

**Genoa Town Advisory Board
Special Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson Kitty DeSocio, Member Brian Williams, Member Dave Whitgob and Clerk Greg Pace.

Absent was Member Bill Donohoe.

Also present was Lisa Granahan, Assistant to the County Manager and Darcy Worms, Human Resources Manager for Douglas County.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson DeSocio called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M. at the meeting room at 2289 Main St., Genoa, NV.

PLEDGE TO ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Clerk, Greg Pace.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Action Item

Member Williams moved to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Member Whitgob. Motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

1. **Discussion and possible action** regarding the interview of candidates and selection of a candidate for the position of Genoa Town Manager. The candidates are: Melinda Clevenger-Klick, Sheryl Gonzales, Claire Fortier, Michael Wolterbeek, Kimberly Petersen, Vickie Kieffer, and Alex Kloske.

Darcy Worms advised the Board that candidate Claire Fortier, had withdrawn her application.

The remaining six candidates were interviewed separately. They were asked and responded to questions from the Board. The candidates were asked the same questions.

The Board took a lunch break at 11:55 A.M after the first four interviews. The meeting resumed at 12:53 P.M. The Board continued with the final two interviews.

The Board recessed at 2:52 P.M.

Chairperson DeSocio called the meeting back to order at 3:11 P.M.

Chairperson DeSocio said that Member Bill Donohoe called her stating that he wanted to be part of the process but he is very ill. He asked if at all possible could the decision be delayed so that he could listen to the tapes. He told her he felt that having a full Board make this decision is important.

Member Williams said he would not be at the next Board meeting and therefore the decision would have to be delayed to March.

Lisa Granahan suggested that a special meeting could be set.

Discussion was held regarding deferring a decision until all Board members are present. Member Whitgob said he understands why Member Donohoe would want to be present however the special meeting today was set to move the process along. All members were in support of this meeting and it is unfortunate that Member Donohoe is ill. Member Whitgob said if there is consensus and the group of four present is comfortable that there is someone to whom we would like to offer the position then we should go forward.

Member Whitgob suggested that the Board have a discussion to decide if there is someone to whom they would like to make an offer. If we find that we are not agreeing, then we would wait for Member Donohoe's involvement.

Lisa Granahan discussed her research of the Open Meeting Law regarding a situation where there are only four members present and there is a two/two vote. An alternative would be to continue to a meeting with the full Board.

Discussion was held regarding the interviews and the scoring process.

Lisa Granahan gave the Board members a tally of the scores given to each applicant. The order starting with the top candidate is: Kimberly Petersen, Sheryl Gonzales, Alex Kloske, Melinda Klick, Michael Wolterbeek, and Vickie Kieffer.

Member Williams said this job has had so much turnover, and the whole idea of the learning curve – someone having to start all over- makes him uneasy. Sheryl Gonzales has a lot of experience especially with Candy Dance. She stepped on a few toes and he has talked to her about that. She is a quick study and based on reasons of efficiency, competency and her credentials, even if she did not have the current job, she has done similar work which make her an excellent candidate. Member Williams went on to say he is really concerned about the learning curve as it is February and Candy Dance is not that far away. He is also concerned about the stability of the office. Member Williams said that Ms. Gonzales is his favorite candidate and his second choice would be Kimberly Petersen.

Chairperson DeSocio said she is weighing longevity, where the Town will be two years with the proper candidate versus a current learning curve. She believes it is short-sighted to just look at the learning curve, we need to look at where we are going and the future of the Town and which one of these individuals is the best person to see us through years beyond 2008.

Member Williams said we are in the middle of the exclusive permit situation in which there is a lot of background and personalities, he is concerned how quickly the others would come up to speed.

Clerk Pace said Sheryl Gonzales has proven she can do the job. He questioned if we can improve. Clerk Pace concurs with what Member Williams is saying and also with what Chairperson DeSocio has said. He asked what is the risk possibility of taking on someone that we do not know.

Chairperson DeSocio asked if it isn't true that Sheryl Gonzales is contracted through the end of February and so would be getting the Town through the February 7th meeting regarding the exclusive permit. Lisa Granahan said the contract for Ms. Gonzales' services will continue until a new Town Manager is hired and once someone is hired, a start date is determined, there will be 5 days of overlap and the contract is finished.

Chairperson DeSocio said it shouldn't matter if Sheryl Gonzales were here or not to handle future Commission meetings, our committee should be able to get us through. If the committee is unable to get us through, we are doing something incorrectly. We are a team, not one person sets the team environment.

Member Whitgob said this is a great discussion and we are making sure what happens is the best for the Town of Genoa. He said we have a known commodity in Sheryl Gonzales. In response to Member Williams comments, Member Whitgob believes its fair, without going into details, that we would have a discussion with Sheryl about past behavior to make sure those things do not happen in the future. Member Whitgob said he agrees with Chairperson DeSocio that here is a potential opportunity to upgrade. He said the top three candidates are all clearly qualified. He said is it in the Town's best interests to go with a known commodity to try to have a seamless transition, that would be Sheryl Gonzales, or is there someone else that presented here today that has an incredible vision that really could take us someplace that no one else could. Member Whitgob said we have some good choices.

Member Williams said that Ms. Gonzales has applied for this position before and was one of the finalists. He feels that says something about her motivation. Other managers have lasted one year, or less, and were unable to handle the position. Member Williams said he was concerned about the other candidates. It appeared that Alex Kloske has had a lot of jobs and that concerns him.

Member Williams commented on how many interviews he has participated in the last year. Chairperson DeSocio said she would have helped out if asked.

Member Whitgob said we all agree that Sheryl Gonzales has been there and done that. And we agree that there have been a couple of little episodes and we can decide if we can live with that moving forward. Member Whitgob stated that Kimberly Petersen is very bright, and has good background. He is concerned that she would be going from \$108,000 to \$45,000 (salary range). He felt that Alex Kloske was the person who listened the most, nailed the questions and is a very solid guy. Member Whitgob said that looking out 3 to 5 years he would be comfortable with the vision expressed by Alex Kloske.

Discussion was held about salary and how the candidates may react to a lower income.

Member Whitgob said that all three of the top candidates did a great job in answering the interview questions. In terms of the interview, he would put Alex first, Sheryl second, Kimberly third. If Sheryl is offered the position, he thinks there would need to be a conversation between her and the Board on how to work together going forward and an agreement that there would be no issues.

Member Williams said he believes the Town has seen so much turmoil, turnover, that they are really looking for stability. That is why he is supporting Sheryl Gonzales.

Chairperson DeSocio's gave her choices as Alex Kloske, then Kimberly Petersen.

Member Williams made a motion to extend the offer to Sheryl Gonzales. There was no second.

Member Whitgob said he would like to hear from Clerk Pace. Clerk Pace said his position is he feels that Sheryl Gonzales is a safe bet and if we can improve our hand with one of the other two people then is it worth the risk. He said that while he hates to always go with what is safe, and he heard what Member Williams said about so much turmoil, should we go with the known commodity when we have reservations about whether we can control her and can we do that.

Member Williams said we know 100% about Sheryl Gonzales and about 10% of anybody else.

Chairperson DeSocio said when Ms. Gonzales was hired by Douglas County we knew nothing about her as well. She is willing to take a risk. Chairperson DeSocio said she feels there is too much controversy with this person and spoke about numerous phone calls she has received.

Member Whitgob said he has not had any unsatisfactory experiences with Sheryl and he has worked with her quite a bit. Member Williams concurred. Member Whitgob said he is very sensitive to what Chairperson DeSocio has said. Member Whitgob also said that if it is a heinous situation that could not be managed or changed then we all need to listen, however if it is a personality situation that could be softened up, then there are a lot of efficiencies in going with Sheryl.

Clerk Pace said he personally has not had any bad experiences with Ms. Gonzales although he has had limited interaction. At his position at work, where a lot of people come through, he has received some negative feedback and a lot of it may be small town politics.

Member Whitgob said whoever is in the position will be in a fishbowl and will not win a popularity contest.

Chairperson DeSocio feels that the Board has fiduciary responsibility and she feels that Ms. Gonzales lacks in that area and this needs to be discussed. She is still waiting for the final numbers on Candy Dance which have not yet been balanced to the Comptroller's Report.

Member Whitgob asked if this was Sheryl's sole responsibility. Chairperson DeSocio said a report was promised two months ago. In response to a question as to why this hasn't been done, Chairperson DeSocio said she assumes because Ms. Gonzales is being consumed with the exclusive permit issue. However, she does not want to answer for her.

Lisa Granahan said that Chairperson DeSocio is correct. Sheryl Gonzales has been focused on the exclusive permit and getting the next Candy Dance off. She said we were close on final numbers for Candy Dance, there were a couple of outstanding bills. Member Whitgob said he was wondering if the accounting was in or out of Ms. Gonzales' control. Lisa Granahan said she was sure this could be done however the Chairperson is correct it has not been at this time. Chairperson DeSocio suggested reading the December minutes in regard to this topic.

Discussion continued regarding whether or not an agreement could be reached today and whether the person chosen will be supported by the Board.

Member Whitgob and Clerk Pace each said they would be in support of Member Williams motion. Chairperson said that she always supports the decisions of the Board whether she is in favor or not. She does not agree with this decision but she will support it if that is what is decided.

Member Williams stated that he has been very impressed with the efforts of Chairperson DeSocio over the last year.

Clerk Pace seconded Member Williams motion. There was discussion regarding whether or not the motion needed to be re-stated. A resident asked if there was going to be public comment. Lisa Granahan said the agenda states the public is invited but is asked to refrain from comment. However, she said it is up to the Board if they wish to hear public comment.

Member Williams made a motion to offer the position of Town Manager to Sheryl Gonzales. Motion seconded by Clerk Pace.

Chairperson DeSocio opened the meeting to public comment.

Resident Carole Hart stated that she felt the decision of the Board had been made prior to the interviews. She does not feel the Board has the time to change Sheryl. Ms. Hart feels Ms. Gonzales has gone way over on spending for each event and asked the Board to consider one of the other candidates.

Resident Lisa Bommarito feels that Ms. Gonzales is guilty of more than stepping on people's toes. She resents the belittling comment. She also feels that the Board's decision was pre-conceived. Ms. Bommarito said the Board was hired to do this job. She does not believe Ms. Gonzales is capable of handling the fiscal responsibilities required. She would support either one of the other two candidates, especially Kimberly Petersen.

Resident Darlene Tiffany said she does not think the Board had made up their mind or they would have not gone through all of this. She feels that maybe the interview process made Sheryl Gonzales look better than what the Board thought before and that you had to go through this process to see what was out there. Just because the people interviewed are people that no one knows, doesn't guarantee that they would not be someone like Ms. Gonzales, or worse. Ms. Tiffany said because you hire someone different doesn't mean that it's going to be better. She has never had any problem with Sheryl and she has worked with her a lot. Ms. Tiffany also said you have to have someone who is willing to be here as this is not just a 5-day a week, 8-hour a day job. She said people will come down on the Board no matter who they pick.

Member Whitgob said they own the decision, it is part of their position as Board members that they have accepted

Ms. Tiffany said it is up to the Board to work with the person chosen.

Member Whitgob said he wanted to make it clear that the Board did not go into this exercise with preconceived ideas, no backroom agreement as to who was going to be in this position, not for himself. He said questions were asked and scored. Everyone was ranked and you saw what the results are. It would be a different conversation of Sheryl Gonzales was number 7 on the list. The fact is she was number 2.

Member Williams said we could just roll the dice and pick somebody new.

Chairperson DeSocio reminded that a motion has been made and if a vote is taken that is the decision.

Chairperson DeSocio said she would like to add caution to everyone in attendance that this was an objective interview. Numerical value was objectively added to the answers that the individuals gave. Kimberly Peterson came out ahead.

Member Williams withdrew his motion.

Member Williams said he was amenable to extending the decision until Member Donohoe was available. Member Whitgob said if the Board is comfortable with having Member Donohoe listen to the tapes and if we think that will give him the ability to make an informed decision, he has no problem with that assuming we make some special arrangement so that the decision does not go out to March. It would have to be in the first two weeks of February.

Discussion was held regarding a date for a special meeting. Chairperson DeSocio suggested February 19, 2008. There was discussion regarding whether Sheryl Gonzales would stay on as Interim Town Manager until a new manager is hired. Lisa Granahan said at the January Board meeting it was discussed that Ms. Gonzales would stay on until the manager was hired.

A recess was taken at 4:15 P.M.

Chairperson DeSocio called the meeting to order at 4:17 P.M.

Chairperson DeSocio made a motion to wait on the decision of hiring a new Town Manager until Member Donohoe has time to listen to the tapes and set a special meeting for February 19, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. to continue the process. Member Whitgob seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Clerk Pace. Meeting adjourned at 4:19 P.M.

Respectfully submitted
Kris Wilkison