MEMO

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

TO: Mayor Oravec and Fellow Council Members

FROM: Colin Baenziger
(561) 707-3537 (cell)

DATE: May 20, 2016

RE: City Attorney Search – Recommended Candidates

We are recommending the City consider seven candidates for its City Attorney position. Each offers unique qualities. We suggest that the City interview four or five candidates. All seven of the candidates are briefly described below. We believe it is a very strong field of candidates and that the City will find an outstanding individual from among them.

- **Gary Glassman:** Mr. Glassman has worked with Garganese, Weiss & Agresta, P.A. (a highly regarded Central Florida law firm specializing in the practice of municipal law) from 2008 to 2016. He served as an Assistant County Attorney for Orange County (2001-2006) and as a Senior Assistant Attorney with the City of Tampa (2006-2008). Prior to that he worked with as a Partner in Glassman & Golden Norris, an Associate with Becker & Poliakoff, P.A. and Associate General Counsel for Fay's Drug Company. Mr. Glassman feels the most important attributes of a City Attorney are, "to listen to the commission, and understand what the commission is trying to accomplish," and "respond to the commission with a well-researched and thought out response in a timely and efficient manner." He also notes, "The city attorney should be available to department heads and other city officials to provide advice and guidance. The city attorney should be a leader, responsible to the city commission, always striving to make the city a better place for its residents." Mr. Glassman has his J.D. from Syracuse University College of Law and his B.A. from the University of Rochester.

- **Ramon Irizarri:** Mr. Irizarri currently has a private practice with his wife and partner in Miami-Dade County specializing in civil litigation in areas of workers' compensation, wrongful discharge, pension issues, wage and hour issues, real estate, contracts, and dissolution of marriage. Prior to that he served as the City Attorney of Sweetwater Florida for eleven years. He had a private practice in Miami (1985-1990) where he represented the City of Miami, and a private practice in New York (1980-1985). He also served as a Labor Attorney for the New York City Board of Education (1978-1980). He began his career as a professor "so supporting others and guiding them when necessary improves the whole and makes for strong teamwork." Mr. Irizarri feels that the strongest attributes of a City Attorney are honest, integrity, unyielding ethics, professionalism, being consistent and flexible at the same time, communication, and knowledge of the law. Mr. Irizarri has his J.D. from St. Johns School of Law, his B.A. (History) from Long Island University, and has completed graduate studies (Education, Administration and Supervision) at City College and the St. Johns University School of Education.

- **Gary K. Oldehoff:** Mr. Oldehoff has been a partner with Lewis Stroud & Deutsch since 2007. In this capacity he has represented the Florida League of Cities, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, and several other municipalities in Florida. Prior to that he was the Assistant County Attorney for Sarasota County (2002-2007) and worked in the Martin County Attorney's (1989-2000) rising to the level of County Attorney. He was the Assistant County Attorney for Chesterfield County (1988-1989) and Miami-Dade County (1984-1987). Mr. Oldehoff believes that "a successful City Attorney is one who gives sound legal advice and counsel, and produces impeccable legal products that stand the test of time. The City Attorney must have an excellent analytical mind, and must be able to examine an issue or a problem from many different approaches and angles, like examining the facets of a diamond. A City Attorney must also be able to work with people, and be a good manager and administrator. A City Attorney must be above reproach. His or her actions reflect upon the city and those who chose him or her." Mr. Oldehoff earned his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law and his B.A. (History, Political Science, and Anthropology) from State University of New York. He has also completed graduate studies (Estate Planning) at the University of Miami School of Law.

- **O. Reginald Osenton**: Mr. Osenton offers a unique blend of legal and elected experience. While he has been in private practice since 1992, he has also served as the Mayor of Mitchell Heights, WV (2003-2004) and as the Town Attorney for Man, WV (1999-2003). His other local government experience includes serving as Board Counsel for the Logan County (WV) Economic Development Authority (1996-2000), Outside Counsel for the Logan County Board of Education (1997-2003), Chairman of the Logan County Deputy Sheriffs' Civil Service Commission (2002-2004) and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Logan County, WV (1992-1996). After law school, he served as a senior tax consultant with Ernst and Young (1989-1992). Mr. Osenton states, "the City Attorney's Office is a law firm with one client, and I would run it efficiently and effectively much in the same way I have run my successful law firms." He feels the four key attributes of a city attorney are: effective manager, knowledge of the law, integrity and responsiveness. He also believes in representing the interests of his client aggressively. Mr. Osenton has his J.D. from George Washington University's National Law Center and his B.A. in accounting from West Virginia University.

- **Philip Sherwin:** Mr. Sherwin worked for Polk County, FL, from 2003 to 2015, most recently serving as an Assistant County Attorney III. He also worked for the City of Cape Coral as an Assistant City Attorney from 1985 to 1989 and has sixteen years' experience in the private sector. While at Polk County, he supervised a paralegal and a secretary. In 2010 he became Board Certified in City, County and Local Government Law. When asked about litigation, he said, "As a Certified Circuit Civil Court Mediator, I understand the value of mediation. In handling lawsuits everything must be weighed with the City's best interest in mind, which entails a cost/benefit analysis as the matter progresses and a determination whether to settle or not. The City Attorney makes the recommendation to the City Commission, which ultimately determines how one proceeds with a lawsuit. In some cases, you may have a matter that will be particularly imperative to pursue to the end to deter others

from bringing similar actions, while in other cases you must go to trial when there is no reasonable basis to settle the matter. Litigation is both time consuming and expensive, which must be kept in mind at all times." Mr. Sherwin has his J.D. from Northern Illinois University and his B.A. (Psychology) from the University of Miami in Coral Gables.

- **James D. Stokes:** Mr. Stokes has been the City Attorney in Greenacres since 2015. He has also had a private practice since 2011 where he served various clients including local government. Prior to this he was the City Attorney for Palm Bay (2006-2011), the Interim City Attorney for West Melbourne (2006-2007), and the Assistant City Attorney for Pompano Beach (2002-2006). He was in the private sector from (1995-2002). He was the Deputy Sheriff for Riverside (1988-1992) and worked for the Police Department in China Lake (1980-1988) rising to the level of Sergeant. Mr. Stokes believes that "the most important aspect of being a City Attorney is remembering and maintaining my role in city government. The City Attorney's function is to provide legal advice and direction. The City Attorney should never get involved in the policy-making function of the Council, or the executive function of the Manager." Mr. Stokes has his J.D. from Southwestern University School of Law, his M.A. (Theology) from the University of Notre Dame, and his B.S. (Business & Management) from the University of Redlands.

- **John Turner**. Mr. Turner worked in the Lee County Attorney's Office from 1991 to 2015 rising to the level of Senior Assistant Attorney and Chief of Litigation. He is currently in private practice. Prior to serving Lee County, he was in private practice and also served as a Municipal Court Judge in Tulsa, OK. Mr. Turner believes that a successful City Attorney has "integrity; well-rounded knowledge of local government law with a common sense approach to solving problems; a team player who works well with elected officials and staff to protect the legal interests of the entity; a person who gives council members all legal options relating to the matter without stating his opinion on policy issues; and possess the highest level of professionalism, ethics, and dedication." Mr. Turner has his J.D. from the University of Tulsa College of Law and his B.S. (Business Administration) also from the University of Tulsa.

Next Steps

I will contact each of you to discuss the candidates either by phone or in a face-to-face meeting. We are scheduled to select finalists on May 25th and to interview candidates on May 31st. Later this week, I will provide a series of questions you may wish to ask the candidates at the interviews.