

Good evening

Catherine Malloy, Waterway Blvd

I am here to address unethical behavior, the subverting of the search process for a new City Administrator. Please note my comments are based on the process, the facts and behaviors

In my work life I participated in numerous search processes both as a member of search committees and as an applicant and I have never seen such an abrogation of process as this search for the IOP City Administrator.

There are two questions that need to be answered:

- Why would the mayor choose to subvert the established hiring process?
- Why would 6 members of this council support unethical behavior?

Facts

The mayor acting unilaterally, without authority from council (even after 3 candidates were selected and plans were made for their transportation and interviews) spoke to the Assistant Administrator about the position Sharing privileged information with him about salary expectations of the 3 candidates.

FOIA request made on January 24 for candidate qualifications documents. The sunlight shed by the FOIA documents are testament that a highly successful search had occurred with the selection of three eminently qualified individuals having sterling credentials.

Even though "Citizen Comments" doesn't allow time for detailed analysis, looking at the Academic and Experience qualifications would be helpful:

All three have Masters degrees in Public Administration and/or related field, and all have certifications above and beyond the degrees. All 3 have years of experience in city management with one having 20 years total and 7 years in town management in a coastal community.

By comparison: the ^{INTERNAL} ~~fourth~~ candidate has:

A Bachelor Degree in Urban Planning, no advanced degree or certifications, 28 years with the City of IOP in numerous roles, none of which include the necessary executive experience to lead a city the size of IOP nor manage a City budget. Until December 31, 2024, the city's budget was managed by City Administrator Fragoso. The interim administrator was only four weeks into this role before the process went awry.

Objectively, there was no need to introduce an internal candidate!

So, I am leaving you with one more question:

Beside the stain on this council, What is this going to cost the taxpayers? I'm betting at least \$180,000.

City Council 3/25/25

Al Clouse, 3 Grand Pavilion, Isle of Palms, SC 29451

As the Mayor's ill-advised, off balance sheet agenda..... to hire a city administrator..... continues to vacillate..... many constituents continue to express frustration and displeasure with the Mayor and city council.....who continue to shoot themselves in the foot....

Previously..... constituents offered the Mayor and council a realistic lifeline..... to correct the sins of the past.....only to fall on deaf ears.

The Mayor's spin.....failing fact check..... never achieved orbit.

In November..... When the court of public opinion speaks..... hearing will improve.

An open letter to the three finalists:

I sincerely want to apologize to you..... regarding the recent IOP train wreck..... which you were a casualty You were given false hope.....lack of transparency..... by this city..... regarding selection of a city administrator.

Starting the interview process.....you had to be thinking.....
....IOP.....definitive ground rules.....professional recruiting firm..... what could possibly go wrong.....

Finalists;..... I have walked ten (10) miles in your shoes..... I know how your feet feel.

I am sure you felt betrayed.....because you were..... Your presentations were professionalonly to be carelessly wallpapered over..... with a one page document affectionately titled.....Foregone Conclusion.

No.....you did nothing wrong!

Do not second guess yourself.....this is a classic case of learning the hard way.....finding it is difficult to trust people you thought you could trust.....till you can not.

Clearly.....your potential employer was afraid of your medicine..... They feared their inability to micro manage you.....but they knew someone they could.....pissing backwards..... at your expense.

I was told by a reliable source....."communities like ours do this all the time.....we can do anything we want to."

In other words,..... lets lower ourselves to someone else's level.....

It is unfortunate,..... our Mayor and council,..... elevated your expectations.....wasting your time They defied constituent's resounding pleas to acknowledge their mistakeand do the right thing.

In retrospect, they did you a favor..... Zebra's do not change their stripes.....The paymaster's currency is tainted.....drastically devalued.

Leadership skills require constant honing.....You have just learned how not to lead.

We, the constituents of IOP wish you the very best!

Sincerely,

Al Clouse

Brian Duffy, Waterway Blvd

Good Evening

I've been wondering if council believes in contracts. Then I thought to myself of course you do ... you own homes so that means you entered a contract with a real estate agent, a bank, and a seller to purchase that home. So at some level you do believe in contracts but do you believe in implicit contracts.

Is there something I don't understand? ... the City commenced a contract with Find Good People effectively making them an agent for the City to find a new City administrator. The city represented by the administration committee supported FGP in following their very timely process, and allowing them to identify five qualified candidates that the administration committee narrowed to three. To use a baseball analogy, FGP and the administration committee identified three major league candidates all with all-star potential in the allotted timeframe. It is quite clear that the FGP screening process works very well and the administration committee had done its due diligence. A very successful process to this point.

So what happened? Did fear of success set in? Did fear of competence rear its ugly head? How is it that three experienced candidates, undoubtedly with knowledge of home rule statutes, the ability to run an organization and the skill to handle politicians and help them fulfill their role get bypassed? How did the city's implicit contract for a fair process with these candidates get broken?

The FGP contract states "During the retained search process, the client agrees that all candidates (internal and external) will go through the FGP screening process." Did the internal candidate go through the FGP screening process? How did the internal candidate compare to the external candidates? I certainly hope the internal candidate was submitted to the same rigorous process, otherwise it is an example of the City breaking an explicit contract! I would not be surprised if litigation were to follow.

So how is this broken process and ignorance going to impact the city's budget going forward? I'm betting the total compensation package will increase to \$240,000 with a net increase of \$60,000 to the budget. Apparently, this is what it costs when council chooses to protect their own comfort level rather than protecting the stakeholders of this island.

- Let's start with a handout of Governor McMaster's Proclamation designating last week as "Sunshine Week". It begins with: "a government that is open and accountable to its citizens". Therein lies the problem. If there is any confusion with S.C.'s requirements for transparency, may I suggest calling Desiree Fragoso, your municipal association (MASC) representative.
- Mayor Pounds did in fact approach multiple individual council members regarding a procedurally unauthorized, and unethical discussion with Deputy Administrator Kerr. These discussions included confidential information obtained from the formal search process. The mayor also suggested "not interviewing" the three (3) formally selected candidates.
- Please explain tonight "how and when exactly" Mr. Kerr was inserted into the search process. There is no public record, yet Mr. Kerr was formally interviewed on February 4th along with three selected candidates.
- Perhaps our search firm Find Great People may offer a more transparent explanation. Their contract terms with IOP state "There is a fee obligation when any candidate **we refer** accepts a position." Douglas Kerr was not a referred candidate. The search firm should be concerned for many reasons, not just the "non-referral". Complicity by anyone in a corrupted public process is never good.
- In fairness to FGP, three (3) highly qualified candidates were "referred", but ignored. Mayor, with your late-night epiphany to improperly entice Mr. Kerr with potential salary, did it not occur to you that our recently resigned, highly qualified Ms. Fragoso might entertain a rapid return for \$ 180,000? Afterall, it would be a \$ 38,000 raise.

- Administrator Fragoso's timing was impeccable, as there are no easy wins remaining for IOP. A new city administrator must engage across all levels of government, state and federal. "Experience, ability, and desire" as stated by Tony Santiago, our citizens require an administrator up to the task and not seeking short term retirement gains.
- Council will likely approve Mr. Kerr with a highly unethical and corrupt selection process tonight. FOIA law requires disclosure of the approved pay package. There can be no "slow walking" public disclosure. Have the guts to tell the public exactly what you approve. That means tonight with full disclosure. Our citizens are not as council member Ward posted "disciples of doom", nor are we disciples of dumb.