

**SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING**

Kiawah Island Municipal Center
Council Chambers
September 17, 2015; 10:00 AM

MINUTES

- I. Call to Order:** *Mayor Lipuma called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.*
- II. FOIA:** Notice of this meeting has been published and posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Kiawah Island.
- III. Roll Call:**
- Present: Charles R. Lipuma, Mayor
Mary Q. Johnson
John Wilson
Craig Weaver
- Absent: Dennis Rhoad, Town Attorney
- Also Present: John D. Labriola, Mayor Tempore, by phone
Petra Reynolds, Town Clerk
- IV. Citizens' Presentations or Comments:**
Dennis McGill – 100 Pleasant Valley Drive

Mr. McGill commented he felt the four administrator candidates were extremely qualified. Mr. McGill commented on each of four candidates reviewing their qualifications and current position statics from each resume. He indicated that the candidates' present jobs seemed to provide much more a challenge than working for Kiawah. He asked if the salary range, which was stated by the Mayor as \$90,000.00 to 126,000.00, was advertised. He also wondered if the salary range may have been a motivating factor in their decision to apply for the position.

Mr. McGill again made the comparison to the 2010 salaries of the South Carolina Governor at \$106,000.00, Lt Governor at \$46,000.00, Secretary of State, Attorney General and Treasurer at \$92,000.00.

Mayor Lipuma stated there was no salary advertised. He referred to the Town Administrator Executive search brochure that was posted for public inspection. The Mayor indicated the salary would be negotiated with a preferred candidate.

Mr. McGill questioned if any of the four candidates were asked what their salary was at their present position.

Mayor Lipuma stated that each of the candidates was asked what their salary was at their present position.

Wendy Kulick – 38 Marsh Edge Lane

Mrs. Kulick stated that her comment was derived from her work on the Kiawah Board of Zoning and Appeals. She noted that with the board being quasi-judicial everything was done in the open. She expressed her disappointment to see the Town was seemingly doing more and more of its business behind closed doors where residents are no privy to discussions. She asked that the Town go back to conducting its business in the open.

V. New Business:

A. Town Administrator Candidate Selection

Search

Mayor Lipuma gave a brief review of the search and selection process. There were ninety-five applicants who submitted resumes to the Town's executive search firm, The Mercer Group. The top eleven candidates selected by Mr. Mercer and were then reduced to five by Council for detailed investigation. Of those five one candidate accepted a position with another municipality, which left the four candidate which were interviewed on September 10th.

- **Kurt Taylor**
- **Rebecca Vance**
- **Stephanie Tillerson**
- **Jason Taylor**

Following the interviews Mr. Mercer verified the credentials of each of the candidates, conducted interviews of the candidates' references, and also conducted thorough background checks.

Interview

Mayor Lipuma stated each member of Council developed a list of questions to ask each candidate in a round table format until all questioned were asked and answered. Each interview lasted one and one-half hours allowing the candidates to ask questions of Council. He noted that during the day long process each candidate was asked why they wanted to work on Kiawah.

Mayor Lipuma stated one Monday September 14th the Town was notified by Mr. Mercer that Ms. Rebecca Vance had withdrawn her name from contention. The Mayor indicated the three candidates left where awaiting Council's decision which would be made by a majority vote. Following the vote for the desired candidate, Council would also have to vote to begin salary negotiations.

Mayor Lipuma asked Council members if there was any additional comments that they wanted to make in reference to the search and interview process or about the candidates themselves;

Mr. Weaver indicated that he had no additional comment other than to agree the candidates were very impressive and had great skills.

Ms. Johnson agreed the five candidates were very qualified to take on the position but wished that the Mayor and Council would conduct a second interview with one or more of the remaining candidates. She noted the interview day was very long and would like to have an opportunity to meet one or more of the candidate a second time making sure to be thorough with this very important decision.

Mr. Wilson agreed the five candidates were very qualified and stated that Mr. Kurt Taylor came very highly recommended by Mr. Paul Roberts who has worked with Mr. Taylor extensively. Mrs. Johnson added Mr. Peterson, Chairman of the Planning Commission also spoke very highly of Mr. Taylor as a great candidate for Town Administrator.

Mr. Labriola had no additional comments that had not been already stated.

Mrs. Johnson made a motion that the Mayor and Council conduct a second interview with one or more of the remaining candidates.

Mrs. Johnson indicated she felt that with the candidates so close in their qualifications a second interview would allow the Mayor and Council an opportunity to get to know them better in order to choose the best candidate. She stated that more of an exposure to Kiawah and the Town's employees will also give the candidates the chance to determine if they think they would be suited to Kiawah.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson, though he seconded the motion, indicated he was not sure how much more beneficial information could be gained by a second round of interviews. He pointed out that pushing out the selection of an administrator would also delay the selection of a new Town Treasurer.

Mrs. Johnson stated in a normal interview process it would not be unusual for an employer to conduct two or three interviews with a candidate before making a decision. She felt a second interview may give more information to better "sort" the candidates.

Mr. Weaver agreed with Mr. Wilson. He stated with comprehensive work done by Mr. Mercer in vetting the candidates and the length time spent with each of the candidate during interviews he felt there would be no gain in delaying the selection. He indicated that if in discussions following the candidate recommendation it became obvious that there was a need, he would be agreeable to second interviews.

Mr. Labriola had no additional comment.

Mayor Lipuma stated that he was in agreement with both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Weaver. Mr. Labriola had no additional comment.

Mayor Lipuma called the question on the motion for additional interviews. Council voted by role call;

Craig Weaver	No
John Wilson	No
John Labriola	No
Mrs. Johnson	Yes
Mayor Lipuma	No

The motion failed by a 4 to 1 vote.

Mr. Labriola made the motion to authorize the Mayor to proceed with negotiations for terms of employment and approval to offer the position of Town Administrator to Ms. Stephanie Tillerson. The motion was seconded by Mr. Weaver.

Mr. Labriola stated that the suggestion of continuing discussion with the candidate is very appropriate and clarified his motion to say that the Mayor, as the Chief Officer of the Town, should have the approval to proceed with negotiations and enter into a contract without the need for the approval of Council.

Mr. Weaver stated that he would be in agreement with the motion if the negotiation were within the existing salary range and within the Town's existing policies. If any negotiations were out of line with normal policies and compensation that Council would be consulted. Mayor Lipuma indicated that negotiation would have to follow the Town's manual and he would discuss the terms with Council.

Mr. Wilson agreed with Mr. Wilson and suggested that any allowances that are customary but not addressed in the Town's Manual be presented at the next Council meeting for approval.

Mr. Weaver made a motion to amend Mr. Labriola's motion to add the employment package will be subject to approved by a vote of Council. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson. Council voted by role call;

Craig Weaver	Yes
Mrs. Johnson stated without an opportunity for second interview there was nothing to oppose and voted;	Yes
John Wilson	Yes
John Labriola	Yes
Mayor Lipuma	Yes

The amendment to the motion was unanimously passed.

Mayor called the question of the amended motion to authorize the Mayor to proceed with negotiations for terms of employment and enter into a contract with the employment package subject to approved by a vote of Council and approval to offer the position of Town Administrator to Ms. Stephanie Tillerson. Council voted by role call;

Craig Weaver	Yes
Mrs. Johnson stated without an opportunity for second interview there was nothing to oppose and voted;	Yes
John Wilson	Yes
John Labriola	Yes
Mayor Lipuma	Yes

The motion was unanimously passed.

**VI. Citizens' Presentations or Comments:
Marilyn Larach - 1082 Terrapin Court**

Mrs. Larach thanked Council for the time expended on behalf of the citizens of the Town of Kiawah. She hope that the process of the treasurer search would be easier the new administrator in place. It was also her hope that Ms. Tillerson would open to better communication with the Community Association and other Island entities.

Mr. Larach commented that it was her hope that the employment package would address the payment of overtime.

Mayor Lipuma indicated the position was an "exempt" position and therefore does not qualify for overtime payment.

Dennis McGill – 100 Pleasant Valley Drive

Mr. McGill again question if the candidates were asked what the minimum salary they would need or be willing accept to take the position applied for.

Mayor Lipuma stated that each one of the candidates clearly indicated that the salary range give by the Town was acceptable.

Mr. McGill did note that the Town Code stated that the Ways and Means Committee review all contract and he took that to mean even contracts with outside employee that wants to be an employee. Once recommended by the Ways and Means Committee it would go to Council for a vote. Mr. McGill stated that the questions will be what the base salary and start time is going to be with the notice that she will have to give to her present employer and moving time.

Mayor Lipuma indicated those questions will be asked as part of the negotiations.

Mr. McGill also questioned one Ms. Tillerson is here who will be conducting the performance evaluations

Mayor Lipuma stated that the Mayor is responsible for the administrator's evaluation but careful consideration will be given to who will be conducting the employee evaluations since she will not be familiar with the staff.

Mayor Lipuma indicated that the Town is planning a session open to the public giving an opportunity to meet the new administrator. He also stated he plan to take the new administrator to meet the Island principals.

Wendy Kulick – 38 Marsh Edge Lane

Mrs. Kulick seconded Ms. Larach’s earlier comments and appreciated that the process was shared with the public. She commented that she was surprised that the Town did not give the public the opportunity to meet the candidates before the selection was made.

VII. Council Member Comments

Mr. Wilson – no additional comments

Mr. Labriola – no additional comments

Mrs. Johnson – no additional comments

Mr. Weaver thanked Mr. Labriola for ushering the process through and now only has the position of the treasurer to fill.

Mayor Lipuma also thanked Mr. Labriola for hard work and his recommendation of The Mercer Group.

VIII. Adjournment:

Mr. Weaver motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 am. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson and carried unanimously.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Charles R. Lipuma, Mayor

10/15/15
Date