

MEMORANDUM

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

TO: County Commission
Indian River County, FL

FROM: Lynelle Klein and Colin Baenziger **DATE:** January 31, 2023

RE: County Administrator Interview Process Considerations

While the County Administrator finalist interviews are still a month away, we wanted to provide you with some thoughts and options to consider. We have attached a draft interview schedule, a copy of the schedule we recently used in St. Lucie County, and a detailed white paper that serves as a cookbook for who does what so we can all be prepared. The responsibilities are divided between the Consultant (our firm) and your staff. Accordingly, while you may find it interesting, it is not something with which you need to be concerned. Below are some of the questions we are frequently asked and our responses.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Question: Are we expected to pay the travel expenses for the finalists coming to interview to be our County Administrator?

Answer: Selecting your next County Administrator is one of the most important things you will do in the foreseeable future. While who pays the finalists' travel expenses is a decision you make, it is customary to pay them. Many candidates will consider it an indication of how serious you are about finding the best person for the job. The interview process is a two-way street. You are interviewing them, and they are interviewing you – both of you trying to determine if it is the right fit. Consequently, you want to put your best foot forward by paying the expenses.

- 2) Question: If we do pay the finalist's travel expenses, what do we pay for?

Answer: Typically, you pay for airfare for out of state candidates, as well as a rental car, hotel, and meals. For an in-state candidate, it is typically mileage, hotel, and meals. We recommend you give the finalists IRC's travel guidelines and reimburse based on them.

- 3) How much will it cost us if we pay their expenses?

Answer: The finalist pools are generally a mix of in-state and out of state candidates. Total travel costs vary depending on how many finalists you select and where they

come from. That said, the total is typically somewhere between \$4,000 and \$7,500 in total. For example, a candidate flying from Chicago to Orlando ten days from the date of this memo on Delta Airlines can get a round trip coach class flight right now for \$440. Three nights in a hotel is about \$750 total at a respectable chain. Our clients frequently negotiate a better rate and pay even less when they book and pay for it directly since they do not pay tax. A medium size rental car for three days will run around \$160 for three days. Add food at \$50 per day for three days and the total is about \$1,500. In-state candidates will average about \$1,000 because they will drive their own cars, stay fewer than three nights and need less for food. Finally, if select a local candidate, say someone from IRC, St. Lucie or Brevard Counties and the cost might very, very little.

4) Question: Can we make modifications to the draft interview schedule?

Answer: Yes. That is what St. Lucie County did. Hence, their attached schedule is somewhat different from the draft schedule.

Conclusion:

The point of the interview process and the schedule is for you to obtain the information you need to select the best candidate to be your next County Administrator. Hence, if you have other questions, or would like to suggest modifications, please let us know.

Next Steps:

At the Commission meeting on February 7th, these materials will be discussed, and we will determine the best process for Indian River County.