

**CITY OF DELTONA, FLORIDA
CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2013**

A Workshop Meeting of the Deltona City Commission was held on Tuesday, October 15, 2013 in the City of Deltona's 2nd Floor Conference Room at 2345 Providence Blvd., Deltona, Florida.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor John Masiarczyk.

2. ROLL CALL:

Mayor	John Masiarczyk	Present
Vice Mayor	Zenaida Denizac	Present
Commissioner	Webster Barnaby	Present
Commissioner	Heidi Herzberg	Present
Commissioner	Fred Lowry	Present
Commissioner	Chris Nabicht	Present
Commissioner	Nancy Schleicher	Present
Acting City Manager	William "Dave" Denny	Present
City Attorney	Becky Vose	Present
Deputy City Clerk	Mitch Honaker	Present

Also Present: Planning and Development Services Director Chris Bowley; and Building and Enforcement Services Director/Acting Deputy City Manager Dale Baker.

3. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

The City Commission and staff said the pledge to the flag.

4. BUSINESS:

A. Interviews with Consultants for State Government Relations Services and Lobbying.

The four lobbyist firms listed below made presentations to the City Commission:

- 1) Ballard partners, Inc.
- 2) Capitol Alliance
- 3) Capitol Insight, Inc.
- 4) Louis C. Rotundo

Each lobbyist firm discussed their firms lobbyist experience with the Florida legislature and with government affairs, how a lobbyist can help Deltona achieve their goals, the importance of a City being in control of their own destiny, that they do not represent any other City in Volusia County, that Deltona needs to develop a flexible plan of what it wants a lobbyist to accomplish, and reasons that Deltona needs to have a lobbyist in Tallahassee.

At the end of each presentation the Commission asked questions of each firm.

Ballard Partners, Incorporated:

Mayor Masiarczyk asked how the communication process would work between Deltona and Ballard Partners, Incorporated, and Christopher Dorworth, Managing Director for the Orlando office of Ballard Brothers Inc. replied that communication and proximity have a lot to do with relaying information, always being available; that many times issues are time sensitive and Ballard Partners should be able to be in Deltona in a day. He also stated that they have a good rapport with Representative David Santiago who is from Deltona so there would be almost constant communication between Deltona's legislator and Ballard Partners, Inc.

Vice Mayor Denizac asked about a lobbyist job in Tallahassee and the importance of building relationships. Mr. Dorworth replied that a lot of authority is bestowed on the legislature especially in the areas of the appropriations process and rule making process, so if you do not have the right relationships you just cannot get anything done. It is important that a lobbyist have the right dynamic relationship with the Governor's office, to know the multiple branches, and that Ballard Partners knows how to work within the legislative process.

Commissioner Herzberg asked what nearby cities Ballard Partners represents and who from Ballard Partners Inc. would handle the work from Deltona, and Mr. Dorworth replied that they just opened their Orlando office, that they do not have any other cities in the local area, and that he would be the point person but that depending on the issue that Deltona may get one (1) or sometimes more representatives from Ballard Partners.

Commissioner Herzberg asked do you have experience in representing local governments in issues like property tax reform, communication service tax, community redevelopment, enterprise funds, home rule powers, unfunded mandates, and in securing local project funding that did not get vetoed, and Mr. Dorworth replied that they have extensive experience in working with cities and that he feels there is no one better in the State of Florida at securing funding than Ballard Partners, Incorporated.

Commissioner Schleicher asked how Ballard Partners have dealt with unfunded mandates in the past, and Mr. Dorworth replied that they are good at fairing out the obvious mandates that are not going through the session so they can concentrate on the ones that need curtailing during session and especially towards the end of session when unfunded mandates usually have a habit of popping up.

Commissioner Nabicht asked how it works for Ballard Partners to be able to monitor what is going on in Tallahassee as it pertains to Deltona and how does the Commission get that packet of information, and Mr. Dorworth replied that it is tailored to the amount of information that the Commission wants, when they want it, and how the Commission wants to receive it.

Commissioner Barnaby asked what Ballard Partners relationship is with Senators Dorothy Hukill and David Simmons, and he voiced his concerns with ethics and some of the lobbyist firms working in Tallahassee, and Mr. Dorworth, replied that he has had a long standing history with

both Senators, and that there were a series of debates on the ethics of issues and that Ballard Partners are highly conscience of the issue and of the “revolving door” concept of prior legislative members working in Tallahassee and becoming lobbyist. He stated that the law has recently changed in that now legislators have to wait for two (2) years after they term out before they can be a lobbyist in Tallahassee, and that Ballard Partners, Inc. is not limited by that law.

Commissioner Herzberg asked how Ballard Partners perceives the process for them to get their guidance on what a lobbyist is to work on for Deltona, and Mr. Dorworth replied that a big portion is getting input from the City on just exactly what it is they want to accomplish, some input will come from the Florida League of Cities, that Ballard Partners and the Commission would work together to identify budget issues, and that each year the legislature puts out their vision for the year which will usually change many times during session.

Mayor Masiarczyk asked how Ballard Partners Inc. would answer resident’s question of “why does Deltona need to hire a lobbyist”, and Mr. Dorworth replied that the best answer to that question is that the City deserves to have as much control as possible over the future of Deltona.

Capitol Alliance Group, Incorporated:

Mayor Masiarczyk asked how Capitol Alliance Group sees their relationship and interaction with Deltona’s local delegation, and Jeffrey Sharkey, Managing Partner at Capitol Alliance Group replied that they would coordinate delegation meetings and coalition bills, he discussed personalities and abilities of legislative representatives from Volusia County, and the excellent relationship that Capitol Alliance Group has with the Volusia County delegation

Vice Mayor Denizac stated that Deltona is a very unique City with its own set of challenges and she asked if Capitol Alliance Group has ever represented a City with similar challenges as the City of Deltona, and Mr. Sharkey replied “yes” and that he does not feel that there would be any conflict of interest in representing Deltona, that Tallahassee and Key West have very similar concerns as Deltona with regards to water, storm water issues, nutrient issues, septic tanks, algae bloom issues, fertilizer issues, waste water and mandatory sewer system connections.

Commissioner Lowry asked how Capitol Alliance Group can help Deltona begin their journey in using a lobbyist and in communicating the need to the residents, and Mr. Sharkey replied that they could help Deltona develop a legislative priorities list that can be communicated to the media, to residents and through other social media sources, that they can assist with whatever ideas staff develops, and can attend town hall meetings with the Commission and with Representative Santiago.

Commissioner Schleicher stated that Capitol Alliance Groups proposal was very detailed and answered most of her questions, and she asked Capitol Alliance Group to elaborate on their comment that they would reach out to other stake holders, and Mr. Sharkey replied that making sure that the West Volusia community realizes that what Deltona is doing will benefit them then Capitol Alliance will make sure that the rest of the community has buy-in and are in support of the City’s plans.

Commissioner Barnaby thanked Capitol Alliance Group for their professionalism and deportment, stated that Deltona was trying to identify ways to grow their commercial tax base, and looking for opportunities that are game changers for Deltona to change from being 20% commercial and 80% residential to increase the City's tax base. Mr. Sharkey replied that he had done a lot of commercial development over the years and that he enjoys looking at available resources and pulling available resources together with a City's vision.

Commissioner Nabicht discussed the travel expenses mentioned in Capitol Alliance Group's proposal and he asked if they were pooled, Mr. Sharkey replied that they do pool their expenses, they do not charge for office supplies, and that travel expenses are negotiable.

Vice Mayor Denizac asked if the City is provided a monthly report of who the firm has lobbying to and what issues are being worked, and Mr. Sharkey replied that they would like to meet with the Commission monthly or maybe bi-weekly when the legislature is out of session, during session they would provide daily updates with full reports every Friday on a weekly basis, and that neither Capitol Alliance Group nor the Commission could do their job if they are only half informed of what is going on.

Capitol Insight, LLC:

Mayor Masiarczyk asked how Capitol Insight, Incorporated sees its relationship now in Tallahassee with the Volusia County delegation, and Mr. Jeffrey Sharkey, Managing Partner of Capitol Insight, LLC replied that they know, and have worked with the Volusia County legislators, and are impressed with all of the Volusia County elected officials, that they have served with many of the current legislators, and that they are very familiar with the incoming legislative members.

Vice Mayor Denizac asked about Capitol Insight's federal level lobbyist and how that would benefit Deltona, and she asked how accessible Capitol Insight would be to the City. Mr. Sharkey replied that all benefits would be in an indirect nature because this is a State lobbying services request for proposal (RFP), that the federal lobbyists have different rules, that Capitol Insight has an office in Orlando, that most federal grants are in the defense and transportation industry, that with the City's permission they would aggressively pursue federal grants that would benefit Deltona, that Capitol Insight members depend heavily on their I-phones, that they will be in Deltona when needed, they are always available by phone, that they will not clog the Commission up with emails but that they will provide timely updates, that they have adequate infrastructure to track and monitor whatever issues Deltona will have, that they have people and systems tracking legislature in Tallahassee, that they are accessible 24/7 and would expect the same of Deltona's representatives.

Commissioner Barnaby stated that he is impressed with the assembled professional Capitol Insight team and their experience level, and he hoped that they would be able to take the initiative to assist Deltona in changing the dynamics of the City from being 80% residential to a more commercial based community, and Mr. Sharkey replied that there are challenges to changing the mix of a community, that they will help Deltona look at the playing fields and would help develop their plan, and he stated that Capitol Insight is better qualified in experience to help Deltona figure out a plan and to look at, and address issues using tactics to match the situation.

Commissioner Schleicher asked if Capitol Insight looks at the community as a whole and will develop issues that the City may want to look at besides those mentioned on the RFP. Mr. Sharkey replied that they have done research on Deltona, and if hired they will do a lot more research on Deltona's needs, they did a drive through of Deltona, that the interchange at I4 and Howland Boulevard is undeveloped and has many for sale signs along Howland Boulevard that are a benefit coming into the projected better economic times, the fact that Deltona is the 24th largest City in Florida out of 283 cities makes Deltona poised to begin to develop and shape a community that everyone can be proud of in the future.

Commissioner Herzberg asked if Capitol Insight had any other City clients in the area, and Mr. Sharkey replied that they do not represent any cities in Volusia County and if hired they would not be hired by any other City in Volusia County.

Mayor Masiarczyk asked if Capitol Insight could put their thoughts into one sentence that would justify to the residents of Deltona the money spent on a lobbyist, and Ms. Shiela Griffin, Assistant Partner for Capitol Insight replied "having a voice in Tallahassee" and that coming out of a recession and with the new department of Economic Opportunity, that it is a unique time in Florida and Deltona should have a voice in Tallahassee to be a part of the upcoming economic development efforts. Members of Capitol Insight also mentioned the importance of having a seat at the table and that if you are not at the table then you are on the menu, and that the City has a duty to represent residents not only locally, but also in Tallahassee where the funding and the legislature are that can make Deltona an even better place to live.

Louis C. Rotundo:

Mayor Masiarczyk asked about Mr. Rotundo's working relationships with the Volusia delegation, and Mr. Rotundo replied that he has very good working relationships with Senators Hukill and Simmons and provided examples of their long working relationships.

Vice Mayor Denizac asked what sets Mr. Rotundo's lobbyist firm apart from the other lobbyist firms that have responded to Deltona's lobbyist RFP, and Mr. Rotundo replied that he is uniquely qualified to handle Deltona's issues, is familiar with Deltona's challenges, that he has excellent relationships with various agencies in Florida, and that he brings a fore knowledge and experience that is perhaps unique to the other firms.

Commissioner Nabicht asked if Mr. Rotundo could ease his concern about being the firm's sole employee, and Mr. Rotundo replied that he has been a lobbyist for over 30 years, that he has a very select clientele, that he is in Tallahassee all during session and that other than being in meetings he is always available.

Mayor Masiarczyk asked what one statement that the City could make to residents on why it is important for Deltona to hire a lobbyist, and Mr. Rotundo replied that the City needs to be selective and know what they want to get accomplished in Tallahassee, and that a lobbyist is needed to kill bills that would hurt a City.

The Commission filled out, signed, and turned their applicant ranking sheets into the Acting City Manager.

The Commission discussed the varying aspects of each of the applicants, that they were impressed by the quality of applicants, the committee selection criteria, references for each of the applicants, the data that the applicants had submitted, and the selection process.

The Commission discussed how the communication process would work between the lobbyist and the Commission, developing specifics for a lobbyist plan of action, perhaps the selected lobbyist facilitating the development of the City's plan, the importance of a lobbyist protecting a City from poorly written detrimental bills that would have adverse effects on cities, the possibility of sewer hook-ups being mandated, placing a large map of Deltona in the 2nd floor conference room, developing a fluid plan that can adjust to future changes, economic development and infrastructure, the Commission communicating in a timely fashion, and the Commission being readily available to meet to discuss issues and provide direction to the lobbyist firm, especially while the Legislature is in session.

The Commission discussed the upcoming West Volusia Round Table, issues for the Round Table and attendance projections.

While the ranking sheets were being tallied by the Acting City Manager the Commission discussed authorizing the Acting City Manager to negotiate the lobbyist contract with the selected lobbyist, doing a budget amendment to fund hiring a lobbyist, the costs and fees associated with hiring a lobbyist, the maximum amount the Commission was willing to spend on a lobbyist contract being \$50,000 dollars, first year issues with hiring a lobbyist, and the Commission providing clear guidance to a lobbyist.

After discussion, the Commission concurred to authorize the Acting City Manager to negotiate contract terms with the winning lobbyist, to enter into an agreement not to exceed \$50,000, which includes all expenses, if unable to come to an agreement, negotiations with the first place firm would be terminated, negotiations would then take place with the number two (2) ranked firm, and that negotiations would continue until an agreement is reached and an award is made.

The City Attorney announced that there was a tie for first place between two (2) of the applicants.

The Commission and staff discussed ranking the top two (2) firms that were tied during the Workshop or waiting until the October 21, 2013 Regular Commission meeting.

After discussion, the Commission concurred to rank the top two (2) firms that were tied during the Workshop.

The Commission ranked the two (2) firms that were tied for number one, the Acting City Manager and City Attorney tallied the ranking sheets, and the Acting City Manager announced that Capitol Alliance Group was ranked as number one.

5. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:

6. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Mitch Honaker, Deputy City Clerk