

DeFuniak Springs City Council
Special Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
April 13, 2021

The following Council members were present: Mayor Bob Campbell, Mayor Pro-Tem Robert McKnight (Seat 2); Councilmember Todd Bierbaum (Seat 1); Councilmember Kevin Crystal (Seat 3); Councilmember Henry D. Ennis (Seat 4), and Councilmember Wayne Graham (Seat 5). Staff present: HR Director Lacey Woodham, City Clerk Maryanne Schrader, and Finance Director Debra Gibson. Candidate-elect, Tony Vallee, was also in attendance.

Mayor Bob Campbell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Campbell explained the requirements of the Zoom meeting and introduced the Council, as well as the Candidate-elect, Tony Vallee, to the candidates.

HR Director Lacey Woodham explained the process of the interview session and conducted the interview.

Purpose: A. City Manager Interviews – Conducted via Zoom

9 a.m. – Joseph Turner

10 a.m. – Tyler Johnson

11 a.m. – Emmanuel Adediran

Break

1 p.m. – Thomas Rigwood

2 p.m. – Robert Thompson

3 p.m. – Frederick Thomas

4 p.m. – Judith Frazier

The 5 base questions are as follows:

1. Please tell us why you are interested in this position.
2. How have your education and experience equipped you to address the specific and unique needs of DeFuniak Springs?
3. How would you align the mission, goals, and objectives of the administrative functions with those of the City?
4. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the City’s business plan, operations, and departments and guide any indicated change?
5. Describe in your own words what the word “transparency” means to you and how you would implement transparency on a day-to-day basis with council and staff, as well as the public.

Joseph Turner introduced himself and the interview proceeded. At 9:07 a.m., a Zoom interruption occurred and resumed at 9:09 a.m. Mayor Campbell went over the contract requirements for the position. The interview ended at 9:55 a.m.

Council discussed the pros and cons of the replies, and the candidate’s past municipal experience. Councilmember K. Crystal mentioned the comment of a five-year plan, so he would need to provide a strong succession plan.

The next candidate, Tyler Johnson, began the interview process at 10:03 a.m. Mayor Campbell introduced the Council, Candidate-Elect T. Vallee, and HR Director Lacey Woodham.

HR Director Lacey Woodham began the interview process. The interview had a slight interruption and resumed at 10:08 a.m.

Council began questions to the candidate at 10:11 a.m. The candidate began his question process at 10:30 a.m. The interview concluded at 10:32 a.m.

The Council began their review process of the candidate at 10:34 a.m. discussing the pros and cons of the candidate's comments.

Mayor Campbell called for a ten-minute recess at 10:46 a.m. and the meeting was resumed at 10:57 a.m.

The next candidate, Emmanuel Adediran, began the interview process at 11:01 a.m. Mayor Campbell introduced the Council and HR Director Lacey Woodham to the candidate.

HR Director Lacey Woodham went over the interview process and began the questions at 11:03 a.m. Candidate E. Adediran replied to the list of questions. Questions to the candidate began at 11:13 a.m. The candidate asked a few questions at 11:26 a.m. The interview concluded at 11:27 a.m.

The Council began their overview of the candidate at 11:29 a.m. discussing the pros and cons. Mayor Campbell called for a recess at 11:30 a.m. to resume at 1:00 p.m.

Mayor Campbell opened the meeting at 12:59 p.m. announcing that City Attorney Clay Adkinson was participating via Zoom.

Candidate Thomas Rigwood joined the interview at 1:00 p.m. Mayor Campbell introduced the Council, HR Director Lacey Woodham and Council-Elect T. Vallee.

HR Director Lacey Woodham went over the interview process and began with the question process. Mr. Rigwood introduced himself before commencing with responses at 1:02 p.m.

At 1:07 p.m., Mayor Campbell went over the contract requirements for the position. The Council commenced with questions for Mr. Rigwood.

At 1:21 p.m., Mayor Campbell asked the candidate if he had any questions, and with none requested, the interview session was ended at 1:22 p.m.

Council went over the pros and cons of the candidate, Mr. Rigwood.

Mayor Campbell closed the comments at 1:28 p.m.

Mayor Campbell opened the next interview at 1:55 p.m. for Robert Thompson. At 2:01 p.m., Mayor Campbell introduced the Council, HR Director Lacey Woodham.

HR Director Lacey Woodham went over the instructions and began the interview at 2:02 p.m. Mr. Thompson introduced himself before responding to the questions. There was a short interruption for technical problems before the interview commenced.

Mayor Campbell went over the contract and asked the Council to proceed with questions to Mr. Thompson at 2:11 p.m.

At 2:42 p.m., Robert Thompson asked several questions of the Council.

Mayor Campbell wrapped up the interview at 2:50 p.m.

Council went over the pros and cons and took a brief recess at 2:53 p.m.

Mayor Campbell opened the interview session at 3:00 p.m. for candidate Frederick Thomas.

Mayor Campbell introduced the Council, HR Director Lacey Woodham at 3:03 p.m.

HR Director L. Woodham went over the instructions and commenced with the questions at 3:04 p.m.

Mr. F. Thomas introduced himself and responded to the questions.

At 3:23 p.m., Mayor Campbell commenced with the questions from the Council and Mr. F. Thomas responded. Afterward, Mr. F. Thomas asked a few questions with a slight communications interruption. Mayor Campbell and Council responded accordingly.

After final remarks, Mayor Campbell explained the contract requirement for the City Manager position, and the interview ended at 3:45 p.m.

Council went over the pros and cons of the candidate and concluded at 3:49 p.m.

Mayor Campbell commenced the interview at 4:00 p.m. with Judith Frazier by introducing the Council and HR Director L. Woodham.

HR Director L. Woodham went over the instructions and began the interview process.

Candidate Judith Frazier started the interview at 4:01 p.m. At 4:10 p.m. Mayor Campbell went over the contract process under the City Charter and opened the floor for questions from the Council.

At 4:31 p.m., Mayor Campbell asked Candidate J. Frazier if she had any questions, and she asked several questions of the Council.

Mayor Campbell made his final remarks at 4:42 p.m. ending the interview.

Council went over the pros and cons of the candidate.

4. Council Comments - The consensus of the Council was to offer Robert Thompson the City Manager position possibly starting salary at \$120,000. Discussion ensued on moving expenses.

Director of Finance Director stepped out to review the budget and stated there is \$36,000 remaining of the prior city manager and deputy city manager salaries in the budget.

Councilmember R. McKnight said \$6,500 would be a reasonable contribution for a moving expense. Councilmember T. Bierbaum said \$12,000 to \$15,000 is a typical moving expense.

Discussion ensued on negotiations outside of a salary such as benefits, as well as placing benefits into the contract. Councilmember R. McKnight mentioned the moving expense should be paid back if he does not stay a full year.

Councilmember K. Crystal asked if the city manager evaluation could be done twice a year, and Council concurred. HR Director L. Woodham said she will research options.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum asked if a draft employment contract could be provided by the meeting on April 19th.

City Attorney Clayton Adkinson arrived at 5:23 p.m. and Mayor Campbell went over the council comments.

City Attorney Clayton Adkinson mentioned the Council could move up the special meeting from the 19th to provide the selection of the city manager position and terms of employment contract.

Council discussed moving the meeting to April 15th at 5:00 p.m. in order to provide a ranking and possible offer of the contract. A graduated stepped pay system and half of the moving expenses were items discussed to be placed in the draft employment contract. Councilmember K. Crystal mentioned a one-year contract with possibly offering a two-year contract based on performance.

City Attorney Clayton Adkinson suggested a buyout provision stating some items could be offered in the negotiations. HR Director Lacey Woodham said Mr. Thompson could start as early as May 1. Discussions ensued on termination language in the contract.

A summary of the items discussed that could be placed in the draft offer of employment:

- Starting salary of \$120,000
- Moving expenses of \$6,500 – would need to be paid back, if candidate does not stay employed for one full year
- Benefits to be included
- Evaluation done twice a year
- Graduated, stepped pay system (Such as start at a lower salary and an incremental increase at six months and a year)
- One year contract with a two-year extension based on performance
- Termination language
- Buyout provision

4. Adjourn

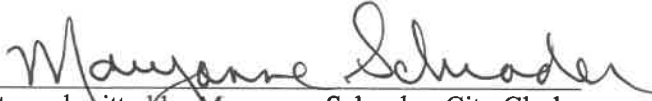
Mayor Campbell adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Approved:



Mayor Bob Campbell

Attest:



Minutes submitted by Maryanne Schrader, City Clerk
Proper notice having been duly given

