deal of resistance but he is a consummate professional, highly competent, and a very effective leader. In short, he fixed that problem. He remained even tempered at all times and eventually was quite successful.

Mr. Witt is not the type of individual who seeks publicity. He works solely for the satisfaction of reaching target goals and running a high performance organization. He is an excellent leader and team oriented. His education is quite impressive and includes two master degrees. He is deeply ethical, has good judgment and makes good decisions.

Mr. Witt is a skilled communicator. He routinely gives two hour presentations on strategic management and technology. Everything he writes is high quality.

After Mr. Witt developed a strategic plan, he had to decide on his CIO Office staff. He did the hiring himself. He consulted with department heads and used a collaborative approach when choosing from within. The result was an outstanding team.

Mr. Witt will make an outstanding City or County Manager. He has worked with such professionals as General Norman Schwarzkopf and retired from the Air Force as a Brigadier General. Reaching that level takes intelligence and a very rare talent, and it speaks to what a truly exceptional leader Mr. Witt is.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Implicitly trustworthy,
- Responsible,
- A great example of the very best qualities of the military,
- Consummate professional,
- Strong leader, and
- Has the right motive for his hard work.

Strengths: Leader and team player who is never motivated by recognition. He is educated, ethical, and loyal.

Weaknesses: None.

Clarke Jones - Employee, IFONE Inc., Florida 786-303-7840

Mr. Jones has worked for Mr. Witt since 2007. He has gone to Afghanistan to work on several projects for the company.

IFONE is a portable communication system Mr. Witt developed. It is approximately the size of a coffin. Soldiers can carry it with them on their missions and have essential communications available. Nothing like it had ever been created before.

Mr. Witt is currently changing the entire communication system in the Kandahar Office. He is putting in a nine meter dish and giving the soldiers an internet speed of 256K with a firewall that scrambles the signal to ensure that calls are private. This new system will greatly improve the communication soldiers will be able to have with their families.

Among Mr. Witt's impressive leadership history is a position in Germany in which he ran the air force base and had over 1,000 soldiers under his command. He is regimented, structured and detail oriented. He would be the perfect fit for a City or County Manager position. He stands against all forms of corruption and has even spearheaded an unpopular campaign to abolish the automatic five percent annual pay raise in Miami-Dade County.

When doing business Mr. Witt is professional at all times. He also has a humorous personal side. He can switch between the two easily, and this ability makes him a strong manager and an enjoyable person to be around.

In meetings Mr. Witt is always to the point and speaks in such a way that he will not be misunderstood. He is calm at all times and handles stress extremely well. He has successfully dealt with types of stress in his career which vastly outweighs the stress of managing a city.

Mr. Witt has traveled all his life and has finally set down roots in Florida. Mr. Jones recommended the Coral Gables position to him. He will do an exceptional job and can move the city in whatever direction it wants to go.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Ideal candidate for city manager,
- Anti corruption,
- Structured,
- Detailed,
- Intelligent/Innovative, and
- Great leader.

Strengths: Leadership; regimented; structured; detail oriented; and intelligent.

Weaknesses: None.

Judi Zito - Employee, Miami-Dade County, Florida 305-375-5527

Ms. Zito met Mr. Witt in 1999 and worked for him until 2003 when he left the Miami-Dade County. He is a good man and she has a great deal of respect for him.

Mr. Witt is experienced and highly intelligent. He brought together people who normally would not mix. Miami-Dade County has a large number of departments, and it had been very rare for them to communicate with each other. He managed to get each department moving in the same direction and working together. He is a great communicator and always calm, even in heated situations.

Mr. Witt is an excellent leader. He knows how to motivate his team. He has high expectations for his staff but does everything in his power to help them succeed. For example, when he started he wanted the County web portal up and running within six months. Many people did not think that timeframe was possible. Mr. Witt was extremely helpful in cutting through red tape and was willingly dealt with any issue that came up. Miamidade.gov was completed on time, won several awards and is still an outstanding addition to the County.

Whenever he spoke at commission meetings, Mr. Witt was poised. He gave presentations at conferences and was always on point, with perfect composure. Most writing was done by his staff, but documents drafted by Mr. Witt were consistently well done.

One of the major projects Mr. Witt initiated was dialing 311 for local government services. He secured financing and budgeted $16 million for the project. He got inter-local agreements with Miami to have only one large call center instead of two, and this saved money. Miami-Dade is the first county jurisdiction call center to answer for two governments. Citizens can now easily call to report a pot hole or ask a question simply by dialing 311.

Mr. Witt's military background has trained him to focus on a goal and not give up. As the Chief Information Officer his focus was primarily on technology, but his leadership skills go well beyond that. Before he introduced new technologies, he first reformed the procedures which had not been working.

Ms. Zito would hire Mr. Witt without hesitation. She was sad to see him leave in 2003 and wants him get back into government and to run a city. Coral Gables would be a perfect fit.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Leadership,
- Encourages collaboration,
- Persistent in reaching goals,
- Focused,
- Respected, and
- Experienced.

Strengths: Intelligence and communication skills.

Weaknesses: None.

Sandra Mesa - Employee, Miami-Dade County, Florida 305-499-8511

Ms. Mesa worked for Mr. Witt in 2000. She truly enjoyed working for him and has remained friends with him since he left the County. When Ms. Mesa pictures his face, it is firm with a little smile that lets you know he is also fair.

Ms. Mesa has been in the technology field for 21 years and Mr. Witt was the best boss she ever had. He was fair, appropriately stern, and people oriented. He wanted everyone to collaborate, so he encouraged departments to stop fighting and work together. He frequently dealt with the press and was never an embarrassment to the County.

Ms. Mesa was mildly intimidated by Mr. Witt but had the greatest respect for him, as did her coworkers. They would do whatever he asked. He had no trouble meeting deadlines and set specific goals for his staff to help them meet theirs. He kept his focus and kept his team on task. He was very good at giving direction when it was needed. He provided a firm foundation and always looked for the best process to follow in serving the people.

Mr. Witt came into Miami-Dade County with six major goals. He put them into a booklet that Ms. Mesa still keeps as a reference. One of his projects was miamidade.gov. He initiated the process of developing the web portal which was a huge technological undertaking. It took a great deal of effort for him to convince everyone of how important it was and he got it done.

Mr. Witt functioned very well in the large organization of Miami-Dade County, which leads Ms. Mesa to believe he is more than prepared to be a City Manager. She recommends hiring him before someone else does.

Adjectives or phrases to describe Mr. Witt:

- Firm but fair,
- Focused,
- Collaborative,
- Respected,
- Intelligent, and
- Innovative.

Strengths: Ability to keep focused and on task. Provides good direction.

Weaknesses: None.

Robert O'Neill - Executive Director ICMA and former City Manager of Hampton, Virginia, 202-289-4262

Mr. O'Neill is a former Manager of Hampton, VA and has spent most his life in public service. He has not worked professionally with Mr. Witt but has known him since 1985 and remains good friends with him.

Mr. Witt understands public service ethics. He brings an analytical view, and is very methodical in his approach to issues. He lives in the Florida area and his wife has family roots there. City or county management would be perfect for him because he cares about the area both personally and professionally.

Mr. Witt has a commanding presence. He is experienced in complex organizations and has done everything possible to prepare himself for this position, including serving as a Brigadier General in the Air Force and as CIO for Miami-Dade County. He is level headed, calm, and listens very well. He is respectful of others at all times. He does have some strong views. They do not, however, blind him to others' points of view.

Mr. Witt has given presentations to many groups of CIO's. He is not only a good speaker but is also well prepared. Mr. O'Neill knows what it takes to be a good City Manager and he is extremely confident Mr. Witt would be a very find City Manager.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Thoughtful,
- Experienced,
- Great judgment,
- Ethical,
- Respectful, and
- Capable / Knowledgeable.

Strengths: Methodical and thoughtful; experienced; and knowledgeable.

Weaknesses: None.

Steve Shiver - Former Miami-Dade County Manager, Florida, sshiver@shiver.com

Mr. Shiver was the Miami-Dade County Manager and Mr. Witt was one of the most senior members of his administration. They worked together in 2001.

Mr. Witt is astute, straight forward, and a strong administrator. As the CIO, he was responsible for providing IT services to 30,000 employees. He revamped the County's web portal and won a national award. He did not seem to have a weakness, unless working extremely long hours qualifies.

One of the most significant characteristics of a strong manager is the ability to apply rules and policies. Mr. Witt is methodical and was exceptional at amending policies which did not work and enforcing ones that did. He is a great judge of character and hired personnel into the key positions in his organization. His integrity is solid and his demeanor is ideal for a governmental manager.

Mr. Witt writes well and is articulate. He spoke at County Board of Commissioners meetings and made presentations at many other functions. He is innovative and often thinks outside of the box, discarding preconceived notions that do not work for something creative that does.

In Miami-Dade County, Mr. Witt's department was larger than some entire cities. He has all the skills necessary to be one of the best City Managers in the county. He also has an untarnished reputation which he honors. Mr. Shiver highly recommends him.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Articulate,
- Efficient,
- Methodical,
- Consistent in application,
- Writes well, and
- Astute.

Strengths: Methodical and very good at applying rules and policies. Strong administrator and good judge of character.

Weaknesses: None.

Daniel Ricker - Editor, Watch Dog Report, Miami-Dade County, Florida

Mr. Ricker is the Editor for Watch Dog Report and knew Mr. Witt from 1999 to 2003. He watched him as the CIO for Miami-Dade County and he was always very solid. Mr. Ricker is currently covering the Coral Gables City Manager search and can not endorse any particular candidate, as that would constitute a conflict of interest. Without showing favoritism, Mr. Ricker can say that Mr. Witt was very good and does not have any negative comments about him.

June Randall - Chief of Police, but previously Assistant Director for Miami-Dade IT Department, 305-471-2610

Ms. Randall was hired into Miami-Dade County's IT Department in 1999 as the assistant director. Mr. Witt was a good man to work with. He was patient and got along well with everyone.

Mr. Witt has a good sense of humor and was a trusting manager with high expectations. He would share his vision then let his employees do their jobs. He followed up to ensure things were done to his standards. He was supportive of county management initiatives and helped move them forward.

Mr. Witt gave presentations to the county commissioners and did a good job. He had to give budget presentations as well. He created collaborative work groups and chaired the IT meetings. He was great at looking toward the future, beyond the day to day operations, and assessing where efforts needed to be directed.

Mr. Witt was passionate about managing and implementing new projects. He expanded projects over the IT department and had a structured approach for every step. He initiated collaboration across departments by decentralizing IT functions. He can be credited with keeping everything running smoothly and moving forward.

A Chief Information Officer is quite different from a City Manager. Mr. Witt has experience running a large operation. He has prepared budgets and managed departments, and is a very hardworking, good person. Ms. Randall does not know what it takes to be a good city manager but she knows Mr. Witt is patient, even tempered, and handles stressful situations very well.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Gets along well with others,
- Good sense of humor, calm personality,
- Supportive,
- Collaborative,
- Forward thinking, and
- Patient.

Strengths: Looking into the future to determine where things need to be headed.

Weaknesses: None.

John Meyer - Employee, CIO Office, Miami-Dade County, Florida 305-893-9897

Mr. Meyer met Mr. Witt in 2000 when he was hired to manage the finance system. Mr. Witt had found a great deal of his talent internally; however Mr. Meyer was brought in from outside the municipal organization.

Mr. Witt was a breath of fresh air for such a large county with a $7.5 billion budget. He was the first CIO and made a great number of changes while addressing complex technology needs. He did a considerable amount of analysis and unified over 60 different departments.

Police and Fire had not previously cooperated with each other. Mr. Witt created radio systems which ensured communication between them.

Everyone in the county learned a great deal from Mr. Witt. Many work groups were formed, and employees could meet electronically, as well as in person, thanks to the new technology he introduced.

Mr. Witt made good decisions when selecting employees to be part of his team. He was a good speaker and brought people together. Each month he gathered everyone together in a large assembly hall for an informational meeting. He helped everyone understand their part in working toward common goals. He spoke extemporaneously yet could still take you clearly from point A to point B.

Mr. Witt would be the first to admit the does not know everything. Because of this he surrounds himself with people across all areas of expertise. He was a fair employer and listened carefully, even when he held a different opinion. His ego never got in the way of his determination to get a job done properly.

The media interviewed Mr. Witt occasionally about spending. He attended a number of public meetings every month, and was often called to the County Commission meetings. He encouraged the press to stop by his office anytime. He was an honest, well respected representative for the County.

After Mr. Witt left the County, Mr. Meyer realized how much of a buffer he had been for his employees. He represented change and would willingly take the heat, allowing his staff to concentrate on their work. He literally had an open door policy for anyone who wished to speak with him.

Mr. Witt was one of the best executives Mr. Meyer has ever worked with. He brought Mr. Meyer on to introduce a new financial system. He fought for changes which resulted in savings of tens of millions of dollars.

Several times a week, when actions came to a head in Mr. Witt's office, you could hear everyone shout "Hooah". Another interesting phrase Mr. Witt would use was "find the bellybutton," meaning, "find the person responsible." Do not get sidetracked with someone unable to accomplish what you need. Find the right person, the bellybutton, and get it done.

Mr. Meyer would absolutely hire Mr. Witt. He is a very rare individual with outstanding character.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Honest,
- Great integrity,
- Builds effective teams,
- Represents change,

- Knowledgeable, and
- Consensus builder.

Strengths: Ability to unify and move people toward a single goal.

Weaknesses: None.

Robert Allen - Former Air Force Colonel, Currently IFONE Inc., Florida 757-876-6944

Mr. Allen has known Mr. Witt since 1982. When Mr. Witt left his position as Commander of the Air Force communications unit, Mr. Allen stepped in as the next Commander. In the first Gulf War, Mr. Allen was Mr. Witt's deputy.

Mr. Witt has the unique ability to tackle complex problems and find the key to resolving them. He is both politically and socially savvy. He defines his mission and then brings people together to complete it. Problem solving is innate to his character and he works through problems using leadership and group participation.

Mr. Witt started IFONE from nothing and ended up with a contract deal closed by Mr. Allen in Afghanistan.

Mr. Witt knows how an organization should function. He totally changed the philosophy of how things were done in Miami-Dade County. He recognizes a need, defines the means for responding to it, and solicits the tools needed to achieve success.

Mr. Witt's greatest strengths are his integrity and honesty. He sets the standard higher than people think is possible. He pushes people to be better. Whether it is general environmental responsibility or another specific priority in a community, he reaches far beyond the standard.

Becoming a Brigadier General in the Air Force is a very rare honor. Mr. Witt did not earn that title by being a dictator. He earned it through his accomplishments which were based on his ability to plan, organize and direct. He is very good at controlling his resources and finding additional resources when necessary. He is a persuasive speaker and taught a government communications course at a local college while working in Miami-Dade County.

The final Air Force report on Desert Storm and Desert Shield ended up being written by Mr. Witt. He received favorable comments from those who received it. There have been times Mr. Allen has disagreed with him, but Mr. Witt had the final decision. Afterwards, Mr. Allen realized that Mr. Witt had taken more into consideration than he had.

Mr. Witt sees things from a higher plane than most people and sees things others do not. If he asks you to do something, just tell him what you need. He will provide with the resources to succeed. He never berates people. He prefers group efforts, but if someone is not able to keep up, he moves them out of the way so others can move forward.

REFERENCE NOTES
RANDY WITT

Mr. Witt is very passionate about the local government. He serves on several panels to improve local and regional issues, particularly where communications and construction are involved. He is not bashful about pointing out areas of weakness or concern.

The family of Mr. Witt's wife is well known in the area and has been able to help Miami-Dade County improve living conditions. Mr. Witt can work successfully for any Mayor or Commission. He will work hard for the citizens and develop an organization which supports what the Commission feels is best. There is no one better for the job.

Adjectives or phrases that describe Mr. Witt:

- Personable,
- Purpose driven,
- Mission oriented,
- Congenial,
- Politically and socially savvy, and
- Problem solver.

Strengths: Integrity and honesty.

Weaknesses: None.

Prepared by:

Trissa White
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Background Checks

Background Check Summary for
BUFORD RANDOLPH "RANDY" WITT

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Miami-Dade County, FL	No Records Found
Fairfax County, VA	No Records Found
State	
Florida	No Records Found
Virginia	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Sarasota County, FL	No Records Found
Fairfax County, VA	No Records Found
Federal	
Florida	No Records Found
Virginia	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle	
Florida	No Records Found
Credit	Very Good
Bankruptcy	No Records Found
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed

Internet Research

The Miami Herald
June 13, 2003

PAYOUTS FOR AIDES OF SHIVER DENIED
Author: *KARL ROSS, kross@herald.com*

In his first move as county manager, George Burgess on Thursday undid the final actions of his predecessor by nixing severance packages to former manager Steve Shiver's closest sidekicks at County Hall.

Amid the hubbub of his resignation last Friday, Shiver authorized 90 days of paid leave to his former chief of staff, Thomas David, and for David's assistant, Christopher Hebert. Both turned in letters of resignation that day. ``It is my conclusion that these last-minute personnel actions are not in the county's best interest," Burgess states in a memorandum. ``I am therefore officially rescinding these actions." The move saves the county more than $101,000 in salary and benefits, officials said.

In an e-mail to The Herald, the mayor's chief of staff, Javier Soto, referred to Shiver's 11th-hour action as the ``June 6 piñata" - a metaphor for official largess derived from a Mexican children's custom.

ANGRY PENELAS MEMO

Earlier this week, Penelas indicated in a memo to then-acting County Manager Alina Tejeda Hudak that he felt Shiver had gone back on his word by authorizing costly concessions to David, Hebert and others.

According to the mayor's office, Burgess' memo also negates healthcare benefits that Shiver awarded that day to Donald Allen, the county's personnel director, and **Randy Witt**, who recently resigned his post as chief information officer.

Shiver was on a family vacation Thursday and could not be reached for comment.

In a separate action, Penelas has rejected Shiver's request for continued healthcare coverage for himself and his family until he reaches retirement age. Soto said the benefits, adjusted for inflation, could have cost the county millions for Shiver, who is 37.

Soto said the mayor has instead decided to give Shiver one year's pay as severance - the maximum allowed under his contract. Shiver will not be allowed, however, to collect unpaid annual leave.

HALF PREDECESSOR'S

Soto said Shiver's total payout would likely be in the mid-$200,000 range - less than half of the $550,000 in severance awarded to his predecessor, Merrett Stierheim. Unlike Shiver's, Stierheim's contract included annual leave, he said. Penelas appointed Shiver in early 2001 and has final say over his compensation.

For regular county employees, decisions about paid leave and other benefits are usually left to the discretion of county agency heads. For David and Hebert, that would fall to Shiver as head of the county manager's office.

Burgess could, if he chooses, award lesser severance packages to David and Hebert - but that's unlikely, a county spokeswoman said. ``He's rescinded it," said Aimee Artiles, the county's media relations manager. ``So he's basically saying, `You don't get anything.' " Burgess was in meetings late Thursday and couldn't be reached for comment.

LAST DAY MOVED UP

David, whose last day was slated for June 30, earned $166,649 a year. However, he made his resignation effective Thursday after learning the county was unlikely to honor his agreement with Shiver.

Reached at home, David expressed disappointment but said: ``I've tried to be honorable in this thing, and I'll continue to do so."

Hebert earns $83,940 as an assistant manager. His hiring raised hackles because of his lack of government experience and a 10-year-old misdemeanor theft charge. He previously worked in Shiver's real estate office.

Burgess' memo not only revoked Hebert's paid leave, it also revoked his resignation, Soto said. Hebert had been attempting to find a job elsewhere in county government, but one such transfer was blocked in the wake of Shiver's resignation, sources said.

The Miami Herald
February 27, 2002

SHIVER ADMITS `ERRORS' IN DEAL
Author: *KARL ROSS, kross@herald.com*

A squabble over a $7 million software purchase resurfaced Tuesday as County Manager Steve Shiver - publicly addressing the issue for the first time in more than six months - took responsibility for ``errors" in the deal, since scrapped.

At the same time, officials announced Shiver had been cleared of any misconduct by the Commission on Ethics and Public Trust, which investigated the matter. ``They said they didn't find a smoking gun," Assistant County Manager George Burgess said.

Shiver told county commissioners he did select Oracle as a software provider against the recommendation of a panel led by the county's chief information officer, **Randy Witt**, which preferred the firm PeopleSoft. Shiver noted Oracle was less expensive.

The county's top procurement official, Ted Lucas, also took responsibility for what he called an ``inadvertent error" by his staff in improperly placing the software purchase on the July 24, 2001, commission agenda.

Shiver asked commissioners for permission to put the software purchase out for a competitive bid, as opposed to the prior no-bid process. Inspector General Christopher Mazzella was not at the meeting, but said his office approves of the action. He said his investigators will issue a report.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
October 23, 2000

MIAMI'S OMNI MALL RETURNING - AS TELECOM HUB
Author: *BEA GARCIA, bgarcia@herald.com*

Turning the Omni International Mall, the once fabled shopping mall that ruled downtown Miami in the late 1970s and early 80s, into a telecom colocation facility is easier said than done, as developer Ed Penson is finding out.

Not that Argent Ventures, the New York real estate company his son Andrew runs as chairman, hasn't handled singular conversions before. It has turned an aged pasta factory in Jersey City, N.J., and an abandoned meat market in Boston into telco hotels as they are known in the industry.

In Fort Lauderdale last November, Argent began converting an old BellSouth central office at 115 NE Third Ave. Penson says leases are out for ``virtually all of the space."

Since the banner went up on the south side of the Omni building about a month ago, announcing that Argent was looking for tenants, there have been many inquiries. But no one has signed on the dotted line. Argent has put between $40 and $50 million into the Omni property so far, including more than $30 million to acquire the structure.

In the three months since the deal was closed, work crews have been busy with demolition. The work is tricky, because the mall shares some systems with the Wyndham Hotel, which is built into the complex. The first floor of the old mall is now one giant open space. Gone are the walls that once separated shops, escalators, the food court and the carousel that provided rides for $1 to big and little shoppers. The multicolored tile that stretched through the corridors of the mall is barely visible under the dust of the demolition. The space once occupied by J.C. Penney and Burdines is now an empty shell. And there's a lot of empty space here to lease - a total of 1.2 million square feet. The space once occupied by the original Jordan Marsh, later converted to a Burdines, is 400,000 square feet.

Penson has discovered that the market has changed somewhat since he first considered buying the Omni about a year ago. He took title in early June. He realizes the big telecom tenants, who want 250,000 square feet, have already found a place to settle. Also, there's competition now from other that space is being outfitted to accept telecom tenants. ``There's demand out there. But it won't rush in, it will trickle in," Penson says. Many inquiries have been made about retail, office or living space.

The vital signs still look good for this sector of the real estate market, says Tom Dean, a managing director with Cushman & Wakefield of Florida. ``But we don't know when the wave will crest."

Still, Argent Ventures, which made a fortune in the 1990s buying properties or mortgages from owners in need of cash, then redeveloping them and making money as the value soared, is optimistic the Omni project eventually will succeed.

Penson is going forward with his plans to convert the entire mall into a telecom/technology hub, with retail space on the street level. Next month, the Downtown Development Authority will put up banners advertising the Omni Technology Center. But Penson says he's also be flexible, depending on what the market demands. He'd like to hand over space to the first tenant by year-end and have all the space leased in 18 months to two years.

UP FOR SALE

The state of Florida is considering selling some of its most precious ``real estate'' - banner ads on some of the state agency websites - to advertisers. Turns out Miami-Dade County is thinking along the same lines. The county has talked to an agency that specializes in such ads.

B.R. ``Randy'' Witt**, the county's chief information officer, says website advertising might be discussed at the November meeting of the county's committee on efficiency in competition. ``It's possible then we'll obtain county commissioner approval,'' **Witt said.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
September 18, 2000

GOVERNMENT JUST A MOUSE CLICK AWAY
Author: *CHARLES SAVAGE, csavage@herald.com*

Death to bureaucracy!

From Miami-Dade to Broward, the revolution will be computerized: never again the hunt for the elusive downtown parking space, the interminable wait in line, and the rebuke from a listless clerk that credit cards are not acceptable or that this is the wrong window.

This is the promise of ``e-government," which is bringing the lessons of Internet-based business transactions to the public sector. South Florida counties are investing millions to bring their services online. ``It's an evolution in the way we think and conduct government business," said Broward County Administrator Roger Desjarlais. ``We've become a society that has come to expect instant service. If you can buy an automobile online, why can't you pay a parking ticket there?"

Coming soon to your computer screen: the ability to pay property taxes, water bills, parking tickets and traffic fines; apply for occupational, hunting, fishing and marriage permits; order birth, death and marriage certificates; retrieve court files; renew driver's licenses and auto tags; and, someday, vote.

Randy Witt, Miami-Dade's chief information officer, is one of the standard-bearers of the movement. The county's challenge: finding a way to let Web servers talk to Miami-Dade's antique core computer systems that have been storing public-record data since the late 1970s.
``It's very expensive to take all this data and transform it into more usable and modern terms," **Witt** said. ``One of the goals in our vision - which is out there on the horizon - is possibly creating an e-government center for South Florida. If we develop a parking-ticket payment center, we could combine resources and create one for all three counties" - Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach.

GOING IT ALONE

But **Witt** cautions that standardization still is years away. For now, each government is building mostly its own unique system. Within four months, Miami-Dade plans to launch its first three services: parking-ticket payment, occupational licenses and renewals, and forms requesting government services.

Broward is a little further along. On July 1, the county became the first government in the nation to record a ``paperless" mortgage loan, reducing a 45-day process to three hours. By November, the county hopes to have residents paying their property tax and water and sewage bills online

with a credit card. An e-government task force is conducting a survey on www.broward.org about which services to build next.

Broward Clerk of Courts Ed Kennedy has made e-government a priority since Gov. Jeb Bush appointed him to replace the late Robert Lockwood in February. While reorganizing the office staff, Kennedy created the position of deputy chief for technologies, now filled by Brian Levy.

TRAFFIC TICKETS

For years, the court's antiquated dial-up information system has frustrated those who depend on it. Kennedy and Levy hired Andersen Consulting to bring it onto the Web in a user-friendly mode by October. By Thanksgiving, traffic tickets will be payable there, too. ``We will also offer a premium service where you can do a lot more than simple search,'' Levy said. ``Suppose you wanted to know how many adjudications of `guilty' judge so-and-so performed in the last six months. If we have the data, you can query it. Of course, you could have done this before if you came in, but it would take hours or days to gather it.''

Kennedy's second phase, he said, is less than five years away: the fully paperless courthouse, in which files will be available as images and people will be able to call up templates for motions and file them online. He said his office hopes to learn from the system developed under Miami-Dade Clerk of Courts Harvey Ruvin, who has been working with Andersen for six years to create a paperless traffic court system that came online in June.

Within 4 months, Miami-Dade plans to launch its first three services. ``We're going to share with Dade our Internet process, and they are sharing with us their traffic court system,'' Kennedy said. ``Over time, we'll be on the same wavelength. We're beginning a dialogue with Palm Beach to do the same.''

Ruvin said his $18 million system in Miami-Dade, Simultaneous Paperless Image Retrieval of Information Technology, is being looked at by other cities as well. ``If you look step by step, it is the first comprehensive optical imaging solution for an entire court process in the world,'' Ruvin said.

Translated, that means it converts mountains of documents into electronic scans that can be retrieved at will over a computer network. It also eliminates the need for some documents to exist. ``We have a proprietary interest in it, and we want to market it, not just in Florida,'' Ruvin said. ``Chicago and Atlanta are both actively interested.''

No longer having to move stacks of traffic court paper around has substantially reduced the need to pay for workers, Ruvin said. The traffic division has gone from 300 to 210 positions. But no one has been laid off; workers have been retrained or lost through attrition.

The national transformation to a true ``e-government'' in major cities likely will take at least six years because of funding problems and interagency turf battles, argues Jeremy Sherrard, an analyst for Cambridge-based Forrester Research, in a recent report. ``Right now, everything

government is doing is really a restatement of an existing process, which is easy: I go wait in line at the DMV, or I click on [the Department of Motor Vehicles website]," Sherrard said. ``The next level is more integration. What's going to start reducing bureaucracy is when government starts to reorganize itself to reflect its Net services."

Sherrard thinks the user-friendly service model of a Web page will teach government to abandon structuring itself according to what bureaucrats do, such as having some permits issued by building and zoning and others by an occupational office. Instead, it would collect all its customer-service activities into a single one-stop agency.

Broward Finance Director Phil Allen, who oversees the county Office of Information Technology, hopes the changes will bolster democracy. ``E-government really is a reinvention of government," Allen said. ``With the technology now available, we are in a place to redefine how we accept public input into the decision process." Soon, Allen says, the county will be able to abandon the public-forum process - when citizens have to adjust their schedules to the commission's convenience to be heard on an issue - for online forums.

And Ruvin thinks downloadable video of commission meetings, with each segment keyed to the agenda item being discussed, is just two or three years away.

`DIGITAL DIVIDE'

But planners must be careful that the ``digital divide"' - the division between those who have access to the Web and typically older or poorer residents who do not - does not disenfranchise people, Allen said. ``We are on our guard to make sure the way we provide services through the Net is not exclusionary," he said. ``So that is where you push public access in libraries, which exists already, and in other places."

In the more distant future - the kind measured in years, not months - Ruvin said the next generation of technology will ``empower the public to use the public record in ways we can't even imagine today." ``I was a county commissioner for 20 years, and people often will say to me, `Don't you miss that? There you were in the middle of all those sexy, important issues,' " Ruvin said. ``And it brings a smile to my face because I think I'm where the action is now. All this technology is for the first time available. ``It's the frontier, and I think it's very exciting to be part of a frontier."

`E-GOVERNMENT' TIMETABLE FOR SOUTH FLORIDA

South Florida is investing millions to bring ``e-government," online government business transactions, to the public. Here are some key dates in the establishment of ``e-government" services in Miami-Dade and Broward counties:

* By October, Broward Clerk of Courts Ed Kennedy hopes to bring the court's antiquated dial-up information system onto the Web.

* By Thanksgiving, Broward traffic tickets will be payable there, too.

* In the next five years, Kennedy hopes to have a fully paperless courthouse, in which files will be available as images and people will be able to call up templates for motions and file them online.

* In June, Miami-Dade's paperless traffic court system came online.

* Within four months, Miami-Dade plans to launch its first three services: parking ticket payment, occupational licenses and renewals, and customer service request forms. Broward has established an e-government task force to study which online services to build next.

Click on www.broward.org to participate in the task force survey.

Miami Herald, The (FL)
July 21, 1999

County manager adds new staff
Author: *Herald Staff*

Miami-Dade County Manager Merrett Stierheim announced two additions this week to his senior staff at County Hall.

B.R. ``Randy'' Witt was hired as chief information officer, a new position paying $145,000. **Witt**, 53, will be responsible for computer technology and security in county government. The retired Air Force brigadier general was director of defense information systems support at TRW Inc. in Falls Church, Va.

``He will be like a senior technology assistant, reporting directly to me, working with the budget office," Stierheim said. ``This is a trend that has been going on in private industry for years."

Stierheim also named Corinne Brody as director of the Office of Performance Improvement, a new office designed to promote efficiency in government. Brody also will work with the county's Efficiency and Competition Commission. ``Corinne is exceptionally bright," Stierheim said. ``She will be working closely with the budget office but also with my office." Brody, 40, joined the county in 1990. She was deputy director of the Department of Audit and Management Services. Brody earns $100,000 a year.

Current Salaries

Candidate Salaries

The following are the base salaries that the semi-finalist candidates gave to us. Although salary is always a consideration, we recommend that it not be the determining factor. A highly qualified candidate may warrant a higher salary. That individual may well save the City several times the difference in salary by making better decisions.

You should also know that we have discussed the salary with each of the candidates and they are prepared to accept a salary within the advertised salary range.

Candidate	Current / Most Recent Salary
Julio Avael	$ 142 ,000
Steven Crowell	168,000
David Frasher	154,000
Ronald McLemore	144,000
Robert Ruano	139,000
Patrick Salerno	220,000
Larry Spring	180,000
John Wesley White	208,000
Buford Randy Witt	195,000