

To: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

From: Kenneth (Ken) Parker, FCCMA/ICMA Senior Advisor

Subject: City Manager Selection Process

Date: June 23, 2020

Recently, your City reached out to the Florida City-County Management Association (FCCMA) to see if Senior Advisors could assist the City of Lake Wales in recruiting your next City Manager. That call was referred to me. My name is Ken Parker. Currently, I serve as the FCCMA Senior Advisor Coordinator. There are currently nine active Senior Advisors in Florida.

Senior Advisors are retired city and county managers with lengthy experience and who are respected within the public management field. We are appointed by the FCCMA Board of Directors and the Executive Director of the International City/County Management Association. We are not paid. All of us are volunteers.

Senior Advisors provide, at no cost:

- Career and employment counsel to FCCMA and ICMA members;
- Guidance and counsel to members regarding ethics questions or concerns;
- Assistance to cities and counties with the Council-Manager form of government.
- Assistance to cities and counties that are considering adopting the Council-Manager form of government.
- Assistance to civic groups regarding the Council-Manager form of government; and
- Assistance to members-in-transition with guidance and direction as they seek new employment opportunities.

Upon request by the governing body of a municipality whose population is under 20,000 and for counties whose population is under 75,000, Senior Advisors can provide limited Manager search services. Our services are based upon two criteria, population and availability of a Senior Advisor or Senior Advisors. We do not charge for our services; but, we do request the City cover all travel related expenses. Generally, travel expenses are mileage, meals and hotel if required to stay overnight at a location. We request that the City make all hotel reservations and to pay for them directly rather than the Senior Advisor submitting receipts to the City for reimbursement.

Senior Advisors do not do any background searches on candidates. Those are the responsibility of the city or county. For your information, background investigations can cost about \$2,500 per candidate if done by an outside firm. Normally national search firms provide this service as part of their proposal. Senior Advisors are not consultants, but serve

as colleagues and counselors.

In the case of Lake Wales, you meet the first criteria, population. However, Senior Advisors may not be your best option.

There are several policy questions that your City Commission needs to answer before you embark on a Manager search.

- Do you want to involve citizens in the development of recruitment materials and in the screening process? If so, then you would need to appoint members to the citizen group.
- Do you want to hold community listening sessions conducted by either the City Commission or the citizen advisory group?
- Do you have an interim candidate that you desire to appoint as City Manager? If the City Council has an internal candidate, I would strongly recommend that you not begin the search process until after the Commission decides whether to employ the internal candidate or if the internal candidate states clearly that she/he will not be a candidate and will not apply for the position.

In my opinion, the City Commission has four options available.

1. Employ a full service firm to handle your recruitment. These firms have highly qualified people to assist the City Commission in hiring the right person. They have extensive networks. They work with the City Commission in developing a profile of characteristics the Commission desires to have in its next manager. They recruit based upon charter requirements and the profile they develop working with the Commission. They do not wait for applicants to apply. They contact those in their network that most closely meet the job profile and encourage them to apply. The firms are responsible for all the background checks and verifications. They help the City Commission manage the interview process. They may assist the City Commission in developing interview questions. They receive the applications and screen the applications for the Commission. They help the Commission manage the interview process and schedule. For a City your size this is by far the best option.
2. The second option is for you to handle the recruitment process internally. That means your staff would develop the entire recruitment packet. They would be responsible for advertising for the position. They would be responsible for accepting all resumes. The City would be responsible for conducting all background and verifications. Some cities choose to employ an outside firm to conduct the background and verifications. I always recommend to any city to do the highest level of background investigation. It is far more than criminal and civil records check and related files. It includes reviewing social media and other media. It verifies education. It includes employment verification. It may include review of

personnel files. Your internal staff would be responsible for managing the interview process.

If you choose to conduct the search in house, Senior Advisors could provide examples of recruitment materials that other cities have used. We could provide the Council with a questionnaire that would help develop the candidate profile. I indicated that I would review documents and provide her with input. I did indicate to her that we could assist the City Council with resume review.

3. Allow the Senior Advisors to advise you and your staff on recruiting the next City Manager. Most of the work would be done by your internal staff. We would advise the Commission and them on a variety of items including preparing the job profile, the recruitment brochure, and where to advertise. The Senior Advisors would review the resumes and provide you with a listing of potential candidates who met the charter requirements and the profile develop and approved by the Commission. We would work along side you on preparing questions to be asked the candidates as well as helping with the interview process. This option is a partnership with us coming along side of you and your staff. The question that you must ask is how much time your staff can dedicate to the process. Senior Advisors do not have the contacts that the recruiting firms have. We do not know which managers are considering moving from their current jobs to another position. Recruiting and placement is what the firms do. Recruitment of Managers is not the primary thing Senior Advisors are charged with doing by FCCMA and ICMA.
4. The final option is to employ an internal candidate and not advertised. In my opinion, this is the first question that you must answer. If you are considering hiring an internal candidate don't waste your time with a developing a RFP for consultants or even consider any other options.

If I were involved with you in preparing documents and advertising for the City Manager position, the following process would take place:

- One month to develop position profile and recruitment documents. I would ask the City Commission to adopt all documents before the position is posted.
- Advertise for one month. If a Search Firm is selected they would handle the placement of the ad. If a Search is selected to do the recruitment the resumes would be sent to them. If the Senior Advisor or internal recruitment option is selected, then the city would receive all the resumes.
- Two weeks for the review of resumes and provide the City Commission with a list of qualified candidates.

- City Commission would determine which candidates from the qualified list they want to interview.
- Background and Verifications can take up to one month or more. I always recommend the background and verifications be completed prior to interviews.
- Schedule interviews.
- Select a manager and approve contract.

Most managers have a notice provision in their contracts if they are currently employed. Some cities and counties are willing to waive the notice provision. Most cities and counties are not willing to waive the notice provision. Each Manager contract is different. The usual notice requirement is 60 days. I have seen some that are 90 days.

A nationwide search firm may be able to cut some time off this schedule since they do this on a regular basis.

If I or another Senior Advisor can assist you, please feel free to call us. I am looking forward to being online with you next week.