

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting

Agenda Item F-4

February 10, 2009

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Maria Anderson

Commissioner Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.

Commissioner Wayne “Chip” Withers

City Staff

Interim City Manager, Maria Alberro Jimenez

City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

City Clerk Staff, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Colin Baenziger, Colin Baenziger and Associates

F-4 [Start: 11:23:12 a.m.]

Discussion concerning narrowing the list of City Manager candidates and setting forth the interview process. Commission As-a-Whole

Mayor Slesnick: F-4 – this is concerning the proposed list of City Manager candidates, and we are going to, come on up Colin; we are going to wait until Mr. Cabrera gets in the room though. Colin welcome back, why don't you start us off.

Mr. Baenziger: Good morning.

Mayor Slesnick: And make sure you pull that right so it faces your mouth.

Mr. Baenziger: OK. Colin Baenziger, Colin Baenziger and Associates, and as everyone is aware, I'm sure; my firm was retained to assist the City in finding its next City Manager. I wanted to just go through briefly what we've done for the benefit of the public, and then we can discuss how we go forward in terms of selection of candidates to interview. Essentially, in mid to late November, I met with each of the City Commissioners and the Mayor, and the goal was to obtain some guidelines in terms of what kind of people the City was looking for. Some of those guidelines were high level management experience, expertise and skill; exceptional interpersonal skills; high degree of professionalism, honesty and integrity; track record of achievements; strong financial skills; there was a preference for Florida and southeast Florida, in particular experience; union experience and experience working in a ethically and cultural diverse community. We reached out to some nine thousand local government professionals, and having said that there is only about four thousand or few less than that, City Managers in the country, of

those many are small cities and such. So when all is said and done, your field of qualified candidates – well qualified candidates – qualified candidates is not quite as broad as one might think. There is probably, according to the ICMA, less than four hundred (400) cities with populations over fifty thousand that have some City Manager form of government. We did reach out to those; we looked at both traditional and non traditional candidates. When we got our candidates back, what we did in our screening process was to measure those candidates against the criteria for the ideal candidate that was given to us by the City Commission, with an emphasis on managerial ability and experience. All candidates are kind of a mix of knowledge, skill, abilities and experience. Very few are going to meet the criteria of an ideal candidate; although we do have a few here in this group that are very, very close. We received applications from ninety-one applicants, having done local government recruiting before for the last ten years basically, we were familiar with many of these candidates. In fact, eighteen of the ninety-one we had presented to other cities at various times in the past as semi-finalists. That doesn't necessarily mean they are good candidates for Coral Gables, it just means that we knew them fairly well because we have worked with them in the past. Of those we selected, eight that we thought should be reviewed further. We also selected nine candidates with whom we not familiar, except to the degree that we had talked with them during the recruitment process, we've seen their resumes, so on, and so forth. We could have selected others; there were quite a few very, very good candidates; it was a strong pool, very strong pool, and the problem became of course that we had to get this down to a manageable number; we can't deal with thirty candidates, and we can't recommend thirty candidates to you. So we picked the ones that we thought looked like the best fit. Seventeen were selected; of those seventeen four were women, and three represented minority groups. Upon further review we ended up, we ended up recommending nine candidates for the City Commission to consider further. Those candidates are **Julio Arael** who was the City Manager in Key West and the longest serving Manager in Key West in recent memory; he has over fifteen years of experience as a City Manager, and just to survive in Key West that long, I think he was there eleven years, is a major achievement, it's a very difficult place to manage; and I would add that you have to be very careful when you read the newspapers down there because if they like you, you are fine, and if they don't like you there are problems. Our second candidate was **Steven Crowell**; Steve has over twenty years experience as a City Manager in three states, and we like to see people that have managed in more than one state, simply because it gives them a different perspective than someone say, who has been in only one city, or only one state. He is currently the City Manager in North Port, population 54,000; very fast growing community, before that he was the City Manager in Greenwood Village, Colorado, for eleven years. Greenwood Village is a mixed use community outside Denver with a number of Fortune 500 headquarters, median incomes of over one hundred and fifteen thousand dollars household income; he is very creative and a strong candidate. Now having said that, there was an incident yesterday in his office, we were notified last night at around 8:30 p.m., involving a resident who had come in to complain about his roads; and I guess the discussion became somewhat heated; after the resident left he went over to the Police Department and alleged that Mr. Crowell had pushed him, that's totally out of character with what we have found in his background, and its also something absolutely that Mr. Crowell denies; however, I notified the council last night by e-mail and tried to reach each of you this morning; however, it is something I think you need to be aware of. **David Frasher** is our next candidate; David started his career as a City Manager a little bit late. He started out as a Police Officer, and then went to law school, and then practiced law for a short period before becoming a

City Manager; he's been a Manager in three states, in three different cities; he gets along well with people, with his liked officials in the public, he is exceptionally perceptive, he has an advantage in that he has been a Police Officer and union member and a Manager, so he sees both sides of the equation, of course his legal background is important, impressive, and he has a high degree of integrity. One of the things that we found impressive was that he's not afraid to put his career on the line for what's best for the city; does so appropriately, in an appropriate manner and at times when it is appropriate. **Robert Ruano** is a Coral Gables resident, eighteen years experience in the public and private sector; Executive Director of Regis House; and we found Robert to have excellent management instincts; he's a little bit of a non traditional candidate because he has not spent his career primarily in local government, but we wanted to reach out to him. Our next candidate was **Patrick Salerno**; Patrick has been a City or County Manager in two different states. His most recent position was the City Manager of Sunrise, Florida, where he was there for seventeen years, and during that period Sunrise evolved from a largely residential City, kind of out west in Broward County into one of Broward County's commercial hubs, its actually one of the very few, if there are very many others that are not on the coast in Broward County at least, that have high rise condominiums. He has experience with dealing with developers and with the development industry, and in fact was the City Manager when Wayne Heizinger did the, I guess it's now called the developed land extender or something like that, where the Florida Marlins....**Larry Spring**, we are getting very close to the end here; Larry Spring is essentially an Assistant City Manager in the City of Miami; he has a mixture of public and private sector experience with heavy concentration on banking. He has remarkable financial and people's skills; he's a skilled negotiator; worked closely with elected officials both in the City Government and County Government. One of the deals that he has been very deeply involved in is this new proposed stadium for the Florida Marlins. **John Wesley White** is a long time City and County Manager; he's done in Maryland and Florida, in fact was the City Manager of Sarasota, Florida, excuse me, the County Manager of Sarasota County for approximately ten years; essentially took Sarasota County from...professionalized the government and made it what it is today; he was succeeded by Jim Lay who is also a very good Manager. Our last candidate is **Randy Witt**; Randy again is a non traditional candidate, very strong track record; he retired from the Army as a Brigadier General, not that many of those running around; he also served as the Chief Information Officer from Miami-Dade County; he's been a successful business man; someone that, I guess, doesn't take public service for granted, he wants the best for the residents, and he wants his government to be the best; he has a track record for instituting change. Those are our suggested candidates. As I said there were many others we could have considered, it just became a question of us evaluating the candidates and trying to determine who best fit the criteria we were given. As I've said, we have presented some of these other candidates in other cities, and quite comfortably, it's just a matter of whom do we feel is best for Coral Gables? What I'd like to do is to give you each a ballot with the nine names on it, and have you check off the candidates you would like to interview. We normally recommend five, it could be less; it's really important that you select the ones you feel comfortable interviewing. Then we can tally it up and discuss what we do going forward; we can end up with three candidates, we can end up with four, we can end up with five. Of course obviously I've been doing all the talking, and I'm sure the Commission has some comments.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I have a couple quick, quick comments. So of the one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine candidates, how many of these have you seen before of the nine?

Mr. Baenziger: Of the nine, we've seen four of the nine; five are new to us.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: A lot of times its tough to look at resumes and determine their capabilities, first let me mention that. My question to you is when you selected these nine or actually when you got the ninety applicants, refresh my memory, were those responses to an add?- were those actually you reaching out and trying to bring people in that would be good for the City of Coral Gables?- or how was the methodology done that you secured these candidates?

Mr. Baenziger: It was some of both.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Some of both.

Mr. Baenziger: In other words we did have a recruiting material, as I said we e-mailed to nine thousand people, and then we did also reach out to people. The trick or once you try to do in this business is create a buzz in the industry about a particular job, and why it's a good job, and you try and entice people to apply. Obviously I can't reach everybody in the country by telephone, but I can reach some, and some that I think are good candidates, and we identify those for network.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: The follow up question, one more follow up question is that some of these, a good majority of these candidates are outside the Dade County core, certainly a majority are.

Commissioner Cabrera: Seven out of nine.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Seven out of nine. When you decided on bringing their names forward, I'm sure that you had a conversation with them to make sure that they would be able to govern in Dade County, which is a unique County with regards to the rest of the State and maybe in the country.

Commissioner Anderson: Very unique.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Very, very unique; and I just want to make sure that you had that conversation with them and vetted them as much as possible with regards to location they would be going to.

Mr. Baenziger: Yes, I have.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Do you want us to ask specific questions about these candidates?- do you want us to vote?- or how do you...

Commissioner Cabrera: It's our decision process; can we talk about this first, the five of us?

Commissioner Anderson: I would like that.

Commissioner Cabrera: We can't discuss this outside of these chambers, so I'm more interested in getting you all perception on the nine candidates just in generality, if you don't feel like talking that's fine, but I'm going to speak my mind.

Commissioner Anderson: I'm happy to share.

Commissioner Cabrera: Do you want to start?

Commissioner Anderson: No, go right ahead, go for it.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well, no, no, I'm interested in hearing you all, is that all right with you Mr. Mayor if I just ask the Commission how they feel?

Mayor Slesnick: Absolutely.

Commissioner Cabrera: I'm interested in hearing what you all...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I'll go ahead and start if I may do so. I went through the candidates and I found maybe two or three that I would like to interview from the candidates that were selected. Now, I don't know, having not done this in a while, matter of fact since we hired Mr. Brown, I don't know if that's a good list of candidates, if you have two or three candidates out of the nine, is that something traditional or should we have more candidates to select from?- I mean, I don't know, but I have two or three names that I would feel comfortable interviewing for the City Manager's position. By the way let me just add, should these candidates, should we decide to interview, should we move forward on that, and should we not end up making a decision on any of these candidates, I have no problems, like I said before, putting it back out and looking for the right candidate should it not be in this nine.

Commissioner Withers: Colin, maybe you can help me out on this. You asked each of us to list the four-five characteristics that we would like to see in the new, and I assume you put that in some kind of grid. I know what I asked, and I don't know what the rest of the Commission asked, but I had a pretty good feeling where we were headed. How did you evaluate these candidates with that grid because some of those real characteristics, I only see a couple where the financial strength was real important?

Commissioner Cabrera: By the way, I said that too.

Commissioner Withers: And I don't know if these folks were graded on...I don't see that matrix that you might have put together in putting base criteria for some of these candidates. So maybe that will come out in the interview process, so maybe you can expound. Usually, I guess, when the City does a bid, we have a nice table with matrix and we show the committee on how they evaluate, and they give them a one or a ten, and they evaluate them on price, experience, dah, dah, dah; was there any kind of exercise that you went through and can you share that grid with us?

Mr. Baenziger: We did not do a specific grid. We did talk with each of the candidates, we went through the criteria with them and we were comfortable and not every candidate is going to meet every criterion exactly one hundred percent, but we are very comfortable with these candidates meet the criteria quite well.

Commissioner Withers: I saw in here you had a set of questions. So I'm assuming that these are just basically boilerplate questions that City Managers are asked?

Mr. Baenziger: Those are actually questions that we suggest that you may want to select from when you do your interviews; we didn't ask every candidate all of those questions.

Commissioner Withers: So were there a series of questions based on what our requirements were, what our hopes were, were there questions fashioned to each candidate based on those...I guess what I'm saying is, you know, this looks like a group of folks whose resumes were impressive, but without any real, and I'm not trying to thwart the process here, but I really didn't see where the basic questions that I had were asked to the candidates in order to evaluate them, and I don't know how the rest of the folks felt. Some of these are pretty impressive people, but I know that we wanted to see South Florida political experience; we wanted to see previous legislative experience as far as working as a City Manager or Assistant City Manager, and some of these candidates don't have that, and I was just wondering how they met the grade in lieu of those requirements?

Mr. Baenziger: I would say that there are other factors that we weighed and decided that they outweighed the fact that they were, that they didn't have the specific things that you were...again, its kind of a mish-mash; everybody has different qualities and characteristics and sometimes, I guess, I got a little bit of a mixed message in terms of South Florida experience. I know that it was important to some of you, but some of you indicated that perhaps it wasn't important. So, for the majority I think they have some experience in South Florida, whether it may not be as a Manager.

Commissioner Withers: Well, you know, that wasn't a strong requirement for me, but I know that others expressed it; but I guess, you know, to sum it up what I'm saying is I'm prepared to provide you with a list of five folks that you can evaluate and bring back, but I would hate to say at the end of the day after wasting their time and wasting the Commission's time that I might not feel comfortable with any of those five candidates after the interview process, but I mean I don't know how the rest of you feel; do you feel like these five are the list we have to pick from, or do you feel that we have to send it back out again?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I think this is what we start with and then we make a decision because I'm ready...

Commissioner Anderson: Here's my thought process on that, if I might?

Commissioner Withers: Did I respond, Ralph.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes you did, I really appreciate that, I really appreciate that.

Commissioner Anderson: I'm sure from what I understand from staff is that we all were pretty much in the ballpark as far as the quality, and I don't know what you all said, but one of the things that I was looking for was person of impeccable integrity, and even the perception of integrity; and I'm sure many of these qualify for, but I found that a couple of these candidates that already came with some baggage, whether it was true or not, and at this point in my existence here in the Commission, I didn't want anybody that had anything written about them that might even consider improper.

Mayor Slesnick: Well, Maria based on that though you and I would not qualify for election.

LAUGHTER

Commissioner Anderson: No, but you know, listen, I have no way of gauging....I know our situation, I know we are totally incompetent and "nincompoops", and we obviously don't know where we are coming from, but that being aside, I don't know the sources as well only what I read, so if its yellow journalism so be it, but I got to rely on what I read; and I also had another process that I went through; there is a resident in our City who used to hire City Managers, and used to train City Managers in California at a university; and he went through the list and he felt that there was some that were very qualified for other positions like financial positions and things like that, that was his opinion, he gave me his opinion; I like Chip, am not ready to make any of those five choices now, I think that...I'm not comfortable with all of them; I like some of them for their financial background, Mr. Spring had wonderful credentials, but I'm not sure....

Commissioner Withers: I'm prepared to turn five names in, if we are supposed to evaluate and turn in five names, but I certainly want to reserve the right that, that is not going to be the list that we are obligated to choose from, I just want to make sure we all...and we might start all over again with some other folks.

Commissioner Cabrera: I was very interested, thank you, I was very interested in getting you all perceptions of this...Oh I thought you were going to go last since you are the Mayor.

Mayor Slesnick: No, you are the one that asked.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK, go ahead; I'd love to hear from you. I just thought you were going to reserve the right to go last, that's all, I was respectful.

Mayor Slesnick: I was trying to be respectful of your request.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well, we are both very respectful of each other. It's an election year.

Mayor Slesnick: I'm ready to move forward on the list; I, like Vice Mayor Kerdyk, found several names that I think are very good and very qualified. First of all on this list, I really only know one person, I've met one person, two people; I met two people and know one person, and obviously they are all South Florida people. There are probably other people out there that may also be good, but looking at the list, I thought that some of these people deserve an interview, and if we don't find someone that we can concur after that stage, then we move back; there is

always someone else out there, is what I'm saying, there is always someone else out there, but I'm not pushing anyone, so I'm just saying I can move forward interview some of these people, and I think they would be worthwhile to interview.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Can I just say one more thing?

Commissioner Cabrera: You can say whatever you like.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Well, when I initially got the package, my thought was just go back out again and get some more names to add to the few that I had, but the more I thought it through, I thought maybe I'd like to interview the two or three people that I thought were very well qualified and then make the decision similar to what Chip said. If there is a person in there that I thought is capable of governing the City of Coral Gables, then at that point we at least had an interview and we can make that decision, if there is not we send it back out. So my initial blush was one thing, and then when I thought it through and looked through the resumes a little bit more and made my phone calls, then I thought may be you know, it would be prudent to go ahead and do the interviews, that's my methodology.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well, I've got to tell you, I'm trying to evaluate this as a kind of performance feedback session; and when I used to have folks that worked for me, I used to always ask them how they think they did on a task or project; and I always ask them to give me a number from one to ten, ten being the highest, one being the lowest, and then from their we would be able to gauge each other's performance feedback. If I were to give feedback on this exercise, I'd give it a five. Now, I would not give it a five because of lack of energy and good work by Mr. Baenziger and his team, I'd just look at it as a five because of the list we have to work with; and so I am like you, I am running into an issue where I only have two people, I had three yesterday, I have two today, that I would be willing to interview for this job, and knowing that we had eighty-seven applicants, knowing that we did a national search, and now seeing a list of all the applicants that the City Manager's office was able to obtain for all of us, you know, I come away somewhat disappointed with the group that I have to chose from because I am not, unfortunately Don, I am not prepared to give you five names; the best that I can do is give you two, and I think from what I heard Commissioner Anderson say, she feels like maybe two, and from what I hear Vice Mayor Kerdyk say, I think he may have two and/or three, and you and Chip have five, Commissioner Withers.

Commissioner Withers: I can give you five; I don't have five that I would want to interview.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well, I can give you five too, but I don't have five.

Mayor Slesnick: Fine, let's see if we can agree on two names or three names to interview, if we don't like them we move on.

Commissioner Cabrera: Let me just say, OK, that's fair, that's fair; but let me just say that of the two names I'm not ready to move on, I hate to embarrass anyone in this room, but in many ways I looked at past Managers and current Interim City Manager and used them as benchmarks, and I have to say that some of these folks would have a difficult time beating out the current Interim

City Manager, that's how strongly I feel about this process. So I'm grappling with it and I'd like the rest of you, because I know the five of us dissected that very thick binder, I know we did just because I know how we operate, and I know how important we think this process is; and I wish I could come away and say, gosh I'm really pumped up about these nine people and I think we really have five that we could really bring in here and have a heck of a competition, interview process, selection, decisions, I just don't feel that way.

Mayor Slesnick: I think it's fair though to say to people who have not seen the binder, that there are several things that impress me, and I'm not talking about specific names.

Commissioner Cabrera: A lot of good work in the binder, a lot of good work.

Mayor Slesnick: And I'm not saying anything about a specific candidate, but of this group this is probably one of the highest educated groups, specifically in public administration...

Commissioner Cabrera: No question. Not only education, but you know, good upstanding people, good credit history...

Mayor Slesnick: And several of them with long tenures of City Manager in tough situations.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yeah, yeah, good credit history, no crime related problems, none of those things that we all...thankfully our consultant did a fine job, of doing a phenomenal job of background checking.

Mayor Slesnick: And Maria, I just got to say, Colin presented those Internet searches, and I just read some of those things, and even if you read them they sort of fall a part in reading them, you know. Some person came in and said she striped for the Manager, but there was...

Commissioner Anderson: You know, and it wasn't that...

Mayor Slesnick: And in the newspaper they were trying to beat up on the Manager and of course they were the only one that ever had that conversation with this person.

Commissioner Anderson: But Don, I'm not questioning your criteria, but I do reserve the right to have some qualms about a few of them, and I know that some of these are yellow journalism and I'm able to discern those I'm pretty sure, but it doesn't give me a level of comfort, and I think that's where I'm coming from and its not about, it may not be about their character, but I think even if there is a hint of impropriety or any possibility I'm kind of aware of that, because I don't want to go through last year all over again.

Commissioner Cabrera: Let me add to what Ms. Anderson said. You know, I read these articles that were printed about these folks, and I swear now after eight years of being in office, I think that I can look at them objectively, but I really, still in my heart of hearts to this day I believe that there is that side of the issue, and there is the other side of the issue, and somewhere in between in the middle is the actual truth. So even though they may be considered yellow journalism and they may be somewhat inconsistent or inaccurate, it cast a sense of doubt for me...

Commissioner Anderson: Absolutely.

Commissioner Cabrera:...because you know what, I consider those kinds of articles and those kinds of incidents, I look at and then I all of a sudden say there is a pattern to this, and the pattern is not good. That's just my way of looking at it, Don.

Mayor Slesnick: That's fine, but I can assure you that there is a pattern to how the Gazette has treated me over eight years, and that pattern in most and every case is absolutely, there is no middle ground, is absolutely inaccurate and incorrect.

Commissioner Anderson: I understand that.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK, but thankfully you are not applying for the City Manager's job, or else you would not have made the final nine, you know Don, that's the bottom line.

Mayor Slesnick: Why don't we do this?- why don't we do this?- nothing is set in stone, why don't we see if we can list five names and see who comes up to the top two or three...

Commissioner Cabrera: OK, and I'll also like us to say who the names are; I don't want to do any secret ballot stuff, are you OK with that? I'm interested in knowing, no, no....

Commissioner Anderson: Just say it out loud.

Mayor Slesnick: You can put your name on there anyway.

Commissioner Cabrera: I want to know from the five of us, the hiring managers; I can't talk to you after this; I can't call you at the office and say, I can but I won't, I can't call you and say, hey Bill, how do you feel about this, so I really need to know how you feel about this process here, would you agree its pretty darn important?

Mayor Slesnick: You have to put your name on the ballot anyway, so that's fine.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK.

Mr. Baenziger: If I might just, what we normally do is collect the ballots from each of the Commissioners, have the City Clerk with the score sheet, and I'll read out the ballots, so everybody knows who voted for whom, and the City Clerk can tally up the numbers and we can see where we stand.

Commissioner Anderson: I just prefer to say it out loud too.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I don't really care.

Commissioner Cabrera: It doesn't matter; we'll go through the process.

Commissioner Anderson: We'll go through the process.

Mayor Slesnick: Which way you want to do it?

Commissioner Cabrera: Let's do the ballot, let's do the ballot.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: It doesn't matter; he's going to read them out anyway.

Commissioner Withers: We write down five names alphabetically and...

Commissioner Cabrera: I don't have five names.

Mayor Slesnick: Write down who you can.

City Attorney Hernandez: Do you want to go through and just say the first name and if three people say yes, then you interview them?

Commissioner Cabrera: No, let's follow...I don't want to take away from Mr. Baenziger's process.

Commissioner Anderson: Not a problem.

Mayor Slesnick: Write down the number of names that you can and we'll see how it comes up, how it matches up.

Commissioner Cabrera: Then I'll reserve the right to discuss this further.

Mayor Slesnick: Of course.

Mayor Slesnick: We are rank ordering them?

Commissioner Cabrera: I think we are just checking, checking.

Mayor Slesnick: OK.

(COMMISSIONERS SELECTED NAMES)

Mr. Baenziger: I guess the elected officials would like a score sheet so you can keep track as I read the names. OK, I will start with the Vice Mayor, and the Vice Mayor selected Steven Crowell, Patrick Salerno, Larry Spring, Randy Witt. Commissioner Anderson selected Larry Spring, just one. Commissioner Cabrera selected Steven Crowell and Larry Spring. Commissioner Withers selected David Frasher, Ron McLemore, Patrick Salerno, Larry Spring, and Randy Witt. Mayor Slesnick selected Steven Crowell, Robert Ruano, Patrick Salerno, Larry Spring, and Randy Witt. I believe that's all.

Mayor Slesnick: Did you say Kerdyk.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes, I was the first one.

Mr. Baenziger: Yes, Vice Mayor Kerdyk was first.

Mayor Slesnick: Before we get the tally, obviously I was the only one that checked one name, and I'll tell you why I did. I checked Robert Ruano because he is a Coral Gables citizen and he's got a good resume and he made the final; I checked him because I thought as a Coral Gables citizen he deserved an interview, that's...

Commissioner Anderson: I think that's a valid...

Mayor Slesnick: He would not be ranked at the top of my list, that's why I put him down. I like Robert, I think we all know, or most of us know Robert, he's a great administrator at the City of Miami, he made the finals, but mostly it was my thought and consideration as a resident.

Commissioner Anderson: Consideration that he's a resident, that's understandable.

Mayor Slesnick: That's all, and I'm not offended if no one else agrees with that, I wanted to explain that.

Commissioner Cabrera: So now we are tallying the numbers, is that what we are doing?

Mr. Baenziger: Yes. So instead of just kind of waiting for that, can I continue discussing the issue? I'm trying really hard to appeal to the four of you my feelings, not appeal, but share with you my feelings that, I really truly wish that I would have had more excitement and interest in the nine folks; and I just need us all to be clear that I'm simply not enamored or even close to being enamored with the nine people, and so while I gave you two and I would like to interview those two people, I have reservations even about those two gentlemen; and I think it would not be authentic and genuine if I did not express these thoughts to you today because this is...you know some of you will have much bigger things to look back on after you leave office, I really mean that sincerely, some of you really have some phenomenal legacy projects, I don't think I'll have one; my legacy will probably be this hiring, and I don't want to regret the hiring of the next City Manager, because you know I'm going to continue to live in this community, I don't expect to move out of it, unless you know I get to the point where I can't afford to live here anymore, but I want to walk away as a Commissioner and feel good about the fact that we hired the very best person for the job and someone that really could take this phenomenal City and make it even better than it is today, so that's why I'm so insistent about this dialogue that we are having so that we all come to the realization that we all want the best for the City and so let's not just settle, really probably that's the best word I can use today, the word is settle.

Commissioner Anderson: As I reviewed the candidates, I felt the same way, and I'm going to raise another point; there was a candidate that many people have approached us on that's a local candidate, was there any interest in having that come up or putting that back on the table?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Are you talking about Mr. Rasco?

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let's just go ahead...since we haven't talked about it, but since you are bringing it up, let's go ahead.

Commissioner Anderson: It's an elephant in the room.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yeah, for sure; I mean he's a great guy, but...

Commissioner Cabrera: It's good that it's being brought up; I mean the fact is...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Do you just want to go out and start this whole process again...

Commissioner Cabrera: Maybe, maybe, maybe, Bill, maybe.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: So you don't want to interview anybody?

Commissioner Cabrera: I didn't say that, no, no, no, I didn't say that now. I said that maybe...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I want to get some clarification, because if that's the sentiment to throw out the nine names...

Commissioner Cabrera: No, I didn't say that.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Then let's articulate...

Commissioner Cabrera: I've been trying to articulate, OK.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: So what is your best case scenario?

Commissioner Cabrera: My best case scenario now is that...no, I never said throw it out, OK, I only said that based upon the nine people that we have to look at, I only came away impressed enough with two people that I would want to interview further. I also heard Chip, and Don, and Maria, and it sounds to me like the process that we are going to follow is, we are going to have five people, and we are going to go through an exercise of interviewing five people, but what I want to tell you is that if I am not convinced of five people or one person, or two people, I am not going to cast a vote in favor of it, and candidly speaking, I'm scared, because I don't know how you all are going to feel about that, it could be a four to one vote, or three to two.

Mayor Slesnick: I feel the same way.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK. OK.

Mayor Slesnick: I feel the same way; and I would hope we all commit that we can interview these people and if we don't come to a firm feeling among us that we have the right person, that

we will continue to act in a collegial manner that we've done for eight years, and we'll walk away.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I agree. I'm a hundred percent with you.

Commissioner Cabrera: But you know what the silver lining in all of this is?- that we've got a very competent team leading the City right now, and that doesn't mean we have to go a hundred miles an hour to accomplish this.

Commissioner Anderson: That's fine.

Commissioner Withers: Colin, may I ask you a question about salary level? How did you convey that to the applicants?

Mr. Baenziger: We told them that the salary was up to two twenty-five (\$225,000).

Commissioner Withers: You think that dissuaded any folks?

Mr. Baenziger: Dissuaded any?

Commissioner Withers: I mean potential applicants. Do we have an issue to address Ralph's...do you think there is a salary level here that's keeping some all stars off the list?

Mr. Baenziger: Salary is always a factor; I don't think that it kept all stars off the list to any degree, if you raised it to \$250,000 or \$275,000 we might get different people; we would probably get some different people.

Commissioner Withers: Would that allow you to go to certain cities that maybe are paying a higher level than this and go after those folks, and ask them if they are interested?

Mr. Baenziger: Yes, it would.

Commissioner Withers: You know, its kind of interested that you bring this up, because he gave us salaries, and the lowest salaried of the nine was \$139,000, and the highest salaried of the nine was \$220,000, and he was an eighteen year Manager, so I think we are commensurate.

Commissioner Withers: Well, I don't know; we talked about if there was a "dream" City Manager out there and we could go to that City Manager and they might be in a different city and we say, well that's all the characteristics we like, let's go out and recruit somebody as opposed to soliciting resumes, we talked about doing that. I was just curious to know in your searches if there are City Managers out there that are making above that that we would really like, maybe we'd reach for that person and see if...

Mr. Baenziger: I don't know that they are necessarily making above that, but there are some that would require above that to move.

Commissioner Withers: OK, that's a fair statement.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Colin, can I ask him one last. In your opinion, are there super stars in this list that you have given us?

Mr. Baenziger: I believe so, yes.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: There are?

Mr. Baenziger: I believe so, yes.

Mayor Slesnick: I just want to remind the Commission one thing, and this goes to your point Ralph, you remember I said when we started this, we got plenty of people locally to look at, we don't need a national search, we don't need to go out, but the Commission felt strongly and I went along, and I want you to know in the same collegial manner I tell you know, that if we go through trying to finish with this list and we don't find someone then we should...

Commissioner Cabrera: And I remember you saying that, and I respect you very much for your position on it, the reason I was so dead set on a professional recruiter like Mr. Baenziger was, I wanted someone with that expertise to help us through that process, but you're right, I remember you...

Mayor Slesnick: That was a good idea, I was convinced; but I want you to know that I would be as willing to adapt to whatever.

Commissioner Cabrera: So will I, so will I.

Mr. Baenziger: We had one candidate who received all five votes, that was Larry Spring; we had three candidates, Steven Crowell, Pat Salerno, and Randy Witt who receive three votes; there were three other candidates that received one vote. My suggestion would be that we interview the top four, and if you would like to include Mr. Rasco...

Commissioner Anderson: I just brought it up, and that's their decision as a whole...

Mr. Baenziger: I'm just saying that Mr. Rasco is a candidate we have presented before...

Commissioner Cabrera: But I'd like to talk to my colleague about this. I think that the fact that you brought him up is a good thing, I mean if you feel that strongly bring him up.

Commissioner Anderson: I received a lot of calls about him and about his character, but it's ultimately our decision as-a-whole; he wasn't selected and there was a process in place, whether we may have agreed with the process or not, I wanted to extend him the courtesy of at least having us talk about it, and if it doesn't happen that's just the way it goes.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I would go ahead and interview him; I think that he is somebody that everybody knows; I'm for interviewing Joe Rasco. I mean, I think that everybody knows him, there is a lot of reach out to him, and I would be for that to make it five candidates.

Commissioner Cabrera: How do you feel about that?

Commissioner Withers: I don't know.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: He's a nice guy.

Commissioner Anderson: I just put it out there; its up to us, it has to be a comfort level I believe amongst the five.

Commissioner Withers: You know....

Mayor Slesnick: Let me just say this, Chip, and I know what you are struggling with, and I know that's not the process and so forth; but the one thing about Mr. Rasco, he has been responsible for County outreach for all the cities and still is responsible for County outreach to all the cities, and he has really done a yeoman's job in trying to reach out to the City and step in where we were being harmed and/or thought we were being harmed.

Commissioner Withers: I wasn't going to talk about Mr. Rasco.

Mayor Slesnick: And a courtesy of an interview wouldn't be against my grain.

Commissioner Cabrera: Would your concern be more about what happens after we leave the Chambers today, and we start getting phone calls?

Commissioner Withers: My concern is that we build an ideal resume for City Manager, and then we go out and find that person...

Commissioner Cabrera: We did that, we created...

Commissioner Withers: I don't know that we did that Ralph; and again without asking Colin, did he scour the country looking for "top drawer" City Managers in Topeka, Kansas or Raleigh, North Carolina, or Las Vegas, Nevada, and did we say this is the person we want...

Commissioner Cabrera: Go get him.

Commissioner Withers:...go get him and let's talk to him, its like drafting a first round draft pick for a sports team; this is how you want to build your team, this is what you build your team around, these are the characteristics, let's go see if its in our price range and our ability to get this person.

Commissioner Cabrera: I don't know what you did, but here's what I did. I created a list of critical qualities this person needed to have, and then I gave him also a list of Moody's, top rated

cities in Florida, and I said, you know, these folks are doing something right in their cities because they've got the highest ratings possible. So I handed that over to them as well. So for me, I gave them as much direction as I thought I could give, which was hey, these were top rated financially...

Commissioner Withers: How many of these nine fit into that list?

Commissioner Cabrera: Not one. The only one withdrew, that was on the list and he ended up withdrawing, and I saw that in the list of eighty-seven candidates, and that was the Assistant City Manager in Coral Springs.

Commissioner Withers: Listen, I don't know any of these folks, and they could just come in and knock our socks off, and we could fall in love with one or two of them, and I'm certainly willing to move in that direction.

Commissioner Cabrera: You're right, you're right, but I just...my first impressions I needed to share them with you all.

Mayor Slesnick: Let me say this; the one person that Colin told me was, the knock your socks off, the guy that is the cream of the crop of City Managers, that idolize the field, we didn't pick.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Which is?

Mayor Slesnick: John Wesley White. The Chip thing...no I'm saying, I'm just saying...Chip said...remember I really place a lot of thing on locality, on understanding South Florida, and being ready to come here, and Mr. McLemore who has lead a smaller City, but lead them to being actually being recognized by Money Magazine and so forth. We didn't pick him either, and that was one of those cities that performed outstandingly in Florida. OK. We have...you all wish to interview those five names or would you like to know it down even further, because I am open to that too?

City Attorney Hernandez: What were the names again?

Mayor Slesnick: We said we would be and I am open to that. We have five suggested names...

Commissioner Cabrera: Could I get you to think about the following. I heard Mr. Baenziger say that one of the candidates received all five votes from us, so that's person already is going to be interviewed. Then the next person...

Mayor Slesnick: Three people received three votes.

Commissioner Cabrera: Three people received three votes, so why don't we concentrate on what the majority of this Commission agreed to do?

Mayor Slesnick: OK.

Commissioner Cabrera:...and go by majority vote as we vote on other items, so that brings it down to four; sorry, that brings it down to three.

Commissioner Withers: Three people got three votes, didn't they?

Commissioner Cabrera: So that's four, OK, and then did we agree on Mr. Rasco, was that agreed across the board, was that agreed across the board by us?

Mayor Slesnick: Across the board, I'm not sure.

Commissioner Cabrera: Or by majority vote.

Mayor Slesnick: By a majority. Can we see all the sheets; can we see all the voting sheets?

Commissioner Cabrera: Remember we did this once before; we had Mr. Burgess not make the finals and then we brought him in as a finalist, so it's not like...

Mr. Baenziger: If I might just add, you know, we have had Mr. Rasco in the finals before, and he's a good candidate, its just we got caught in the numbers game...

Commissioner Cabrera: We understand.

Mr. Baenziger: I certainly have no objection and we certainly can provide his work very, very quickly to you.

Commissioner Anderson: And this whole interview process doesn't guarantee anybody anything, it's just an opportunity, and I never made any promises to anybody.

Commissioner Cabrera: So we've got four plus one; but that one we really haven't decided, Mrs. Anderson brought it up.

Commissioner Anderson: I want us all to be comfortable, if there is no comfort level, then...

Commissioner Cabrera: Mayor Slesnick brought him up.

Mayor Slesnick: I am happy to add him to the list; I'm not pushing, I'm happy to add him to the list.

Commissioner Cabrera: I'm happy to add him to the list as well, but on this one, I kind of want to get everybody on board on this, if you are not on board then I don't want to go forward; I'm serious if you are not on board...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I already said I was for it.

Commissioner Anderson: The same...

Commissioner Withers: I have no problems with it, whatsoever.

Commissioner Cabrera: Alright, so we are all on board.

Mayor Slesnick: OK. So this City Commission will now move forward to interview the following five people: Larry Spring, Patrick Salerno, Steven Crowell, and Randy Witt, and the other person is Joe Rasco. Those five people, and Commissioner Cabrera has stated and Mrs. Anderson has stated, and I have said, I will certainly concur that we can either find ourselves a candidate that thrills us or we can move on, and I take it Colin, that you are there to move on with us if we have to.

Mr. Baenziger: Absolutely, absolutely, its part of our program.

Commissioner Cabrera: So what's our next timeframe?- what's our next step sir?

Mr. Baenziger: Well that's the next question, which the twentieth I believe, a week from Friday is some activities, I know that the City Commission has decided on whether it wants to hold a reception or not, typically that's what we do on a Friday.

Mayor Slesnick: No, no.

Mr. Baenziger: OK. So that's out, then our next official activity as a Commission is one-on-one interviews on Saturday morning beginning at...

Mayor Slesnick: Why don't we do those on Friday morning?

Mr. Baenziger: We could.

Mayor Slesnick: Or do you want to do them on Saturday for some reason?

Commissioner Cabrera: The question has to do with whether we do it Friday or Saturday.

Commissioner Anderson: I can't do Saturday.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You can't do Saturday?

Commissioner Cabrera: Saturday mornings are tough for me.

Mr. Baenziger: Sounds like Friday.

Commissioner Withers: Because you are riding your little bike.

Commissioner Cabrera: Because I'm out riding my bike; shave my legs that morning and then I ride my bike, you can interview them in the Farmer's Market, and they can do some cooking lessons along the way.

Mr. Baenziger: Friday the 20th them.

Mayor Slesnick: Friday the 20thdo you believe...

Commissioner Withers: Friday the what?

Mayor Slesnick: This is Tuesday the 10th, do you believe that there are any problems setting that up with these, do you think we are going to be able to...

Mr. Baenziger: I don't think so because we made everyone aware of when the interviews would be, we anticipated some activities that Friday, so they should be available for Friday.

Mayor Slesnick: Fine.

Commissioner Anderson: Friday before the next Commission meeting, correct?

Mayor Slesnick: Yes.

Mr. Baenziger: And then the next step would be to discuss the candidates at that next meeting, and decide whether you want to hire one or go back on.

Mayor Slesnick: Let me say this, we certainly as we finish the interviews can certainly have further discussions at that point too.

Mr. Baenziger: Yes.

Mayor Slesnick: I mean we can advertise...Walter, Maria; I think that after we finish the five interviews on that day, we should certainly say that we reserve the right to discuss in public the results of those interviews while they are hot on our minds, I don't think we should wait two weeks and discuss them.

Interim City Manager Jimenez: On that same day?

Mayor Slesnick: Yes.

Interim City Manager Jimenez: OK sir.

Mayor Slesnick: Just let the public know that, that's what we intend to do.

Mr. Baenziger: So I will notify the candidates that the interviews will start on Friday, and I will get you an updated schedule with the candidate names.

Commissioner Withers: Colin, I guess what's lingering in my mind, what did you use to evaluate ninety, or eighty-seven, whatever it was down to nine? I mean, if it was your....see here's what's concerns me, if its your subjectivity then that concerns me; I don't know if there was any objectivity at all applied to any of these candidates; I don't know how you evaluated them other

than your feelings and your interviews and your concerns, if you didn't apply our requirements for strengths and weaknesses, and frankly that concerns me....

Mr. Baenziger: I understand what you are saying.

Commissioner Withers: I'm not demeaning the process or saying you didn't do a good job, but if there is no objectivity applied to any of these selections, then it was your feelings, your gut, your...and it's us now with candidates that you've shepherd through this process.

Mr. Baenziger: I guess what I would say is that we had ninety-one applicants; some of those candidates obviously fell off very quickly. Of those ninety-one we looked at or knew twenty-seven, and looked at them in some depth. I did not do a matrix, frankly I don't do matrixes because I'm looking for different skills and its very difficult to rate someone five here and three here...

Commissioner Withers: I understand.

Mr. Baenziger:...based on the paper and such, so a lot of it is subjectivity quite frankly, and my gut reaction in terms of talking to those people, and in terms of what I think their skills are.

Commissioner Withers: That's the answer.

Mr. Baenziger: That's the answer.

Commissioner Withers: Fair enough.

Mayor Slesnick: Now, its been raised from the administration that at one time we had talked about doing a day of individual interviews one-on-one and then moving to a Commissioner interview. My understanding was on Friday the 20th we were going to interview as a Commission, is that your understanding?

Commissioner Cabrera: I thought we were going to do it individually.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I did too.

Mayor Slesnick: You want to do it individually?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I thought it was individually first.

Mayor Slesnick: No, no, I meant individual, you and all five candidates?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Right, that's what I thought it was, and then we were going to get together and talk about it amongst ourselves, wasn't that the game plan?

Mayor Slesnick: That's fine.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Am I right with that?

Mr. Baenziger: I'm sorry, I'm not with you.

Mayor Slesnick: So you are going to schedule on Friday the 20th, you are going to schedule each of these candidates an hour with each of us.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: It's an hour?

Mayor Slesnick: Well half hour.

Mr. Baenziger: Normally we do forty minutes, but we've often done an hour, so whatever you want.

Mayor Slesnick: Let's go back; it was a good point by the administration that we need to clarify in our minds what we are doing, and make sure the Commission agrees. On Friday the 20th, we will have a matrix of various interviews where each of us will individually sit and talk to and get to know each of these candidates.

Mr. Baenziger: Yes.

Mayor Slesnick: OK. That was not what I had thought we were doing the other day; OK, then that will take us the whole day, or at least the most part of the day. I would still like at that point, I think that is the appropriate time for us to then maybe at the end of that day, if we can end those interviews by about 3:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. or something, for us to meet as a Commission to having interviewed all these people to then rerate who we would like to then interview as an entire Commission or no one, and then we'll set a date for that.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: That's a good idea.

Commissioner Withers: But there are four candidates and there are five of us, I mean five candidates so that's why you are saying five hours basically.

Mayor Slesnick: Exactly, but we can do the individual, as long as they are geographically that they can move around, we don't have to do them all at City Hall.

Commissioner Withers: Is the press allowed in the interviews?

Mayor Slesnick: No, this is a private interview between you and the person; the press and the public would be allowed to come to when we discuss it between ourselves.

Commissioner Withers: Is there going to be anyone with the Commissioner...

Mayor Slesnick: I would hope not.

Commissioner Withers: Just one-on-one with the Commissioner; no one from Colin's group and no one from the City's group.

Mayor Slesnick: No, I don't think so, unless you want to.

Commissioner Withers: No, no, no, I just want to make sure....

Mayor Slesnick: This is a personal meeting to understand and get to know the person.

Commissioner Withers: I prefer that Don.

Mayor Slesnick: And then, Colin, if we could then arrange, for instance....

Commissioner Cabrera: Can I then throw something else out to kind of stay with what you were talking about. I never saw you all criteria; I only saw what I gave; couldn't we take all of our criteria, assemble it together and from the criteria developed by the five of us, which I think we had some duplication...

Commissioner Withers: I'm sure Colin can provide that for us.

Commissioner Cabrera: Couldn't we then develop a matrix based upon those criteria and see how these four or five people fill that particular set.

Commissioner Withers: Based upon their resumes?

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes sir, what do you think about that? It would certainly help me.

Mr. Baenziger: I can assemble a matrix certainly and do you want to evaluate the resumes, or is this after the interviews?

Commissioner Cabrera: No, I would like you to, based upon the information you provided us, take the criteria that we gave you and see how these five people match up to that criteria in the form of a matrix, so that at least for me, this process becomes less subjective, that's what I'm looking for.

Mr. Baenziger: I'm with you now.

Mayor Slesnick: We are going to take a break for lunch, but one last time just to make sure everybody is on board. On Friday the 20th each of us will be scheduled to spend approximately forty to forty-five minutes with five different people starting in the morning, and by early afternoon, we'll schedule a session where we come back together to then determine who if any we are going to move forward to a group interview.

Commissioner Withers: We are doing this in the Police interrogation room, correct. I don't know if this is the best place to do that.

Commissioner Cabrera: I thought maybe the Youth Center.

Mayor Slesnick: Well, you don't even have to be there, you could be at your office; they could move around.

Commissioner Withers: It's not a big deal.

Mayor Slesnick: No, I'm saying, they could meet at my office here; Maria could use the office here, if anybody else wants to meet...

Commissioner Anderson: Do any of them play golf, I could meet them, (laughter), just kidding.

Mayor Slesnick: I'm just saying, as long as they are geographically movable around a ten minute period, we could meet in different places.

Commissioner Withers: That's fine.

Mr. Baenziger: I'll work with staff to come up with.

Commissioner Withers: Colin, I am impressed with the voluminous of the...

Mr. Baenziger: Well thank you.

Commissioner Withers: A lot of work.

Commissioner Cabrera: A lot of work went into this.

Mayor Slesnick: If the perfect Manager of all Managers walked into your office tomorrow, let us know.

Commissioner Withers: The mother of all Managers.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you very much.

Mr. Baenziger: Thank you.

Commissioner Withers: Nice job.

[End: 12:27:00 p.m.]