MINUTES
City of Cocoa
City Manager Candidate Virtual Townhall Meeting

August 13, 2020

A City Manager Candidate Virtual Townhall Meeting was held on Thursday, August 13, 2020, in Cocoa City Hall, in City Council Chambers, located at 65 Stone Street, in Cocoa, Florida, 32922, as publicly noticed.

I. **Opening Matters:**

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Assistant City Clerk took the roll.

PRESENT:	Jake Williams, Jr.	Mayor
	James Goins	Deputy Mayor
	Don Boisvert	Councilmember
	Lorraine Koss	Councilmember
	Brenda Warner	Councilmember
	Anthony Garganese	City Attorney
	Matt Fuhrer	Interim City Manager
	Monica Arsenault	Assistant City Clerk

OTHER STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Cantaloupe, Chief of Police; Tammy Gemmati, Administrative Services Director; and Mitchell Lawyer, Tech Services Supervisor.

Ms. Dona Higginbotham introduced Caryn Gardner-Young, the first City Manager candidate to answer citizen questions. Ms. Higginbotham added that she had a total of twenty-seven questions and each candidate would be given an hour to answer as many as possible.

Ms. Caryn Gardner-Young began at 5:37 pm. She answered the following questions:

- Candace Rogers: What do you hope to get out of the position in a city like Cocoa?

- PELSAPP2: Have any of the candidates ever been let go, forced to resign or resigned under pressure from a previous job and why?
- David Prather: As City Manager, how would you improve the business climate in this difficult environment?
- Connie Harvey: What is your philosophy for using consultants?
- Anthony Colombo: With the numerous social issues affecting the nation today, how do you think these issues affect Cocoa?
- Jeri Blanco: Cocoa is in the unique position of owning a utility that generates a significant amount of revenue for the City. This revenue has allowed the City to accumulate a generous balance in the reserve account. As City Manager, one of the duties and responsibilities will be to oversee the budget. How would you manage the current reserve balance, would you be in favor of maintaining the current level of reserves or would you look at that balance as an opportunity to expand on capital improvement projects in the City?
- Chris Hattaway: Have you ever been investigated for an ethics violation through the ICMA and what was the outcome?
- Candace Rogers: What will your goal be for the first year and the third year? How do you set those goals and do you have a process?
- David Prather: How or in what role would you use Citizen Advisory Boards?
- Connie Harvey: What is your philosophy regarding the use of consultants to help guide policy and operational decisions such as recommending/selecting a vendor for trash collection?
- Anthony Colombo: What qualities can you bring to make a positive impact on the City?
- Christopher Hattaway: Why did you resign from your last City Manager position?
- Candace Rogers: How do you incorporate citizen input into the city planning process and how much weight do you think should be given to the development of those plans?
- David Prather: Give an example of how you have empowered your staff to lead or complete a complex project.
- Connie Harvey: What is your philosophy regarding the use of consultants for directional input such as creating architectural guidelines and/or small-scale parking studies?
- Chris Hattaway: Why are you currently seeking employment as a City Manager with the City of Cocoa?
- Candace Rogers: How do you keep a ship on course when the winds of politics are constantly trying to change your course?

- Connie Harvey: What is your philosophy regarding the use of consultants for large-scale, strategic visioning and capital improvements such as those invite/encourage public input that result in a longer-term plan, such as addressing parking issues and improvements to our waterfront and parks.
- Chris Hattaway: Will you consider defunding the Police Department?

Ms. Gardner-Young expressed her gratitude for the opportunity and provided a closing statement. She ended at 6:35pm[1].

Ms. Higginbotham introduced Mr. Keith Moffett, the second City Manager candidate to answer citizen questions. He began at 6:43 pm.

In addition to the questions posed to Ms. Gardner-Young, Mr. Moffett was able to answer the following additional questions from citizens:

- Candace Rogers: Cocoa is made up of a very diverse community with competing ideas. Have you been in a situation where two groups had opposing ideas on an issue and wanted you to take their position? If so, described how it was resolved.
- Chris Hattaway: How do you handle disagreements with Council members?
- Candace Rogers: What do you bring to this job that the other two candidates may not?
- Chris Hattaway: Have you spoken with any member of the City of Cocoa Council privately outside of what was set by the search agent?
- Candace Rogers: What do you think are the challenges and opportunities facing Cocoa?

Mr. Moffett gave a brief background on himself and expanded on some of the citizen questions. He provided a closing statement and thanked Council for the opportunity. He ended at 7:15 pm[2].

Ms. Higginbotham introduced Mr. Stockton Whitten, the third and final City Manager candidate to answer citizen questions. He began at 7:32 pm.

Mr. Whitten shared he was happy and encouraged by the opportunity and provided a closing statement. He finished at 8:11 pm.

II. ADJOURNMENT.

[1] A break was taken at 6:35pm & returned at 6:43pm

[2] A break was taken at 7:15pm & returned at 7:32pm

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Jake Williams, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

Monica Arsenault, Assistant City Clerk