

**Summary Minutes of the:
ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS
(Hybrid) SPECIAL CALL COUNCIL MEETING**

Founders Park Community Center
Islamorada, FL
Wednesday, June 2, 2021
1:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting to Occur Utilizing Communications Media Technology (CMT)

Pursuant to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), social distancing guidelines established to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the Regular Village Council Meeting was conducted utilizing Communication Media Technology (CMT) via a Zoom video conferencing application.

Coronavirus-related Precaution: Due to the size and configuration of the Founders Park Community Center, which serves as the Council Chambers, and in keeping with CDC and Florida Department of Health guidelines, capacity of the Community Center for Village Council meetings was limited indefinitely due to the coronavirus pandemic. Only Council Members and essential staff members required to conduct the meetings were in physical attendance due to the limited capacity. The general public was able to virtually attend and otherwise participate in Council meetings utilizing the existing Zoom meeting infrastructure. The Village expanded its Internet bandwidth and Zoom meeting participant level to facilitate participation and comment by the public remotely. Additional information regarding options for viewing the meeting and participation through public comment were included on the last page of this agenda. If assistance was needed, the agenda directed the public to contact the Village Clerk's Office at 305-664-6413 no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Mayor Pinder called the meeting to order at 1:48 p.m. Deputy Village Clerk Stephanie Conde called the roll with the following Councilmembers being present on roll call: Mayor Buddy Pinder, Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler, Councilman Mark Gregg, Councilman Henry Rosenthal and Councilman David Webb. Colin Baenziger and Public Information Officer Mary Swaney were also present. Village Attorney Roget Bryan started attendance in person, then moved to virtual presence with Acting Village Manager Maria Bassett.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Former Mayor Ken Phillipson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Buddy Pinder provided the prayer for the meeting.

VIRTUAL MEETING PROCEDURES

Village Attorney Roget Bryan provided the virtual meeting procedures.

REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Buddy Pinder invited Scott Dudley from the Florida League of Cities to announce the Home Rule Hero Award which he presented to Village Attorney Roget Bryan.

Councilman David Webb requested the Thursday, June 10, 2021 Regular Village Council Meeting be moved to Wednesday, June 9, 2021. Each Councilmember expressed their approval with the request with a thumbs up.

VILLAGE MANAGER CANDIDATES

Colin Baenziger provided the Village Manager candidate interview and decision-making process.

Candidate Andrea Agha announced that she had decided to gracefully bow out of the running citing professional growth and her desire for big city problems.

Councilman Rosenthal asked for an updated decision process since a candidate had dropped out of the running. Mayor Pinder requested a super-majority vote of approval by Council regarding the selection of the Village Manager. Councilman Webb requested a unanimous vote of approval.

Guillermo Olmedillo was the next candidate to address the Council. He cited environmental concerns as his motivation for applying for the position. He commented that he believes in courtesy, respect, and an open-door policy. Councilman Webb asked what the residents and council should give him to ensure success. Mr. Olmedillo stated that he believed communication, transparency, and ethics were most important as the job was more than an 8-5 position. Councilman Gregg asked Mr. Olmedillo to share his thoughts on council term limits based on his previous experience with City of Surfside, FL. Mr. Olmedillo noted some of the similarities between Surfside and Islamorada; that he believed two-year terms often reflected a shift of philosophies as council membership changed.

Vice Mayor Bacheler asked Mr. Olmedillo to share his plan for residency in the Keys. Mr. Olmedillo detailed his transition period plans for daily travel and suggested the possibility of a housing stipend. Councilman Rosenthal expressed concern over Mr. Olmedillo's residency plans and inquired about his wife's response to the possibility of relocation. Mr. Olmedillo clarified his transition plan which involved splitting his time between his current home and here noting he would be in Islamorada Monday through Friday and at his current home on the weekends; and that he would be available by phone on the weekends unless his presence was needed.

Mayor Pinder took a moment to recognize previous councilmembers that were in attendance: Deb Gillis, Cheryl Meads, Ken Phillipson, and George Geisler and invited each to the podium to say a few words. Mayor Pinder also thanked the staff for designing the candidate meet and greet reception and the candidate interview process events of the day.

Council requested a short break at 2:27 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 2:35 p.m. Mr. Oravec expressed his gratitude to the Council; shared his passion for Islamorada noting that he believes Islamorada is an incredible waterfront village that could rise to its full potential, united with his leadership; and that improvement happens when core values are established and implemented. He commented about his experience in government noting he had become an expert in legislative affairs, grant writing, building collaborative teams, and leveraging relationships for the betterment of the community. Mr. Oravec commented that he had become an expert in strategic planning, strategic problem solving and in helping communities be better versions of themselves; that he was the assistant city manager of Port St. Lucie, was promoted to manager and later became the mayor,

where he served with distinction. He detailed his ideas of how he, staff and Council would measurably improve Islamorada.

Councilman Webb asked Mr. Oravec what the Council and community needed to do to ensure his success. Mr. Oravec commented that we needed to think about our respective roles; all recognize that it is a “fresh start”; have open, honest, sometimes difficult conversations to learn where the friction points are so as to work them out to the best of our ability; understand that there are three sides to every story; and that just because someone had a different view point it did not mean they were right or wrong. He stated that from a policy perspective, we need to find out where the majority of the citizens are and find the common ground.

Councilman Gregg asked Mr. Oravec to share his transition plans. Mr. Oravec commented that if he were chosen, he would want immediate contract negotiations; he would request a housing allowance; he would propose the Village put him up for 30-60 days immediately as the he and the Council were ready to go noting some of their important decisions had been put on hold until the position was filled; would propose taking the oath of office in July, living in Islamorada and using those first 60 days to go through the listening that is necessary, and meeting with the Council, the public and staff; and after the 60 days he would be finding a place here. He explained what motivated him, stating he would be ready to go in July that this was “home”.

Vice Mayor Bacheler pointed out Mr. Oravec’s team leader skills; noted he had been the city manager at Port St. Lucie, then the mayor and asked him to explain why he was now seeking a manager role. Mr. Oravec explained that serving as mayor was a great honor but was not financially sustainable for his family; and that he wanted to continue serving local government in a place he could call home and that Islamorada fits that bill. Vice Mayor Bacheler asked Mr. Oravec to share his thoughts about two-year and four-year council member terms. Mr. Oravec thinks the people decide the charter, should be decided during the election, and suggested that from a policy analysis standpoint, we should study turnover in the organization in two verses four years and provide that data; in his experience staggered terms were better than non-staggered; four is desirable given the length of time it takes for some projects, but noted the topic had been a wedge issue in the Village.

Councilman Rosenthal asked Mr. Oravec to define transparency regarding the push and pull. Mr. Oravec believes staff and council work for the people, are there to serve them and provide transparency through public records, communication, accountability. Mayor Pinder asked Mr. Oravec to elaborate on the 10-year plan in regard to long term village’s issues. Mr. Oravec suggested charting the course to the long-term vision with continuing community buy in from residents, groups, while working together. Mayor Pinder asked his thoughts on the Village’s stormwater problems; noted that the Councils needed to buy-in to the strategic plan. Mayor Pinder asked the candidate to explain how he would address the stormwater issues in Islamorada. Mr. Oravec opined that working through the strategic planning process we would find a lot of overlapping major priorities in one project; noted he was the project manager for a \$35 million replumbing of a US-1 corridor through which they solved flooding issues, water quality issues, created a park, and a preserve.

Colin Baenziger called the final candidate, Terry Suggs to the podium. Mr. Suggs shared that he has over 20 years in public service, in various departments such as planning, public works and solid

waste; that he had worked in city/county management for about ten years; and noted that his experience included working through multiple hurricanes and the aftermath. Mr. Suggs spoke of the importance in following the strategic plan and described his management style. He stated he was asked why he wanted to change from a county administrator, serving 72,000 residents, to serve a smaller community. He explained that he and his wife absolutely love Islamorada and have had friends and family here for 30 years; and explained that serving a large community (800 square miles) made it difficult to get to know the people in the community. He expressed his great desire to move to the area and be part of a small-town environment again where he would have a chance to know the people. Mr. Suggs explained his familiarity with coastal community struggles regarding flooding and working with the U.S Army Corp of Engineers. He noted that in Putnam County they host a lot of events such as fishing tournaments and noted the Bass Master Elite which is aired on ESPN and had been hosted three times in Putnam County.

Councilman David Webb asked what the residents and council could do to ensure his success. Mr. Suggs requested clear concise direction from Council; and to host meetings with residents to identify issues and develop solutions with Council. Councilman Mark Gregg outlined the expectation that Mr. Suggs becomes part of the community, and how he planned to get there. Mr. Suggs explained that he would begin with village residency, and that he would give his current employer proper notice before leaving.

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler commented that there were about three community factions within Islamorada and asked how he would handle bringing them together to foster a relationship. Mr. Suggs plans to identify their concerns and the common ground, find consensus and build upon it. Councilman Rosenthal asked if he had a particular achievement that he wanted to share. Mr. Suggs stated he took ownership of Putnam County's first strategic plan; and explained that they put the met in different areas of the county to gather input from different stakeholders, shared the information with the Commission, received feedback which led to creation of the plan.

Vice Mayor Bacheler asked about his ability to make snap decisions. Mr. Suggs explained that he did not like to make snap decisions but was capable. He shared an experience that occurred during a severe storm, in which a 180-bed healthcare facility was breached by water. He explained that moving the patients was not an option; that his staff and other agencies decided to dig a trench to move the water away from the building which saved the residents. Mayor Buddy Pinder asked what his plan for the first six months would look like. Mr. Suggs wants to sit down with each councilmember, define priorities and each councilmembers preferred method of communication; meet with the staff to get a feel for their responsibilities, perhaps make changes to better serve the public and to create better efficiencies; and meet with community members to build a relationship to foster trust and find common ground. Vice Mayor Bacheler praised the staff and wanted to know what he would do to make it a better place for staff. Mr. Suggs commented about treating people they way you want to be treated; recognized the critical role that staff plays in his success; and believes in public recognition of staff efforts.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At 3:32 p.m. Mayor Pinder requested a break with the meeting reconvening at 3:45 p.m.

Mayor Pinder opened public comment.

Ken Phillipson spoke of the importance of providing housing for the Village Manager.

Ed Davidson commented on the council's ability to make a selfless, civic decision that affects the lives of the community while picking the correct candidate.

Angel Borden expressed her belief that there should be a requirement that Village Manager must live here and plan to stay long-term.

John Timura commented that three factions exist and part of the council listens while the others have only personal interests in mind.

Mayor Pinder closed public comment.

Councilman Webb commended Colin Baenziger on his efforts through this process, and that he was overall pleased with the candidates presented.

Mayor Pinder mentioned the large task the council has taken on, how they were unified through the process, and the importance of the decision. He invited the council to discuss the process for selecting the Village Manager.

Councilman Webb commented that he wanted a unanimous decision regarding the selection and was prepared to nominate a candidate. Vice Mayor Bacheler wanted to rank candidates, and expressed his preference for a super-majority vote, with a chance to ratify. Councilman Gregg wanted a private vote for democracy. Councilman Rosenthal, with a second from Councilman Webb, made a motion nominating Greg Oravec as the next Village Manager. Mayor Pinder voted in favor of the nomination with Councilman Mark Gregg and Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler voting not yet. Motion passed 3 to 2. Due to the Council's previous discussion regarding a super-majority vote and the ratifying the vote, the Council requested direction from Attorney Roget Bryan regarding results. Village Attorney Roget Bryan advised the decision was at the will of the council. Councilman Webb questioned Councilman Mark Gregg abstaining when that was not really an option. Councilman Gregg explained he was questioning the process; that he wanted to discuss the candidates and offered to ratify vote. Vice Mayor Bacheler asked for a ratified vote for 5-0 support for Mr. Oravec. Councilman Webb made a motion to select Mr. Oravec as Village Manager. Councilman Rosenthal seconded the motion. Council voted and the motion passed 5-0.

Councilmembers took a few minutes to congratulate Mr. Oravec and took a few photographs.

MAYOR / COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

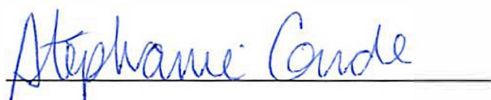
Mayor Pinder asked Village Attorney Roget Bryan for direction on the contract negotiation process. Mr. Bryan suggested a point person to assist with contract negotiation. Councilman Gregg nominated Councilman Webb because of his prior contract negotiation experience. Vice Mayor Bacheler seconded the motion, Councilman Rosenthal and Mayor Pinder both agreed. Councilman Webb discussed keeping it an open-ended contract with no expiration date. Councilman Webb wanted to add a longevity bonus, and housing consideration. Vice Mayor Bacheler would like a bonus to be given on merit not schedule. Councilman Rosenthal would like to wait to see what contract negotiations bring back for later discussion. Councilman Webb requested that the Village

Attorney and Acting Village Manager be involved in contract negotiations given their subject matter expertise. Mayor Pinder asked Acting Village Manager Maria Bassett to confirm the salary range (\$150k-\$180K), and FRS rate (23%). Ms. Bassett also noted that historically a 10% contribution into a 457 plan was included in the contract. Councilman Gregg asked for the last managers contract to be emailed for reference purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Henry Rosenthal made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Mark Gregg seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

Approved by Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Conde". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Stephanie Conde
Deputy Village Clerk