



Agenda Report

2725 Judge Fran Jamieson
Way
Viera, FL 32940

New Business - Miscellaneous

J.4.

1/7/2020

Subject:

County Attorney Succession Plan

Fiscal Impact:

None at this time

Dept/Office:

County Attorney

Requested Action:

Provide direction as needed.

Summary Explanation and Background:

A recent newspaper article discussed the upcoming retirement of various upper level county staff in the next five years and expressed concern regarding a need to create a formal plan to address the transitions. The County Attorney's current retirement date is November 1, 2021. This agenda item is provided to advise the Board of the actions being taken to provide a smooth transition and ask the Board if it wishes to take additional steps at this time.

Since the last transition in 2018, the need to prepare for a smooth transfer of the office to the next County Attorney has been recognized. The primary goal has been to create a situation where the Board will have multiple experienced lawyers in house in late 2021, so there will be a strong team in place to support the new County Attorney regardless of whether the Board hires from the outside (wherein it may take months to secure and employ a suitable candidate) or chooses an internal candidate. To that end, there has been a strong focus on hiring and retaining lawyers experienced in a variety of fields, such as eminent domain, personal injury, code enforcement, budget and finance, local government law and various types of general litigation. Experienced lawyers are now on staff and they are being cross trained to provide greater depth of knowledge and broader expertise. By late 2021, there should be multiple attorneys with sufficient experience if the Board decides to explore the option of hiring internally. A few months ago, Assistant County Attorneys began rotating attendance at agenda review meetings and briefings. The next step will be to have the Assistant County Attorneys attend County Commission meetings and respond to questions on the items they have handled.

The need to provide direction regarding office procedures and management has also been a priority. In the last two years, instruction manuals have been created for incoming attorneys, administrative staff,

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commissioners and interns. Procedure manuals have also been created for public records requests, classes on public records law and classes on the Sunshine Law. Standardization of paper and electronic filing systems has also been an ongoing project along with consolidating a list of assignments, records and resources so the new County Attorney will be able to step in and find necessary files and documents with ease.

Options:

1. Direct the Human Resources staff to bring various proposals for a transition plan to the Board.
2. Direct the County Attorney to take additional or different measures to prepare for transition.
3. Take no action at this time.
4. Other action as the Board directs.

Clerk to the Board Instructions:



January 8, 2020

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Eden Bentley, County Attorney

RE: Item J.4., County Attorney Succession Plan

The Board of County Commissioners, in regular session on January 7, 2020, directed the Human Resources Director and/or you to bring various proposals for a transition plan, including a job proposal and a list of sites with costs that could be used for advertising at a lower cost to the County, back to the Board.

Your continued cooperation is always appreciated.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SCOTT ELLIS, CLERK

Tammy Rowe

Tammy Rowe, Deputy Clerk

/kp

cc: Human Resources Director