

**VERNON MYERS**  
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

**MARY LAWSON BROWN**  
VICE MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

**ALLEGRA KITCHENS**  
COMMISSIONER

**PHIL LEARY**  
COMMISSIONER

**JAMES NORWOOD, JR.**  
COMMISSIONER



**ELWIN C. "WOODY" BOYNTON, JR.**  
CITY MANAGER

**BETSY JORDAN DRIGGERS**  
CITY CLERK

**MATTHEW D. REYNOLDS**  
FINANCE DIRECTOR

**GARY S. GETCHELL**  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**MICHAEL LAMBERT**  
CHIEF FIRE DEPT

**DONALD E. HOLMES**  
CITY ATTORNEY

*Regular meeting 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month at 6:00 p.m.*

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF PALATKA**  
**CITY MANAGER FINALIST INTERVIEWS**  
July 3, 2012

Proceedings of a special called meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of July, 2012.

**PRESENT:**

Mayor	Vernon Myers
Commissioner	Mary Lawson Brown
Commissioner	Allegra Kitchens
Commissioner	Phil Leary
Commissioner	James Norwood, Jr.

Also Present: City Attorney Donald E. Holmes; City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers; Finance Director Matt Reynolds, Fire Chief Mike Lambert, Assistant Police Chief James Griffith, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Melvin Register, Main Street Manager Charles Rudd

Mayor Myers called the meeting to order and read the following call, dated June 29, 2012:

**TO MESSRS: MARY LAWSON BROWN, ALLEGRA KITCHENS, PHIL LEARY AND JAMES NORWOOD, JR.:**

You are hereby notified that a special called meeting of the City Commission is called to be held at the regular meeting place of the City Commission at City Hall, 201 N. 2nd Street, in the City of Palatka to commence at 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 3, 2012.

The purpose of the meeting is to interview the five finalist candidates for the position of City Manager.

*Is/ Vernon Myers*  
Vernon Myers, MAYOR

The following Commissioners acknowledged receipt of a copy of the foregoing notice of a special meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012.

*Is/ Mary Lawson Brown*  
COMMISSIONER

*Is/ Phil Leary*  
COMMISSIONER

/s/ James Norwood, Jr.  
COMMISSIONER

/s/ Allegra Kitchens  
COMMISSIONER

**INVOCATION** - Commissioner Norwood

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Commissioner Kitchens

Mayor Myers said he and the City Attorney have discussed a procedure for narrowing the field of candidates to one. At close of interviews the Clerk will distribute ballots containing each candidate's name to the Commission. The Commission will individually assign a score, or rank, to each candidate of 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1, with a score of "5" as the highest or best score, and "1" as the lowest score. The ballots will be given to the Clerk, who will tally them. The two candidates with the highest score will be placed on a ballot and the Commission will then rank those, with 2 being the highest or best score, and 1 being the lower score. Those ballots will be given to the Clerk, who will announce the results.

Commissioner Leary moved to adopt this ranking procedure as stated. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed. Mr. Holmes said, as the Commission has adopted a procedure, they can proceed with interviews.

Mayor Myers stated the question sheets that were provided to the Commission are for their use during interviews, and they are free to make notes on them. Any notes will be public record and all will need to be turned in to the Clerk at the close of the meeting.

The following candidates were scheduled for interview, in this order:

- 1. Kraig McLane
- 2. Clarence Hulse
- 3. Robert (Bobby) Payne
- 4. Michael (Mike) Czymbor
- 5. Gary Getchell

The following questions were asked of each candidate:

- 1. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years?
- 2. Where do you see Palatka in 5 years? 10 years?
- 3. What is your experience in dealing with the media (television, newspaper, radio, WWW)? Do you see the media as a positive force, and if so, how?
- 4. Talk about the most controversial issue you have encountered as a manager/administrator. Be specific. How was it resolved? What would you have done differently?
- 5. How do you build commission consensus on a "split" commission?
- 6. How do you assess the impact of new technologies on the operations of a city like Palatka?
- 7. What sort of things do you do for relaxation off the job?

The questions that follow were submitted by individual commissioners and approved by Mr. Holmes prior to the start of interviews.

Commissioner Brown submitted the following questions:

- 1) If you become city manager, and found that there was an unbalanced budget, what steps would you take? And how would you prevent laying off city employees?
- 2) Give an example of being a team player. How would you set the team up?

Commissioner Norwood submitted the following questions:

- 3) Do you understand the Quality of Life we have here in Palatka? How would you ensure it is preserved?
- 4) Have you been to Mt. Dora? Can you do what has been done in Mt. Dora here in Palatka's Downtown?
- 5) If the Commission decided to develop the 100 block using CRA funds, what are the first five (5) things you would do?

Commissioner Kitchens submitted the following questions:

- 6) Do you now or have you ever had issues with anger control?
- 7) How do you feel that you interact with employees under your supervision who are of a different race or gender?
- 8) How do you feel that you interact with your job "superiors" who are of a different race or gender?
- 9) If you are chosen as city manager, will you have a problem working with our police chief or feel threatened by him because he was an applicant for the job you got?
- 10) Do you have any pending legal actions, i.e. lis pendens or foreclosures?
- 11) The general fund is insufficient for the needs of the City of Palatka. Would you and your administration seek new funding options and apply for existing opportunities from County, State and Federal programs?  
Have you ever had experience with any of the following: CDBG, USDA, FDOT, Cultural and Historic Granting Agencies, Better Place Funding, Tax increment Financing, Mitigation and philanthropy?
- 12) Will you have an open door policy toward the citizens, commissioners and city staff allowing for them to come in and talk to you without making an appointment?
- 13) The City is in need of someone who will provide continuity and stability in the position of City Manager. While you cannot predict the future, if selected, is it your intention to make a long term commitment to the City to serve or do you consider this job to be only a step in your career path?

Commissioner Kitchens submitted the following individual questions:

Mr. McLane: You have been employed in a company that some believe may not be as sensitive to the public's wants as they might be. As city manager not only do you answer to the public directly, but to the commission which serves as your boss and also answers directly to the public. Will you be able to make that transition?

Mr. Hulse: Since 2000, your time staying with a job has ranged from 1 year to 3 years. We need someone to stay longer than 3 years. Are you prepared to stay in Palatka at least 7 years?

Mr. Cyzmbor: Is the mortgage on your home going to deter you from moving to Palatka should you get this job? If your family doesn't like Palatka, will you stay here anyway or will you leave?

Mr. Getchell: Will you be able to make the transition from treating employees as "troops" i.e. police officers, to treating them like regular people? Will you be open to having give and take conversations with them and listen to their positions and concerns?

Additional Questions asked of individual candidates follow by interview:

### **KRAIG MCLANE**

As to ex-parte communication, Commissioner Leary said Mr. Henry Dean of the St. Johns Water Management District spoke to him regarding Mr. McLane's application for the position and gave him a good recommendation.

Mayor Myers stated he had communications with Mr. McLane after Mr. Boynton announced his departure. Mr. McLane visited with him and said he was interested in applying for the City Manager position; he urged him to apply.

Mr. McLane's interview was concluded at 1:30 p.m.

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**BACKGROUND CHECKS** - Mayor Myers noted the City ran a full background check and all candidates came up clean.

**ALL OTHER EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS:** Commissioner Norwood said he had communications with Chief Getchell, who asked to meet with him to let him know he wanted to apply for the job. He told him he should do so. He was contacted by Mr. Payne, who wanted to meet with him, but he declined to discuss it with him in person. He did speak to Mr. Payne by telephone.

Commissioner Leary stated he met with Chief Getchell concerning his application, at the Chief's request. He also spoke with Mr. Payne, whom he has known since childhood, and had a 30 – 40 minute conversation with him about the job and his desire to apply for the position.

Commissioner Brown said she met with Chief Getchell, at his request, concerning his application for the position.

Commissioner Kitchens said she met with Chief Getchell, at his request, concerning his application for the position.

Mayor Myers said in addition to speaking to Mr. McLane, he had meetings with both Chief Getchell and Mr. Payne, both at their request. He told them what the job would entail and urged them to apply if that was their desire.

**RECESS** – Mayor Myers called for a short recess upon consensus of the Commission at 1:45 p.m.

**RECONVENE** – Mayor Myers reconvened the meeting at 1:55 p.m. and returned to the Orders of the Day.

### **CLARENCE HULSE**

Commissioner Leary said he's obviously done some homework on Palatka's downtown redevelopment goals. He asked what, in his opinion, is the key draw to a downtown area, or where would he rank food and entertainment in a redevelopment effort?

Mayor Myers asked where he was born? Mr. Hulse said he was born in Belize, and has been a US citizen for 8 years.

Mayor Myers said the Commission received a communication which was mailed to the Commission containing a newspaper article concerning a forwarded e-mail, and asked him to address it. Mr. Hulse was provided with a copy of the communication (filed). He said the police captain noted in the article and a good friend of the captain's parted ways, and this e-mail became part of a harassment lawsuit this "friend" filed against the captain. About six months before the captain and his "friend" parted ways, he forwarded this e-mail to the captain, who then forwarded it to a group of people, including his "friend." This was a lesson learned.

Commissioner Kitchens said this borders on sexual harassment, and asked if he has any comment about a joke apparently said in a public workplace. Mr. Hulse said it was in an e-mail that was forwarded to him, and he forwarded it to his friend, the captain, who then forwarded it out to others, including this "friend." This was a lesson learned.

Mr. Hulse's interview concluded at 2:35 p.m.

**RECESS** – Mayor Myers called for a short recess upon consensus of the Commission at 2:30 p.m.

**RECONVENE** – Mayor Myers reconvened the meeting at 2:40 p.m. and continued with the Orders of the Day

### **ROBERT (BOBBY) PAYNE**

Commissioner Norwood asked Mr. Payne to explain his concept of Rules, Responsibilities and Expectations for employees, and how he views these documents, as they are ever-changing.

Commissioner Leary asked where he would rank food and entertainment in the scheme of downtown redevelopment, and how important he believes those are.

Mr. Payne's interview concluded at 3:05 p.m.

**RECESS** – Mayor Myers called for a recess upon consensus of the Commission at 3:05 p.m. noting they would reconvene when Mr. Czymbor arrived for his 4:00 interview.

**RECONVENE** – Mayor Myers reconvened the meeting at 3:45 p.m. and continued with the Orders of the Day

**MICHAEL (MIKE) CZYMBOR**

Commissioner Kitchens asked if he'd had any union negotiation experience.

Commissioner Leary said 12 years ago he was sitting with his good friend in a restaurant in Fernandina Beach, and has always been impressed with the food and entertainment venue there. He asked how important does he believe the food and entertainment industry are for redevelopment?

Mayor Myers said there are many similarities between Palatka and Fernandina Beach. There is a lot of difference in the wealth between the two communities. He was there during some of the Center Street redevelopment, which dead ends into the waterfront. It has some blighted areas. Fernandina has some assets Palatka doesn't have, but that is basically what they are trying to do here. They want redevelopment and want to generate jobs. He asked if Mr. Czymbor has any particular talents that can come into play in redevelopment?

Mayor Myers noted Mr. Czymbor has job applications out in various places and that he is a finalist for the position of Panama City Beach City Manager. Mr. Czymbor indicated he was not chosen for that position.

Mr. Holmes asked him to clarify that it is his intent to move to Palatka if offered the job. Mr. Czymbor said it was, but that he could not predict how long it would take him to sell his home and make that transition.

Mr. Czymbor's interview concluded at 4:30 p.m.

**RECESS** – Mayor Myers called a recess upon consensus of the Commission at 4:30 p.m.

**RECONVENE** – Mayor Myers reconvened the meeting at 4:40 p.m. and returned to the Orders of the Day

**GARY GETCHELL**

Commissioner Kitchens asked if he would be willing to work with a new City Manager if another candidate were chosen for the job, and if he would stay with the City as Police Chief if he were not chosen for the position of City Manager.

Commissioner Leary asked if he were to come to the Commission with a recommendation on the 100 Block buildings, or if he was asked to bring a recommendation, would he recommend keeping them, or tearing them down?

Mr. Getchell's interview was concluded at 5:20 p.m.

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**BALLOTING** – The Clerk distributed a ballot containing the names of all five candidates to each member of the Commission. Each commissioner was instructed to rank each

candidate 1 through 5, with 5 being his/her top choice, and 1 being his/her last choice. After the ballots were marked according to instructions, Mr. Holmes collected them and gave them to the Clerk, who tallied the results. The Clerk was instructed to redistribute a ballot to the members of the Commission containing the two highest ranked candidates. The Clerk then distributed a second ballot containing the names of Michael Czymbor and Clarence Hulse.

The Commission was instructed to rank the final two candidates either 1 or 2, with 2 being his/her top choice. After they were marked, Mr. Holmes collected them and gave them to the Clerk, who tallied the results. Mr. Czymbor received the highest score.

Commissioner Norwood moved to instruct the Mayor and City Manager to enter into contract negotiations with Michael Czymbor for the position of City Manager, to include a probationary period of 3 months, a termination salary of 3 months, and a top salary range of \$110,000.00, or equal to Mr. Boyntons' salary at his departure, plus benefits and use of a city vehicle. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

**ADJOURN** - There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

ANY PERSON WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE CITY COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE MAY NEED TO INSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. FS 286.105