

**July 17, 2013**

**Task Force Members**

Kelly Allen – Present  
Marilyn Coffey – Present  
Pastor Michael Cole – Present  
Jim Marshall – Present  
Jack Schrauth – Present  
Tom Shaw – Present  
Bill Wadsworth – Present

**Also Present**

Mayor of Rock Falls - Bill Westcott  
City of Administrator of Rock Falls - Robin Blackert  
Special Assistant to the City Council - Danny Langloss, Jr.

Call To Order by Marilyn Coffey

**Approval of Minutes**

Approval of 7/10/2013 Minutes: motion by Michael Cole to approve the minutes pending the addition of the guidelines for adopting a new form of government and the council's agreement with Commissioner Considine that a evening meeting to include the more of Dixon's citizens is needed. The motion was seconded by Bill Wadsworth. Unanimously approved.

**Discussion with Mayor and City Administrator of Rock Falls**

Mayor Bill Westcott served in Rock Falls for 2 years as an Alderman, served 10 years as City Clerk and was recently elected as mayor. The position of the mayor is not define as far as full or part-time. Mayor Westcott treats the position as a full time position.

Robin Blackert worked for Jerry Mitchell before becoming the City Administrator of Rock Falls.

Rock Falls has a \$22 million budget which is considered high for a population of 9,200. The City is heavily utility based with a lower retail sales tax base.

The City is comprised of 4 wards. Each ward has 2 Aldermen that serve 4 year terms. Elections take place every two years so that the Aldermen do not change all at once.

The City business is mostly conducted through Committees. For the most part, the Alderman form the different committees. There are some committees that have citizen participation. Committees don't take action, they recommend action to the City Council.

Alderman have hiring and firing authority over Department Heads. Department Heads are very important in the city. They report directly to Robin (the City Administrator).

Robin does have the authority to discipline, but is not given authority to terminate. The Department Heads cannot terminate employees (they can place an employee on leave). All termination requests in the City of Rock Falls are reviewed by the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will give their recommendation to the Council and the Council will decide whether or not to terminate the employee.

#### Day to Day procedures

Department Heads come to Robin with day to day issues. Robin meets with the department heads once a week with updates. If there are bigger issues within the department, Robin will contact the appropriate chairman.

Robin can make financial decisions up to \$10,000.00. There is also a very specific purchasing policy in the city.

Q: Is anyone allowed to run for the positions of City Clerk and Treasurer? Are there qualifications that need to be met for the citizen who runs for City Clerk and Treasurer?

A: There are no qualifications other than being a resident of Rock Falls. There is a job description in the city books. The Clerk is the "Hub of the City." Once a City Clerk is elected, The clerk is strongly encouraged to go to state training.

Robin has no authority over the City Clerk. However, Robin is involved in decision making with the non-elected Clerk employees. The Clerk's office handles the Finance Department and HR duties. The Deputy Clerk truly runs the office.

Robin reviews all check requests and at least two elected officials sign off on every check. Council approves the bills.

The City Treasurer makes \$300 per month and comes in a few days a week for a couple of hours. Most of the work is done by the deputies.

The City determines the the salary of the elected official at least 160 days prior to the election.

Q: How long has Rock Falls been a Mayor Council form of government?

A: Mayor Council was the original form of government. The original council had 6 members.

The City Administrator was introduced to Rock Falls in 2003.

#### Economic Development

Rock Falls is trying to bring more businesses to the city. The City has partnered with the Rock Falls Community Development Association allocates \$100,000.00 a year to the association.

Q: What are the improvements have there been to the city government since the addition of a City Administrator?

A: Before an administrator, all administrative were handled by the Mayor. The administrator now takes care of all the day to day operations. The Mayor and Administrator offices are side by side and the two work together closely. The administrator position has changed the daily operations for the better. We are daily making the processes more efficient.

Q: What is your (Blackert) background?

A: (I) Do not have a college degree. To me the most important quality for a City Administrator is common sense. Human Resource is an important function as well which you need people skills. I am not a member of the ILCMA. I do go to different management, personnel, and labor relations to seminars.

The Department Heads are responsible for submitting their budgets. It is my philosophy that if you can run a calculator, you can set up a budget.

Q: How do you see an Administrator functioning differently in a Commission Form vs. Mayor Council?

A: Fail to see any difference between the council and mayor form of government.

End Discussion

Revisit some of the Discussion with East Peoria

### **Public Comment:**

Jordan Bowman: would like to see the GTF invite the City of Morrison for an interview since they have recently had a bad experience.

Jack Schrauth: Leaning toward Commission Form with a Strong Administrator. This gives the most involvement to the citizens. It also requires a legislative change to go through two meetings. City Manager Form would be the next choice.

Bill Wadsworth: Would it be beneficial to for the GTF to make a decision and then bring it to the Public for discussion?

Tom Shaw: We all agree that professionalizing the city must happen. The city needs appropriate checks and balances. The two forms that I am leaning toward are a Commission Form with a strong Administrator or the City Manager Form. Very interested in hearing the Public Comment on both of these Forms. The biggest concern regarding the Commission Form is a person winning a vote and misusing the power given to the commissioner position.

Jim Marshall: Agrees with Tom's statements.

Q: If the GTF was to recommend a council-manager and it does not voted in, do we go to de-facto Mayor Council?

We need to look toward the future to which government will serve us best. We need to decide which form allows new blood and new ideas.

Pastor Michael Cole, Kelly Allen: Agrees with both of the forms that were recommended.

**Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, July 24, 2013 at 9:00am

Monday, July 29, 2013 at 6:30pm

Will use the meeting on 7/24/2013 to prepare for the Public Comment meeting that will take place on Monday 7/29/2013.

Will check to see if Rob LeSage III will write up a short summary for each form of government.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to Adjourn by Kelly Allen. Bill Wadsworth seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.