

1

**DeFuniak Springs City Council
Special Meeting Minutes
1350 Baldwin Avenue, City Hall
May 19, 2026**

Mayor B. Campbell called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. followed by the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

The following members were present: Mayor Bob Campbell; Todd Bierbaum (Seat 1); Councilmember Josh Sconiers (Seat 2); Mayor Pro-Tempore Amy Heavilin (Seat 3); Councilmember Glen Harrison (Seat 4); Councilmember Danny Cosson (Seat 5). Also present were City Manager Koby Townsend, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, and City Clerk Madison Lewis.

ITEM 2 – DISCUSSION/DIRECTION ON FINANCE DIRECTOR POSITION

2.A. Approved Finance Director Job Description

Mayor B. Campbell outlined the process for discussion regarding the Finance Director position.

Councilmember A. Heavilin recommended revising the qualifications to require five years of progressively responsible Florida local government finance experience and requested modifications to the reporting structure so the position would report to the City Manager.

Councilmember G. Harrison requested clarification regarding the Finance Director position being bondable.

City Manager K. Townsend stated the city's insurance coverage already provides bonding for the position.

Councilmember G. Harrison stated the proposed qualifications were generally comparable to surrounding municipalities but supported reducing the required years of government experience. He also supported including continuing education expectations.

Councilmember A. Heavilin discussed prior salary limitations established by the Council in 2019.

Councilmember D. Cosson discussed qualifications, reporting structure, interview participation, and salary considerations. He supported the Finance Director reporting to the City Manager, participation by administrative staff during interviews, and increasing the salary range.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum stated the city received an adequate number of applicants but believed the qualifications were too restrictive. He supported reducing the required experience, requiring a bachelor's degree, and identifying managerial experience as preferred.

Mayor B. Campbell requested clarification regarding the proposed experience requirements.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum supported requiring five to eight years of accounting experience with preference for local government experience and discussed salary considerations.

Councilmember J. Sconiers supported reducing the required experience to five years, requiring managerial experience and a bachelor's degree, and encouraging continuing education toward CFO certification. He also discussed a comparable salary range.

City Manager K. Townsend reviewed qualification and salary information from surrounding municipalities.

Councilmember A. Heavilin recommended increasing the starting salary and requiring five years of accounting experience, including Florida government and managerial experience.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum supported requiring Florida experience and discussed the Council's responsibility in establishing qualifications.

Councilmember G. Harrison expressed concern that requiring Florida-specific experience could unnecessarily limit the applicant pool.

Mayor B. Campbell summarized the proposed qualifications discussed by the Council.

Councilmember D. Cosson stated that requiring familiarity with Florida statutes would provide a smoother transition and emphasized the importance of hiring an experienced candidate.

Councilmember A. Heavilin clarified her support for requiring five years of finance experience, including managerial and Florida government experience.

Councilmember D. Cosson stated he would support providing direction to staff while allowing administration to manage the hiring process.

City Attorney C. Adkinson arrived at 4:38 p.m.

Councilmember A. Heavilin stated her preference for the Finance Director position to report directly to the City Manager rather than the City Council.

City Attorney C. Adkinson discussed the City's current reporting structure, hiring authority, and ordinance provisions related to the Finance Director position.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum discussed prior experiences involving access to the Finance Director position.

Councilmember A. Heavilin stated that prior isolated experiences should not determine the reporting structure.

Mayor B. Campbell stated the Council retains authority except where limited by the Charter.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum expressed support for maintaining the existing structure.

Mayor B. Campbell discussed concerns regarding multiple Councilmembers directly contacting the Finance Director.

Councilmember G. Harrison stated centralized communication could prevent unnecessary pressure on the Finance Director position.

City Attorney C. Adkinson reviewed the Council's authority regarding reporting structure, hiring authority, and ordinance revisions.

Councilmember A. Heavilin stated any direction approved by the Council could be incorporated into an ordinance revision.

Councilmember D. Cosson stated Councilmembers could still communicate with employees while allowing the Finance Director to report through the City Manager.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum discussed previous Council actions involving City management.

Councilmember G. Harrison raised concerns regarding Florida-specific experience requirements limiting applicants.

Mayor B. Campbell requested clarification regarding mandatory versus preferred qualifications.

Councilmember J. Sconiers suggested separating qualifications, hiring structure, and salary considerations into separate motions.

Motion by Councilmember A. Heavilin and seconded by Councilmember D. Cosson to revise the minimum experience requirement for the finance director to 5 years of progressively responsible

government finance accounting experience, including at least 2 years of supervisory experience, and Florida experience preferred.

Vote: Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember J. Sconiers, Aye; Councilmember A. Heavilin, Aye; Councilmember G. Harrison, Aye; Councilmember D. Cosson, Aye. 5 Ayes, Nays. Motion carried.

Motion by Councilmember A. Heavilin and seconded by Councilmember D. Cosson to revise the reporting structure for the finance director position to clarify that the position reports directly to the city manager, including hiring and firing, consistent with our comparable neighboring municipalities and to remove any language creating dual or overlapping reporting expectations.

Vote: Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Nay; Councilmember J. Sconiers, Nay; Councilmember A. Heavilin, Aye; Councilmember G. Harrison, Aye; Councilmember D. Cosson, Aye. 3 Ayes, 2 Nays. Motion carried.

Councilmember A. Heavilin directed staff to review and revise the job description to improve clarity, remove overlapping responsibilities and align the position description more closely with professional standards and comparable municipal finance director positions in our surrounding jurisdictions.

Mayor B. Campbell requested clarification regarding the proposed salary range for the Finance Director position.

City Manager K. Townsend stated that any salary offered above the approved pay range would require City Council approval.

Motion by Councilmember A. Heavilin and seconded by Councilmember D. Cosson to modify the pay range for the finance director's position from \$85,000 to \$125,000.

Vote: Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember J. Sconiers, Aye; Councilmember A. Heavilin, Aye; Councilmember G. Harrison, Aye; Councilmember D. Cosson, Aye. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays. Motion carried.

City Attorney C. Adkison clarified that the ordinance would receive first reading in June and stated the Council could revise the job description and salary range prior to adoption; however, the position could not be filled until the ordinance was formally adopted.

Councilmember J. Sconiers asked whether the Council should consider rehiring a recruitment firm for the Finance Director search.

Councilmember D. Cosson expressed support for allowing staff to proceed with the recruitment process.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum supported issuing an RFP for recruitment services related to the Finance Director position.

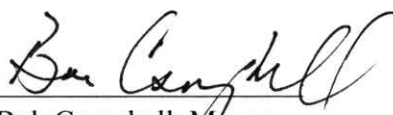
City Manager K. Townsend stated staff would update the job description, advertise the position, and issue an RFP for recruitment services concurrently.

ITEM 3 – CITIZEN COMMENTS – None at this time.

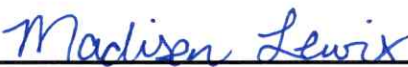
ITEM 4 - ADJOURNMENT

Mayor B. Campbell adjourned the meeting at 5:22pm.

APPROVED:


Bob Campbell, Mayor

ATTEST:


Minutes taken by Madison Lewis, City Clerk
Proper notice having been duly given

