

January 15, 2008 Special Board Meeting Minutes

The Board of Directors of Tampa Bay Water met in their offices, 2575 Enterprise Road, Clearwater, Florida 33763.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Present: Chairman – Commissioner Susan Latvala, Pinellas County
Vice Chairman – Commissioner Mark Sharpe, Hillsborough County
Council Member James Bennett, City of St. Petersburg
Commissioner Al Higginbotham, Hillsborough County
Commissioner Ann Hildebrand, Pasco County
Commissioner Ted Schrader, Pasco County
Mayor Dan Tipton, City of New Port Richey

Absent: Commissioner Ronnie Duncan, Pinellas County
Councilman Charlie Miranda, City of Tampa

Staff: Rick Lotspeich, General Counsel

Consultant: Colin Baenziger, Colin Baenziger & Associates

Chairman Latvala called to order the Special Meeting of the Tampa Bay Water Board of Directors at 12:30 p.m. for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the position of General Manager.

The candidates were interviewed in the following order:

1. Gregory Kisela
2. Gerald Seeber
3. Stephen Sorrel
4. Richard Comerford

Following the interviews the Board recessed for ten minutes.

The Board reconvened at 2:20 p.m.

Chairman Latvala thanked Colin Baenziger and his staff for the very great job they did in bringing to the Board such well qualified candidates. She stated that the Board had two choices, one would be to rank the candidates today while interviews were fresh in their minds, or wait until the meeting of January 25, 2008. She preferred doing it today.

Commissioner Hildebrand stated she agreed and that was fine.

Chairman Latvala stated that the two Board Members who could not be present this afternoon (Commissioner Duncan and Councilman Miranda) completed their rankings sheets after their individual interviews so all Board Members will be participating. She stated that each Board Member would rank their favorite candidate on the ballot from number 1 through number 4. The

ballots would then be tallied and if need be a second round of balloting would take place. Commissioner Latvala felt that it was important to hire someone by a unanimous vote, and asked if it is not a unanimous vote up front but the majority of the Board is for one candidate, did the Board want the opportunity to pass a unanimous ballot.

Commissioner Hildebrand voiced her agreement with the Chairman.

Some Board discussion followed concerning the balloting procedures with the Chairman clarifying that the ballots are to be marked numbers 1-4 with 1 being the best, that no two candidates should be given the same number. Mr. Baenziger advised the Board to sign their ballots before turning them in for Sunshine purposes.

Upon receipt of all the ballots Mr. Lotspeich and Mr. Baenziger left to tally the ballots and the Board took a short recess.

Upon his return, Mr. Baenziger returned the ballots to the Board Members stating that the reason for returning the ballots was because there was a tie with Mr. Kisella and Mr. Seeber both receiving 18 points; Mr. Sorrel had 23 points and Mr. Cumerford had 31 points. He stated that the top two candidates are Mr. Kisella and Mr. Seeber and although it was the Board's decision on how to proceed, he suggested the Board Members each mark an asterisk next to their number one choice between Mr. Kisella and Mr. Seeber.

Mayor Tipton questioned Mr. Baenziger on how the scoring was tallied.

Mr. Baenziger explained that since they were ranked one through four with the number one candidate receiving 1 point and the number two candidate 2 points, whoever had the low number was the winner.

Commissioner Hildebrand noted that now the Board would be selecting one of two candidates.

Mr. Baenziger asked if the Board wished to discuss the candidates prior to voting.

Commissioner Schrader stated that before this afternoon's interviews, Mr. Kisella was his number one choice; however, Mr. Seeber had convinced him otherwise. He noted that Mr. Kisella was somewhat reserved, somewhat laid back and although he did not fault him for that, he noted that Mr. Kisella also mentioned that he was very happy in his current job in Destin and if he was not selected he was comfortable going back to Destin. Referring to Mr. Seeber's comment that he wanted this job, Commissioner Schrader stated that Mr. Seeber seemed to be very passionate about wanting the job. He again stated that Mr. Kisella was his number one choice prior to this afternoon, adding that he also flipped his rankings of Mr. Cumerford and Mr. Sorrel as well. From his perspective, he would be happy with either one of the top two (Mr. Kisella and Mr. Seeber).

Following up on Commissioner Schrader's comments, Mayor Tipton stated that after his interviews on Monday he had Mr. Seeber and Mr. Kisella marked 1-2 with Mr. Kisella actually his number one choice. Both of these gentlemen are soft spoken and are very nice gentlemen, and he felt either one could be General Manager. But, like Commissioner Schrader, after today's interviews he went for Mr. Seeber. Mayor Tipton stated that there was probably no one on the Board that knew Mr. Seeber better than he did. He also knew what he did in the City of New Port Richey and what happened towards the end of his tenure in New Port Richey which he discussed with Mr. Seeber in

his interview. He noted that things have changed for Mr. Seeber personally for the better from his job in Oviedo. Mayor Tipton stated that Mr. Seeber told him what he had accomplished there adding that change from New Port Richey to Oviedo appeared to be good for Mr. Seeber. In conclusion, Mayor Tipton stated that after listening to the gentlemen today, he was convinced that that Mr. Seeber was the appropriate candidate.

Chairperson Latvala stated that after interviewing both gentlemen on Monday, she was torn since she was impressed with both Mr. Kisella and Mr. Seeber, and would be comfortable with either one of them. But on paper, prior to yesterday's interviews she had come to the conclusion that Mr. Kisella was the right choice. She stated that she was taken aback by the fact that he was so laid back during his interview. Consequently she called one of his Board members whom she knew through the League of Cities who stated that was exactly what she felt when he was interviewed for the City of Destin, he was not her first choice because he was so laid back but found she was wrong. Chairman Latvala stated that he obviously got enough votes to get the position in Destin and this Board Member continued to go on about how great he was, how much they didn't want to lose him, and what a wonderful asset he has been to Destin. She stated that they talked at length about how he worked with the Board, what a great job he does and about his team building skills. Chairman Latvala stated the Mr. Kisella does not present well and was hoping that he would show better this afternoon since he has the skills.

Commissioner Hildebrand stated that she ranked Mr. Seeber 1 and Mr. Kisela 2, adding that it was very close between the two of them. She stated that like Mayor Tipton she would be happy with either one of them. She observed the fact that Mr. Seeber knew the area and was involved in Governance from the beginning sitting on the group of 18 and consequently knows the sensitivity of all six member governments. Commissioner Hildebrand stated that Mr. Seeber certainly had a flavor for what was going on and could hit the ground running because he knows all of the players in the Tampa Bay Area, but on the down side, he has never managed a large agency. She stated that like Mayor Tipton she has known Mr. Seeber and his wife for a long time, and knew he was happy in Seminole County and had no intention of leaving. He was encouraged to apply for this position. Commissioner Hildebrand stated that out of the four candidates, she detected more passion in Mr. Seeber in asking for the job so Jerry Seeber was her number one choice.

Chairperson Latvala stated that she liked the fact that Mr. Seeber was so passionate and wants the job and it is because he does have some ownership here. Mr. Seeber was a part of the 18 that made Tampa Bay Water happen and that will be a good transition from Jerry to the next.

Council Member Bennett commented that he did not know either of them and from his perspective, and that of Patti Anderson who assisted him in the process, Mr. Kisella was his number one choice. He felt that Mr. Kisella was very comfortable in who and what he was, he was confident, even though he was somewhat soft spoken. Council Member Bennett felt Mr. Kisella was well-grounded and when asked about his leadership and strength, Mr. Kisella went right to a story about his Water Works 2011 and how he got the public to buy into it. Council Member Bennett stated that he was really appreciative of that. He noted that yesterday Mr. Kisella requested the satisfaction surveys, which no one else did, so he knew something about St. Petersburg and its residents. He went out of his way to find out who was satisfied and who wasn't. Referring to Mr. Seeber's position in Oviedo, Council Member Bennett stated that he was aware of the problems they are having with transportation, growth and water. He noted that Mr. Seeber was a success and he appreciated that. However, he would prefer to put Mr. Kisella out there as a spokesperson for Tampa Bay Water.

Mr. Seeber is extremely soft spoken; he was very difficult to hear. He stated that he asked Mr. Seeber at what point he showed passion and he could not answer. Council Member Bennett stated that was where his conflict was, this person was going to be the face of Tampa Bay Water for the next 10 years and a spokesperson. He added that he thought they were all qualified, it was just how you view it.

Chairman Latvala called for further comments. There were no further comments by the Board.

As a matter of process, Mr. Lotspeich stated that he had the ranking sheets from Commissioner Duncan and Councilman Miranda who both, when they ranked Mr. Kisella and Mr. Seeber, ranked Mr. Seeber one point higher than Mr. Kisella. He stated that he would hold these sheets in case of a tie.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Baenziger suggested the Board vote again. The Board was directed to place an asterisk by their first choice of the final two.

After collecting the ballots, Mr. Lotspeich stated that Mr. Seeber was number one.

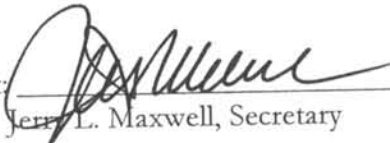
Chairman Latvala asked the Board if they wished to vote unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Sharpe made a motion that the Board vote unanimously in support of Mr. Seeber. Mayor Tipton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 7-0 (Commissioner Duncan and Councilman Miranda were absent).

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Attest: _____


Jerry L. Maxwell, Secretary

Date: _____

2/18/08