



The Village of Biscayne Park

640 NE 114th St., Biscayne Park, FL 33161

Telephone: 305 899 8000 Facsimile: 305 891 7241

AGENDA

Special Virtual Commission Meeting

Village Manager Selection - Interviews

Wednesday, November 04, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Meeting ID: 986 9647 9224



Indicates back up documents are provided.

1 Call to Order

2 Roll Call

Mayor O'Halpin

Vice-Mayor Kennedy

Commissioner Ross

Commissioner Samaria

Commissioner Tudor

3 Pledge of Allegiance

4 Village Manager Selection - Presentations and Interviews

4.a Mario Diaz

4.b Peggy Castano

5 Adjournment

In accordance with the provisions of F.S. Section 286.0105, should any person seek to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, such person will need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made; which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, persons needing special accommodation to participate in the proceedings should call Village Hall at (305) 899 8000 no later than four (4) days prior to the proceeding for assistance.

DECORUM - All comments must be addressed to the Commission as a body and not to individuals. Any person making impertinent or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous while addressing the Commission, shall be barred from further audience before the Commission by the presiding officer, unless permission to continue or again address the commission is granted by the majority vote of the Commission members present. No clapping, applauding, heckling or verbal outbursts in support or in opposition to a speaker or his/her remarks shall be permitted. No signs or placards shall be allowed in the Commission Chambers. Please mute or turn off your cell phone or pager at the start of the meeting. Failure to do so may result in being barred from the meeting. Persons exiting the Chamber shall do so quietly.

Village of Biscayne Park meeting on November 04, 2020 at 7:00 pm with Social Distancing Modifications

The video conference platform Zoom will be used for public participation in hybrid Village Commission meetings as it was for virtual Village Commission meetings. The Village has a subscription with Zoom and it is the platform used by the Village Clerk for live remote public comments during traditional Village Commission meetings. In accordance with Section 2.02 of the Village Charter, the Mayor presides at the meetings of the Village Commission and serves as the Chair for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial hearings of the Commission. Furthermore, in accordance with Section 2-30(e)(1) of the Village Code, each board and committee of the Village shall have a Chairperson. Therefore, the Mayor/Chairperson will administer any meetings conducted pursuant to these procedures with technical assistance from the Village Clerk. Accordingly, Log Cabin shall remain closed to the public when these meetings are conducted.

Public Comment

Anyone who wishes to provide public comment will be able to do so by participating in the Commission meeting via the Zoom platform and/or telephone by speaking during public comment portions of the meeting when recognized per the instructions below or by submitting written comments, evidence and/or written testimony in advance of 24 hours no later than two (2) hours before the meeting via email to the Village Clerk at villageclerk@biscayneparkfl.gov.

Instructions on How to Watch, Listen and/or Participate in the Virtual Meeting:

To access the Zoom Virtual Public Meeting of November 04, 2020 at 7:00 pm, you have the following options:

Zoom meeting instructions for the public participants:

Download the "Zoom Client for Meetings" to your computer or laptop here: <https://zoom.us> and click on Join a Meeting. When prompted to join a meeting, enter the meeting ID. use the link below to join the meeting. If you are using a tablet or smartphone, download zoom from the device's app store.

For the November 04, 2020 meeting please use the meeting link

<https://zoom.us/j/98696479224>

to attend electronically and watch the meeting by computer, tablet or smartphone.

For additional information or assistance please contact the following prior to the meeting:

1. For public comment questions: Roseann Prado, Village Clerk, villageclerk@biscayneparkfl.gov or 305-899-8000

Public Comment

1. Access audio of the Zoom meeting via phone:

You may access the audio from your phone by dialing: 305-893-4427. When the Meeting ID is requested, enter **986 9647 9224** followed by # key. When asked for a participant ID, press # key. If you would like to speak during public comment, please press *9 on your phone to activate the “raise your hand” feature of Zoom. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes.

2. Watch the meeting online and provide public comment during the meeting:

Use the “raise your hand” feature and be recognized at the direction of the Chair. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes.



DATE: November 5, 2020

TO: Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Members of the Village Commission

FROM: Mario Diaz, Candidate for Village Manager

SUBJECT: Village Manager Interview Recap

As requested, below is a detailed recap, to the best of my knowledge, from the 7 pm Village Manager Interview on November 4, 2020.

I began my presentation with an introduction that I wrote to allow residents and the Commission to get to know me on a more personal level. I genuinely believe that getting to know the person will allow for a better understanding of how they plan to lead the administration. I quickly moved on to inform the Commission that I employ a servant leadership style of management. I would later further describe this as more of a coaching method. The purpose is to build trust and respect among the team on all levels, ensuring high performing employees.

I then stated that I had the opportunity to drive and walk the Village streets over the past three months. During this time, I was able to have several conversations with residents and visitors alike. The most common aspect of the Village that all residents appreciated was the job Chief Cabrera is doing. They described how safe they feel walking throughout the community, even at night. I listed two concerns brought to my attention, the flooding that some streets have and the threat to the quality of life the FAA's Metroplex project has to Village residents.

Believing my 15 years of experience has positioned me to be the best candidate for the Village of Biscayne Park, I began to list prior experiences that I feel are relevant to current Village issues. I described how I leveraged my network to benefit from the community goals and provided an example involving FDOT District Secretary Jim Wolf and North Bay Village. I also went on to describe how I envisioned the budget process, would emphasize communication with residents, discussed the solid waste RFP process, and analyzing the Key Biscayne bid. I concluded my introductory presentation with an example of how my policy recommendations addressed the growing concern of short term vacation rentals and their use as party houses.

Mayor O'Halpin

How did I select the residents I spoke to during my visits to the Village? I explained that I would randomly ask residents walking the street to share something they liked about the Village and something they felt we could improve.

Commissioner Samaria

Commissioner Samaria began his series of questions with:

- **Why Did I want to be the Village Manager?** I explained that after initially hearing of the position advertisement, I began researching the community. As with any position, I wanted to picture how my experience and skill set could be used successfully at Biscayne park. The opportunity to see an issue and find solutions caught my interest.



- **Due to limited resources and employees, how much experience have you had in public works?** I provided Commissioner Samaria with my experience in construction with the Fort Lauderdale sewer system installation. I explained how I was the community liaison between the civil engineers and the residents. I then further explained my experience at the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority, where highway construction would impact all municipalities throughout Miami-Dade County.
- **What strategies would you use to bring the administration, residents, and Commission together to accomplish the Village goals?** I stressed the importance of communication and reinforced the vision I had for the budget process, including a resident survey, an executive strategic session between staff and Commission, public workshop, Commission workshop, and public hearings. Developing clear goals during this process will allow the administration to create a plan to implement the commonly agreed goals.
- **What level of involvement do you believe is needed in each department, and what style of management will you employ?** I expressed that the Village manager needs to be a leader for this Village. That there are professionals in place and expect them to perform their duties as best they can. I expect them to be analytical and provide solutions to the issues that are presented. I do not believe in micromanaging and have to trust that staff can complete the task given. With that said, I think I will be involved in understanding the various processes to ensure that the administration moves forward in the right direction.
- **What are some of the assets of Biscayne park and areas that need improvement?** I expressed I felt that the 2019 audited financials showed a 37% unassigned funds. I believe this to be very healthy, especially when it is expected that municipalities will see property values decrease in 2021. Areas that need improvement, as I discussed with residents, are street flooding and organizational leadership.
- **What experience do you have with RFPs and contract negotiations?** I stated that my experience with RFPs encompasses developing a scope of work, working with the legal department to write templates for the solicitations, overseeing the bid openings, recommendations award letters, and as a scoring evaluator. I have worked on master planning, holiday decorations, Chief Financial Officer services, Landscape Maintenance services, Street Paving, ADA sidewalk, etc.
- **What would be your approach to the Village's list of priorities, and how would you implement those tasks?** As expressed, I would first meet with all the commissioners to understand everyone's priorities. I would see where the overlap and commonalities are to devise an implementation plan then.

Vice-Mayor Kennedy

- **Vision and action plans. What are the differences? Who is responsible for each? How do they dovetail together?** The vision for the community is the end goal you will have. It is what you want the community to look like. An implementation plan describes the steps needed to reach and obtain the goals that ultimately form the Village vision. Residents and Commissioners are responsible for providing the vision, with guidance from the administration. It is the responsibility of staff to develop the implementation plan. As staff, we can recommend goals that align with realistic expectations. However, the Commission should be who dictates what the goals for the Village will be. Again, structuring the budget process to provide everyone an opportunity to discuss and agree on these goals is vital to a healthy Community.



- **What was a failure you experienced, what did you learn from it?** I would not categorize this as a failure because I learned from the experience and used it to benefit North Bay Village. During my time at MDX, the agency was being attacked politically. State legislators looked to restructure the agency. At the time, MDX fought to maintain its status quo. Ultimately, that strategy failed; legislation passed, and it forced many changes within the agency. I learned from that experience, and at North Bay Village, I approached the legislative session differently. I took the opportunity to begin a collaborative conversation with elected officials to bring additional revenue to North Bay Village.
- **How would you like to be held accountable and measured?** A simple way for the Commission to hold the Village Manager accountable is through the strategic plan and budgeting process I proposed. During that process, the Village should have X projects and goals the Commission wishes to complete over the course of the year. The Manager's job is to provide realistic expectations and implement a plan to accomplish those goals. Because the Commission agrees on these goals, it would be a much easier process to evaluate the Manager's effectiveness.

Commissioner Tudor

- **What do you believe are the greatest attributes a manager needs to succeed?** Open and regular communication is key with the Commission and residents. Compassion towards others that understand that life happens and, at times, will need to step up to fill any potential gaps. Someone who is willing to listen and step back to understand the concerns fully. Lastly, someone who knows they don't have all the answers and is willing to surround themselves with experts to provide the community with the best service possible.
- **What do you feel is the benefit of creating a multi-year financial forecast?** This is important for any municipality. You should, at a minimum, have a 5-year Capital Improvement Projects plan. This allows for the proper planning from a public works perspective and also from a financial perspective. This is very similar to the plan already required by CITT and can be used for all revenue funds. Having this type of tool will prioritize expenditures and savings so that as large costly improvements are needed, the fiscal impact can be spread over multiple years.
- **Community interactions are key to maintaining relationships, but the Village business still has to move forward even with limited staff. How do you consolidate that?** As your Manager, I will need to find a way to get the job done. Sometimes that calls for a Saturday activity where we invite the Commission and residents to walk with us. Sometimes it is coming in early to have that quick conversation with the residents before they head to work. Society, due to COVID, has been thrust to adopt a more digital footprint. This has opened up many possibilities to interact with the community in a way we hadn't before.
- **Should the administration regularly fine people for code compliance. What steps need to take place?** First and foremost, I believe residents want everyone to be treated fairly. They want to know they are not being singled out, and the process is the same for everyone. An example I shared was the single-use plastics ban in North Bay Village. We developed a factsheet or trifold brochure that explained the code and the recent changes and handed them out to the various businesses. At a later time, we went back to the businesses and, if not in compliance, provided a written warning explaining what they needed to do to come into compliance and by when. In this case, it is the end of December 2020. If in 2021, we revisit and the business is still not in compliance, that is when we enforce the code and fine the property.
- **An individual commissioner cannot direct the Manager or staff to take any particular action. If confronted with this, how would you mitigate this from happening?** I believe the budget process, as recommended, helps create clear expectations for the administration. I also would establish regular individual meetings with you all to keep you in the loop. Whether it is scheduling a weekly call from 4 to 7 pm or an in-person meeting in the morning. Keeping you all informed, I believe, would mitigate that from happening.



Commissioner Ross

- **In the last 12 months, have you applied or interviewed for other City Manager Positions?** I had applied to an Assistant City Manager position for a town in Broward, where I interviewed. However, I do not randomly apply to positions to see what happens. I take a deliberate approach in the position and how my experience and skills would benefit the community I am applying for.
- **Please provide an example of something you or your municipality wanted and how you negotiated that?** I wouldn't say I like to take a win vs. lose approach to negotiation. Most often, a negotiation means each party will compromise. This is why I try to find the win-win in my negotiations. An example is a recent community park for North Bay Village. Mayor Latham wanted to use the property at a local school that is under prescribed and turned it into a community park. I negotiated with the School Board for eight months, and both North Bay Village and the School Board passed a resolution approving a joint-use agreement. Typically, anything with them can take years to accomplish.
- **What are your thoughts on using CITT funds for infrastructure improvements?** Yes, this is possible, and we are currently doing it at North Bay Village. We recently took out a loan for a couple of million dollars to repave all the Village roads. To do so, we pledged revenue from the CITT funds the Village receives. We, of course, check with CITT for approval beforehand. Still, this method allows us to leverage our debt service without using cash that otherwise would potentially be used in case of an emergency.
- **Many projects have been put off to create a comfortable reserve. How would you move the projects forward while maintaining the comfortable reserve, and what is your recommendation of a percent for reserves?** Government Finance Officials Association typically recommends 20 to 25% for reserves. However, I would not call Biscayne Park typical and feel the levels we have now should be sufficient. We are one good wind storm away from having hundreds of thousands, if not millions, worth of damages with the number of trees we have throughout the community. Using the cash on hand to pay for the projects, although your debt service levels are available, you may be short on funds to pay for the emergency services in the event of an emergency.

Mayor O'Halpin

- **What do you think we can do about the FAA plan?** I have been in direct contact with the Assistant City Manager of North Miami Beach and other cities. I know the Bay Harbor Islands, Biscayne Park, North Miami, North Miami Beach, and North Bay Village have all passed resolutions essentially denouncing this plan. We have spoken and asked the Dade League of Cities and even the Florida League of Cities to issue where smaller cities can join and support in litigation. Unfortunately, Biscayne Park does not have the legal department or the funds needed to fight this on our own. If the municipalities can join together with one voice, the Metroplex project can be stopped.

As I understand them, the following are Biscayne Park Priorities based on the interview, discussions with residents, and the various public meetings I viewed.

- CITT Audit and future expenditures
- Code Enforcement
- Communications
- COVID impacts on Property values in 2021 and 2022
- FAA Metroplex Project
- Financial planning
- Flood Mitigation
- Improve work culture
- Manager accountability
- NE 6 Avenue FDOT project
- Solid Waste contract
- Street repaving
- Village Strategic Plan

Wednesday, November 4, 2020 | Zoom Meeting

Interviewing	Peggy Castano	IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Virginia O’Halprin Vice Mayor MacDonald Kennedy
Type of meeting	Special Commission Meeting	Commissioner Roxanna Ross Commissioner Dan Samaria Commissioner William Tudor
Facilitator	Roseann Prado, Interim City Manager/ Village Clerk	Staff Members of the audience

Introduction/Peggy Castano:

Civil Servant with 10+ years of leadership experience in both municipal government and the State of Florida agency. Accomplishments are obtained through innovation and strategic planning to achieve the vision and mission of the organization. Experienced in municipal administration, policy development, and insightful team-building skills, I am acknowledged as an effective communicator, employing cross-functional collaboration and interpersonal skills. Focused on process improvement, I am a fiscally conscientious, customer-centric, skilled resource employee. In my current position as Administrative Services Manager/ Assistant to the City Manager, my peers, staff, and superiors have described me as an ethical, resourceful, loyal, and passionate team leader.

Commissioner Ross

- During this recruitment process, many candidates have accepted other offers and dropped out of the process. How many positions have you applied for in the past months?
 - I have not been in the job market recently due to circumstances like COVID (closing and reopening), Hurricane season, and management of the CARES Act, which have required long hours at City Hall
- The Village will soon enter into negotiations for Waste Management. Talk about your experience negotiating a contract.
 - I have experience negotiating contracts. My most recent negotiation took place during our sidewalk redevelopment project. The consultant who was awarded the project had a design fee that was unattainable for the city. However, the design must be approved by the Broward MPO in negotiations with the consultant and the Broward MPO I was able to separate the design services from the scope and hire an in house design engineer which was a fraction of the previous cost.
- We have about \$1 million in reserves. We will soon receive \$600,000 from FEMA; the \$1 million in projects that we have stopped or delayed what percentage would you advise be put away in the reserves and what percentage used to complete those projects?
 - I would have to assess the finances and have a conversation with the Finance Director. My first instinct would be to explore other ways to bring revenue to take care of the projects placed on hold. I am an innovative thinker and want to explore grants, legislative opportunities, and programs to help fund and support our initiatives. I want to save as much as possible and get projects and services to the community.
- Are you familiar with the PTP in Dade County? This is the half-penny transportation surtax, which was approved to support the improvement of transportation in our Village. At this point, we are at the use it

or lose it stage, and we must provide signs of progress to the county. How would you approach this situation?

- I would like to review the program ordinances to understand allowable and disallowed expenditures. Understand the needs of the Village and the desire of the Mayor and Commission. There are many projects to be considered for example making sure we are ADA compliant, bike lanes, and much more.

Commissioner Tudor

- Recently some residents believe the code compliance should hit the residents' pockets. Do you think that this is the way to handle code compliance?
 - I believe education is key, and we must approach code compliance issues in multiple steps. Policies and procedures should be put in place by the Mayor and Commission. Policy and procedures allow residents to have a clear guide—a clear map of the authorized and disallowed activities and the consequences. Additionally, we must educate the residents making sure that they understand and are aware of these policies and procedures; they know how they work, along with what the expectations would be and what the consequences would be as well. Lastly, after the policy and procedures and education portion, we must enforce the policy and procedures put in place.
- There is a clear understanding of the role of the Village Manager and the mayor and commission; how would you handle a commissioner giving you a directive without being approved by the board?
 - I believe it's essential to have a conversation with the Commissioner to make sure that they get their concerns heard; I am a listening ear and proudly serve as a gatekeeper, a buffer for the entire commission. Once we have established that it's a valid concern and it would like to go further, we should schedule a workshop where we can bring items that concern not only that Commissioner but also the entire body. Everyone must have an opportunity to voice their concerns in a setting that encourages informative and constructive conversation. The goal will be to discuss the why's and the why nots of all parties, ensure that we come into one accord, and one common purpose.
- What are the benefits of a multi-year budget forecast?
 - A multi-year budget forecast is beneficial because we get to plan have a realistic approach of what we plan to do in the next 3 to 5 years; my recommendation or what has worked for me in the past has been that zero-based budget approach as a year to year process. Each year you start the budget at zero dollars, and you justify the amounts which gives you a chance to compare the allocated budget and what was used each year to have a realistic budget in hand.
- The Village is very small and most of the time the Village Manager must wear many hats how would you feel about that?
 - I have been developed professionally in bigger cities; however, I have always worn many hats. I will be available to get the work done. I don't believe a civil servant has set office hours or a job description. I have a let's get it done attitude, and I am very well versed in multiple departments because I am always available to help and complete the job. I am ready to continue to wear many hats and put in the necessary work in the Village.

Vice Mayor Kennedy

- What is the difference between action plan and the mission of an organization?
 - The mission of an organization is the plan of where we want to be in the next 12, 24, 36 months; what we want to accomplish where the direction of the Village. The action plan is the roadmap of how to get to the desired destination, how do we get to achieve our mission what are the

things that we have to put in place to accomplish these goals so that we can adequately arrive at our mission

- In your research of Biscayne Park what YouTube videos have you seen and what have you been following?
 - I have been following the recruitment process in its entirety, reading historical information on the city. I look forward to being able to see more of the YouTube videos to understand the problems of the city to follow the issues with code compliance and waste management contract if the commission decides to renew the contract and negotiate and other things like that so I will be looking more into the YouTube videos of the city.
- The village has a past problems with communication how would you handle communication problems?
 - In my current duties, I communicate with the Mayor and Commission daily. I understand the importance of everyone being informed at the same time. I would set up one on one biweekly meetings to have a set time where I can communicate any issues arising in the city or any problems that I have mitigated throughout the week. The sessions will allow me to have direct feedback from each one of you. The goal is to achieve a clear understanding of pending issues. Additionally, we will decide what gets sent to the residents the vital information to make sure that our residents are up-to-date with details of what's going on in the Village.
- What is one of your failures and what did you learn from?
 - One of my failures was very early in my municipal government career. I was asked to write a grant practically walking through the door at the Department of Development Services; unfortunately, our grant-writer was overwhelmed. She could not write the grant for our particular department, which had three in total. I only agreed to write one because I felt overwhelmed by the idea that I was not knowledgeable enough or didn't have the experience to write a grant. I worked on it, and I produced the grant. I stayed long hours and made sure that it was ready before the deadline, and to my surprise, I got awarded the grant, and right then, and there I knew that there are no limitations. I had limited myself. I had put doubts and doubted myself. Going forward I have consistently committed to giving it my all, never saying I can't and taking the leap on everything that I do. I can confidently say that there is a solution for everything

Commissioner Samaria

- What experience do you have in public works director and we need to hire a public works director
 - Currently, I oversee Public Works Department and therefore I am very involved with Public Works day-to-day tasks. I believe that's a critical department that is out in the community every day. We are working on multiple projects, for example, canal bank stabilization and the irrigation design for the city canals. Public Works has been diligently taking charge of COVID-19 protective measures throughout the city. We have placed social distancing measures and become the first line of defense during hurricane season. Hiring a skilled Public Works Director is imperative.
- What experience do you have in the grants and RFP process?
 - Like I mentioned earlier, one of my crash courses in my career was writing a grant when I felt incapable of doing such. I have written many grants throughout the years; I was the grants and compliance officer at one point in the City where I currently work. I have to write the grant and also keep them in compliance. The City must uphold the agreement; if not, funds will be recaptured. The development of the budgeted projects and making sure that we have documentation in place is essential. At one point, when I accepted the grants officer position, the City was in danger of losing about \$370,000. I put some efficiencies in place and some corrective measures and made sure that we got reimbursed for those

expenses, and the grant was fulfilled. I am well versed in the RFP process. In my capacity as overseeing CIP the capital improvement projects in our City, I work with the engineer and the budget administrator to make sure that we have the scope of services and other verbiage in place for these RFPs to go out. I don't personally write the RFPs, but I am aware of the process of the RFPs.

- What leadership style do you believe in or do you believe in micromanaging or will you let your department directors lead?
 - I would like to believe that we have remarkable in-house talent capable of leading their departments. The department directors are held accountable to make sure that their departments are operating as they should. I will be in place to encourage and power and guide the department director; however, ultimately, they are put in place to lead, and that would be my expectation of each and every one of them. They must take ownership and be proud of their department and make sure that they are putting all their efforts into getting their teams motivated. I will always be available to guide them and to roll up my sleeves and work with them; however, I do believe in the leadership of the department heads
- Why are you a good fit for Biscayne Park?
 - Biscayne Park is a smaller city, and I believe I can genuinely make an impact. I am excited to be present and engaged in all areas of the day-to-day operations of the Village. There is no task too big or too small I will get it done. I will also encourage and empower my team to do the same. In my research, I came across language that said that Biscayne Park has a lack of planning or long-term goals, and I would love to be part of the long-term goals and a plan for the future of Peace King Park. I would be humbled to be part of it.

Mayor O'Halprin

- Are you familiar with the FAA flying reroutes over Biscayne Park and Dade County?
 - Unfortunately, I was unaware of this particular item; however, I have started my research. I have read the South-Central Florida Metroplex Information Article and will continue the investigation. I look forward to furthering the conversation on this item.