

**CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** June 20, 2023

**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**From:** T. Grimm, Interim City Manager

**Subject:** Colin Baenziger and Lynelle Klein, Recommended Candidates  
Interviews and Community Reception

**Background:**

Colin Baenziger recommends considering seven candidates (of the approximately 24 who applied) to be our next City Manager. They believe all the candidates are very strong and would do an excellent job for Belle Isle. Brief summaries of their credentials follow. They are all looking forward to being working supervisors with regular, first-hand contact with the public.

**The Recommended Candidates**

- **Michael Giardino:** Mr. Giardino is presently an Airport Executive Management Consultant for the City of Brownsville, TX (population 190,006). Before that, he was an Airport Chief Executive Officer for Newport News, VA (population 186,729) for six years, an Airport Chief Executive Officer for Rochester, NY (population 206,602) for five years, and Village Manager/Treasurer for the Village of Brockport, NY (population 8,385) for one year. His management style is collaborative, delegation, and decisive. It is deeply rooted in the best decision-making tools and information available. His greatest strength is matching the appropriate resources to a task. While he considers rescuing 110 people in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd in 1999 his greatest personal achievement, his greatest professional accomplishment pertaining to his ability to manage and lead in a municipal government role came at the Greater Rochester International Airport (ROC). While there, they won a statewide competition that awarded the airport \$39.8M toward an aggressive two-year \$79M capital improvement project to create a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Airport. The project incorporated “smart” technologies and numerous access improvements - especially for persons with disabilities. ROC was the program’s first awardee, and its grant submission became the hallmark for other airports to emulate. The award allowed completion of a 7-year plan in two years while adding an outdoor road canopy delivering customer and community-tailored results - incurring no additional airport debt. The project won 13 awards for innovation, including his Community Person of the Year award from the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Mr. Giardino has a bachelor’s degree in earth science from the State University of New York College at Brockport and a master’s in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College.
- **Stacey Kifolo:** Most recently, Ms. Kifolo was the Deputy City Manager for the City of Deltona, FL (population 97,095) for one year. Previously, she was the Township Manager for East Buffalo Township, PA (population 6,949) for nine years and the Fiscal / Project Manager for Central PA Workforce Development Corporation for four years. She is an adaptive leader who realizes different situations and people thrive under different management styles. She believes that we are both teachers and students, and it is important to recognize the need to be both. She is proud of her efforts to reduce a \$3.3M unfunded post-retirement healthcare cost liability at East Buffalo Township and put it in a solid financial position without increasing taxes or foregoing necessary projects. When the

effort began in 2013, the Township was paying for the benefits from the general fund. After having an actuarial analysis done and determining the extent of the liability, she then began to act. First, she was able to identify a less costly healthcare program. She also began setting aside funds to be invested. By 2020, the unfunded liability was down to \$2 million, and the investment account balance exceeded \$1.6M. Ms. Kifolo has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania and a master's degree from Louisiana State University.

- **Dale Martin:** Mr. Martin was most recently the City Manager for Fernandina Beach, FL (population 13,199) for eight years. Previously he was the Town Manager for Winchester, CT (population 10,883) for four years, the City Manager for Davison, MI (population 5,150) for two years, the City Manager for Dowagiac, MI (population 5,700) for a short period, and the City Manager for Linden, MI (population 3,459) for nine years. His management style is best described as quiet oversight. He relies on the expertise of educated, trained, and experienced employees for their specific roles and responsibilities. He meets regularly with senior directors individually but listens more than talks during the meetings. The most significant success of Mr. Martin's career was the culmination of his five-year battle with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to obtain reimbursement funding for Fernandina Beach following Hurricane Matthew (2016). Many residents savaged him for his "mismanagement" of the FEMA process, but he was supremely confident that the City's effort would eventually prevail, and it did. Whereas FEMA's first "final" offer was \$650,000, the city eventually recovered over \$7,000,000. Mr. Martin has a bachelor's degree in political science from Alma College and a master's degree in public administration from Oakland University.
- **David Molgaard:** Mr. Molgaard most recently was the Chief of Staff and Firm Administrator for Bailey & Glasser, LLP for four years. Before that, he was the City Manager for Charleston, WV (population 47,929) for sixteen years, a City Councilmember in Charleston for four years, and worked as an attorney for fifteen years. As a manager and organizational leader, he looks to: develop and improve core competencies within the organization; deploy and leverage appropriate technologies; strategically align duties and responsibilities; identify, develop, and retain leaders; reform work environments and provide incentives to facilitate mission; and collaborate with others, both inside and outside of the organization. When Mr. Molgaard first stepped into the role of city manager in Charleston, he found an organization that was very siloed with sharp delineations that were inefficient and worked against inter-departmental collaboration. During his tenure, the culture drastically changed. Those changes started at the department head level, and the city took great strides in cascading managerial initiative and accountability down to the middle managers and frontline supervisors. Mr. Molgaard has a bachelor's degree in English from West Virginia University, a master's degree in industrial labor relations, and a juris doctorate degree.
- **Mark Rooney:** Mr. Rooney recently served as the Village Administrator for Round Lake Beach, IL (population 27,081) from 2021 to May 2023. Previously, he was the Town Manager for Westerly, RI (population 22,651) for three years, the Village Manager for Carpentersville, IL (population 38,291) for eight years, and the Chief of Staff for North Chicago, IL (population 32,587) for one year. He also worked for the Village of Wheeling, IL (population 35,912) for six years, with the last three as Village Manager. Mr. Rooney believes his responsibility is to create and foster an organizational culture and environment where trust is valued. Leadership starts at the top, so he must be a role model for integrity and honesty in all professional interactions and encounters. Carpentersville's greatest challenges in 2010 were a \$1M structural deficit, failing infrastructure (roads and water/wastewater facilities), and the need to address economic development. He created the slogan, "Get to YES," which became the staff's over-arching vision and guidance. The result was an organization transformed from a bureaucratic mindset to one of engaged problem solvers. Employee morale skyrocketed, as did the satisfaction of citizens and stakeholders (as measured by surveys and

feedback from the community). Consequently, the Village had a competitive edge in attracting local developers, businesses interested in relocating, and businesses already in the village who needed to expand their operations. Mr. Rooney has a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Nebraska. He has done coursework in the master's degree program at Northern Illinois University but did not attain the degree. He is an ICMA Credentialed Manager.

- **Rick Rudometkin:** Mr. Rudometkin was most recently the Deputy City Manager for Huntsville, TX (population 79,411) for one and a half years. Before this, he was City Administrator for Snoqualmie, WA (population 13,810) for one year, the City Manager for Sammamish, WA (population 65,851) for six months, and the County Manager for Eddy County, NM (population 58,394) for six years. Mr. Rudometkin's management style is best described as a visionary servant/leader. It comes to life by creating a team spirit that connects the staff to the council's vision. People will follow and perform when there is a genuine interest in helping them to succeed and when they receive the credit they deserve. His biggest success came from being appointed the Manager of Eddy County in the middle of one of the County's worst economic crises. He enacted measures that successfully prevented the County's bankruptcy. Mr. Rudometkin has a bachelor's degree in business management from Woodbury University. He is an ICMA Credentialed Manager, Certified Public Manager, and a Certified Advocate for Public Ethics.
- **David Strohl:** Mr. Strohl has been the City Administrator for Palos Heights, IL (population 11,819) since 2021. Previously, he was the Village Administrator for Forsyth, IL (population 3,683) for seven years, the Business Manager for Morton, IL (population 15,353) for eleven years, and the City Administrator for West Peoria, IL (population 5,551) for six years. Mr. Strohl manages the organization, not each individual department or employee. He lays out the projects and tasks, sets parameters and deadlines, and checks in periodically. His greatest success came when he was the Chair of the Downtown Development Action Team of the Morton Economic Development Council. He led the effort to create a Business District to facilitate and provide funding for community and economic development and redevelopment activities within the Business District. A 0.25% sales tax was imposed on businesses within the Business District to fund community development and redevelopment activities. The resulting funding will improve commerce within the Village for years to come. Mr. Strohl has a bachelor's degree in political science from Illinois State University and a master's degree in public administration from Valdosta State University. He is an ICMA Credentialed Manager.

### **Next Steps**

The 5-finalists will be selected on June 20<sup>th</sup> and invited to Belle Isle for a tour, public reception, and formal interviews on July 13<sup>th</sup> and June 14<sup>th</sup>, with a possible decision then or shortly thereafter.

**Staff Recommendation:** Discuss the top 5 candidates and complete the Poll Sheet.

**Suggested Motion:** I move to approve the top 5 candidates for consideration as City Manager.

**Alternatives:** Disapprove and conduct a search for additional candidates.

**Fiscal Impact:** Unknown

**Attachments:** N/A