



**ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS  
SPECIAL CALL VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Village Administrative Center  
Founders Park Community Center  
87000 Overseas Highway  
Islamorada, FL 33036**

**Wednesday, May 25, 2016  
5:30 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Mayor Deb Gillis called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. The following Councilmembers were present on roll call: Mayor Deb Gillis, Vice Mayor Jim Mooney, Councilman Mike Forster, Councilman Chris Sante and Councilman Dennis Ward. Also in attendance were Village Manager Maria Aguilar, Village Attorney Roget Bryan, Village Clerk Kelly Toth, and all other appropriate personnel.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Van Cadenhead led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Deb Gillis opened public comment.

Van Cadenhead played guitar, sang and spoke against the demotion of the current Village Manager.

Ken Philipson suggested the Council refrain from setting term limits in future manager contracts. He suggested that perhaps it was time to consider a strong mayor form of government.

John Fernandez spoke regarding his experience in the human resources field. He spoke regarding the pros and cons of demoting staff and the types of individuals needed to serve on the Ad Hoc Village Manager Selection Committee.

Stanley Marguiles spoke against demoting the Village Manager and in support of keeping her in her current position.

Dave Purdo spoke about the Memorial Day Services to be held at the Hurricane Monument. He expressed discontent for the way the Village Manager's evaluation was handled by Council.

Charlotte Norris provided a brief account of her expertise in human resource management. She stated she thought there were three issues to be considered: (1) fairness (2) the village manager search (3) and a need to evaluate the Village's human resource evaluation system. She stated she was offering her resume and bio if the Village desired to utilize her services.

Larry Barr stated he was in agreement with Mr. Marguiles and Mr. Purdo and that what was occurring at the meeting was a disgrace to Council and the Village. Mr. Barr stated the thought the Council was making a mistake in demoting the Village Manager. He stated he thought this reflected poorly on the Village and the Council. He expressed support for retaining the Village Manager in her current position.

Brad Dougherty stated he had hoped to hear what the Village Manager had done to cause her demotion. He stated he thought she had a high level of integrity and outstanding ethics. Mr. Dougherty stated employee evaluations should be reflective of the employee's actual performance.

Mayor Deb Gillis closed public comment.

#### **IV. AGENDA: Request for Deletions / Emergency Additions**

Mayor Deb Gillis announced a Keys-wide meeting was being coordinated regarding workforce affordable housing and that two representatives each were needed from Monroe County, Marathon and Islamorada, Village of Islands. She explained the meeting was to discuss 200 potential affordable units that a Miami developer was considering constructing in the Keys. Mayor Gillis and Councilman Chris Sante expressed that they would like to be the representatives and the Council expressed agreement.

#### **V. DISCUSSION**

##### **A. Discussion Regarding Village Manager Search Process**

**TAB 1**

Village Manager Maria Aguilar read the following information from a letter she drafted and submitted to Council:

*Pursuant to Section 20 of my amended Village Manager contract with Islamorada, Village of Islands (the "Village"), I have the option of reverting to my previously held position of Finance Director/Deputy Village Manager. Based on comments received from individual members of the Village Council during my recent annual evaluation, including comments made to the press and the results of the written evaluations, I hereby accept the offer made as representative of a majority of the Village Council to resign from the position of Village Manager and revert to my prior position of Finance Director /Deputy Village Manager.*

*As requested previously by the Village Council, I agree to continue in the position as Village Manager until such time as the Village Council is able to hire a replacement. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to serve as the Village Manager and look forward to continuing my employment with the Village in my prior role.*

Ms. Aguilar stated that she was very thankful for the opportunity to revert to her prior position and continue her employment with the Village. She stated that in stepping down she was committed to serving the Village Council and anyone selected to serve as Village Manager. Ms. Aguilar stated that by reverting back to her prior position an additional position would be added to Finance. She explained that this was a position that probably should have existed all along and stated she had been working in Finance and helping the Finance Department to address the learning curve until the Finance Director and Finance Department obtained experience in other areas. She stated that she should have come to Council and requested the additional position in Finance when she took the position of Village Manager. Ms. Aguilar explained that if she were to leave the employment of the Village, the Council would have to hire someone to handle the responsibilities of a Controller and the things she had been doing after hours and on weekends.

Village Attorney Roget Bryan confirmed Ms. Aguilar would remain the Village Manager and would handle the responsibilities associated with the position until such a time a new Village Manager was hired.

Village Attorney Roget Bryan began the staff report and stated the following were key items for Council consideration:

1. Whether or not to utilize the services of a consulting firm for the search, or to have staff initiate the process;
2. Approval of an employment advertisement;
3. Methodology to reach a short list of candidates and ultimately select the top candidates for the Village Council to interview.

Assistant to the Village Manager and Public Information Officer Mary Swaney continued the staff report and asked whether the Council desired to use a consulting firm. Council came to consensus to have staff initiate the search process. Ms. Swaney asked if the Council would like any changes to the draft advertisement and whether they wanted the search to be within the State of Florida or nationwide. Discussion ensued among Council and staff regarding the items included in a document entitled the Village Manager Search and Selection Tool. The majority of Council expressed a desire to advertise nationally; to have weighted rankings for Florida residents; to advertise for 45 days; and to include language to reflect “knowledgeable in all departments” in the advertisement.

Ms. Swaney asked whether the Council would like to establish an evaluation committee. Council expressed that they would like to establish a committee with two appointees each. Ms. Swaney explained the proposed potential timeline and asked if the Council was in agreement or if they desired to make changes. The majority of Council expressed agreement with the proposed timeline.

Village Attorney Roget Bryan asked if the Council had a desire to hold a “meet and greet” for the short list candidates in order for the public to meet the candidates. Council expressed agreement for a “meet and greet”.

Village Manager Roget Bryan stated a resolution establishing the ad hoc committee would be provided at the June 9, 2016 Regular Village Council Meeting. He confirmed that the Council would need to provide their committee member names to staff at the June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Councilman Dennis Ward stated he would like to discuss, at a future meeting, a process/policy for the evaluation of village managers that provided transparency and that would be conducted in the open.

Mayor Deb Gillis opened public comment.

Ken Philipson suggested the Council consider the beginning of the school year as it may affect the candidate they hire.

Dave Purdo spoke against rushing the process to hire a village manager.

Van Cadenhead stated he agreed with Mr. Purdo and spoke in support of the Council taking their time in the selection process. He stated that he thought the public should have a say in who was chosen to serve on the Ad Hoc Village Manager Selection Committee and spoke against a committee that was predominately “pro development”.

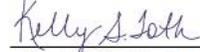
Mayor Deb Gillis stated the selection committee served to narrow the list of candidates and not to make the selection of the Village Manager.

John Fernandez confirmed the committee was subject to Florida’s Sunshine Law. He suggested the Village furnish the committee members with Village emails and cell phones so that they did not have to use their personal emails and phones to conduct business.

Charlotte Norris provided the pros and cons of hiring a manager close to the General Election.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Chris Sante made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Dennis Ward seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:26 PM.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly S. Toth  
Village Clerk

Approved by the Village Council this 30<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2016.