



Fort Myers Beach Town Council

**Town Hall Council Chambers
2731 Oak Street
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931**

Minutes

Friday, April 18, 2025

1:00 PM

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members present: Mayor Allers, Vice Mayor Atterholt, Council Member King, Council Member Safford and Council Member Woodson.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA

Council Member King moved to approve the final agenda, seconded by Council Member Safford.

The motion carried unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

A. Question-and-Answer Sessions

Michael Brillhart introduced himself.

Council Member King asked why Fort Myers Beach. Mr. Brillhart replied that it was the location, size, staffing and what he enjoyed about local government management.

Vice Mayor Atterholt listed the traits he was looking for. He asked if Mr. Brillhart shared Vice Mayor Atterholt's approach to governing and to provide examples. Mr. Brillhart replied affirmatively.

Council Member Woodson asked him to summarize his career path and how it prepared him for this role. Mr. Brillhart reviewed his education and experience and described how he was involved in the sales tax initiative in Pinellas County.

Council Member Safford asked him to describe his experience managing municipal budgets. Mr. Brillhart noted the largest budget was in the City of Wapakoneta, OH, which was \$110 million. He developed and implemented the budget and had strategic planning sessions.

Mayor Allers asked how he would approach budgeting with limited revenue

streams and fluctuating property values due to the disasters. Mr. Brillhart stated he would look at things over a five-year period to see where they needed to be. Council Member King asked what he saw as the greatest challenge for the next manager. Mr. Brillhart replied, implementing all the funds acquired through the state and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) for capital projects and recurring expenditures. He thought most of the projects could be implemented in about three years.

Vice Mayor Atterholt asked him how he had prioritized relationship-building skills, with specific examples of where he utilized them. Mr. Brillhart believed intergovernmental coordination and relations were the same as interpersonal relations because they required communication with whoever the agent was. He described how he interacted with legislative officials to secure \$10 million, which helped build Port St. Lucie Blvd.

Council Member Woodson asked what critics would say about him and how he responded. Mr. Brillhart noted that he was not an expert on IT, but he relied on the experts.

Council Member Safford asked how he led a community through a significant change or recovery. Mr. Brillhart described working with FEMA and coordinating the application process after Hurricanes Milton and Helene hit Crescent City, FL. He worked with FEMA inspectors on projects destroyed by the hurricanes and got some funding adopted.

Mayor Allers asked what strategies he would use to build consensus among council members, staff and community stakeholders. Mr. Brillhart responded that he has consistently suggested annual strategic planning sessions at the beginning of the calendar year to allow the public to provide feedback on everything. He described how public input allowed opportunities to take place that they might not have known about.

Patrick Jordan introduced himself.

Council Member King asked why Fort Myers Beach. Mr. Jordan replied that they vacationed here many years ago and he loved coastal communities. He understood the challenges of being a waterfront community. He added that they had a great staff and looked at the possibilities.

Vice Mayor Atterholt listed the traits he was looking for. He asked if Mr. Jordan shared his approach to governing and to provide examples. Mr. Jordan agreed with his approach and referred to the Bible as an example. Council Member Woodson asked him to summarize his career path and how it prepared him for this role. Mr. Jordan reviewed his work experience in politics and management. He described working in government management positions in Alaska and learned a great deal. He moved back to Michigan and described various experiences in his career and how he learned something new in each position he held.

Council Member Safford asked him to describe his experience managing municipal budgets. Mr. Jordan replied that his most recent role was assembling a \$40 million budget in Iona County, working with the finance

director and department heads. He believes a budget is not a mandate to spend just because it was budgeted.

Mayor Allers asked how he would approach budgeting with limited revenue streams and fluctuating property values due to the disasters. Mr. Jordan would seek a lot of advice and consent because he had never managed a budget with all the characteristics of the town. He would be very respectful of the public's money.

Council Member King asked what he saw as the greatest challenge for the next manager. Mr. Jordan thought that some challenges were addressing the restoration, monitoring the recovery progress and ensuring they received reimbursements from FEMA. He discussed restoring relationships and focusing on the residents' health, safety and welfare.

Vice Mayor Atterholt asked him how he had prioritized relationship-building skills, with specific examples of where he utilized them. Mr. Jordan referred to his relationships with other townships and the county and noted that they fought a war in the newspaper for over a year. He brought up humility, self-awareness, integrity and honesty when building relationships.

Council Member Woodson asked what critics would say about him and how he responded. Mr. Jordan stated that a police chief said he talked too much, but Mr. Jordan said he could listen, too.

Council Member Safford asked how he led a community through a significant change or recovery. Mr. Jordan related a story about building a county wastewater system. Ultimately, 14 municipalities with separate collection systems and treatment plants shut down their systems to connect to the system. The main pipe broke in a neighborhood and raw sewage flooded homes. The pumps were shut off and he described how he worked with the EOC and the county to make people whole.

Mayor Allers asked what strategies he would use to build consensus among council members, staff and community stakeholders. Mr. Jordan would talk to them in the same room and lay out the facts to work toward a common decision.

Will McKannay introduced himself.

Council Member King asked why Fort Myers Beach. Mr. McKannay responded that FMB represented a terrific opportunity to be part of rebuilding the community and to help set it on the path for the future.

Vice Mayor Atterholt listed the traits he was looking for. He asked if Mr. McKannay shared his approach to governing and to provide examples. Mr. McKannay shared the same idea for leadership and tried to embody that throughout his career as a leader. He amplified his team to amplify their talents and put them into positions where they could be more effective for the team.

Council Member Woodson asked him to summarize his career path and how it prepared him for this role. Mr. McKannay joined the army and worked as a police officer for the US Army. He worked his way up through the ranks and indicated that his path helped him develop as a leader and broaden his skill

set. He described several of his roles over the years and was able to see things from the strategic level for disaster response and has worked with FEMA.

Council Member Safford asked him to describe his experience managing municipal budgets. Mr. McKannay noted that the budget at Fort Riley was just over \$200 million and his job was to build the budget request and identify all the funding for different departments. After the budget was approved, his role was to make sure the budget was executed as directed in line with the plan.

Mayor Allers asked how he would approach budgeting with limited revenue streams and fluctuating property values due to the disasters. Mr. McKannay replied that the normal funding streams were lower than in the past. He would try to see where there would be growth and where there were opportunities for growth in areas where they could potentially increase some of the funding streams. He mentioned different taxing areas, different user fees, or different funds and grants that might be available.

Council Member King asked what he saw as the greatest challenge for the next manager. Mr. McKannay thought the most significant challenge was a quick understanding of the recovery and where it needed to go. Balancing economic development and community development would be the biggest challenge.

Vice Mayor Atterholt asked him how he had prioritized relationship-building skills, with specific examples of where he utilized them. Mr. McKannay said he would listen to key stakeholders regarding their priorities and issues and build a relationship with them. Examples included dealing with COVID while on the school board, interacting with the town council for continued education and keeping the staff safe. There were daily conversations because the goal was to keep children in school, which they did. He discussed being a part of the Chamber of Commerce and communicating with members in different economic development lanes who wanted to conduct business at Fort Riley but had to follow their rules.

Council Member Woodson asked what critics would say about him and how he responded. Mr. McKannay replied that he tended to be decisive and action-oriented to get things done. He tried to step back and talk to others who might have a better understanding.

Council Member Safford asked how he led a community through a significant change or recovery. Mr. McKannay described a tornado and extreme cold on the base. One challenge was to find housing for displaced soldiers and to see how quickly they could restore the damage. The freezing weather identified vulnerable antiquated infrastructure and they partnered with private power companies outside of the installation. The public-private relationship became a model for other installations around the US.

Mayor Allers asked what strategies he would use to build consensus among council members, staff and community stakeholders. Mr. McKannay responded that he would have conversations and listen to other points of view. It started with relationships across the board and he would make sure he heard from different aspects of the community.

Jeremy Shaffer introduced himself.

Council Member King asked why Fort Myers Beach. Mr. Shaffer indicated it was a career cap for him and reviewed his experience. He loved public service and enjoyed making changes. He lived in a tourist coastal community and understood the different types of residents. He described the erosion project he worked on at Lake Geneva and noted he loved economic development and did that in his current role.

Vice Mayor Atterholt listed the traits he was looking for. He asked if Mr. Shaffer shared his approach to governing and to provide examples. Mr. Shaffer indicated he was a visionary and collaborative, but everything came from the town council. The town manager had to execute the community's vision and serve them. He described how he engaged with his community to help form policy and have better discussions with the council and mayor.

Council Member Woodson asked him to summarize his career path and how it prepared him for this role. Mr. Shaffer stated that he was hands-on and worked in the trenches. He noted that he went after grant funding and added academia to those grant project requests from the state and federal governments.

Council Member Safford asked him to describe his experience managing municipal budgets. Mr. Shaffer replied that he managed a budget of about \$35 million as a county commissioner. Millions had to be cut out of their budget when the housing bubble burst. They looked at the percentage of each department to determine how much had to be cut. In his current position, he tried to offset capital projects with grants and other funding, but they also had to look at increasing fees to increase revenues while watching expenditures.

Mayor Allers asked how he would approach budgeting with limited revenue streams and fluctuating property values due to the disasters. Mr. Shaffer would have to lean on the team and be aware of what they were doing in Tallahassee. He noted they had to always look at the revenues and expenditures and forecast for the future.

Council Member King asked what he saw as the greatest challenge for the next manager. Mr. Shaffer responded that it was a rebirth and rebuild from the storm. He noted it was a slow process. He thought a challenge would be being cognizant of restricted cash flow with FEMA reimbursements and trying to build back better. Navigating changes, navigating what the community wants, what the vision looks like and how they put the policies in place was also part of the challenge.

Vice Mayor Atterholt asked him how he had prioritized relationship-building skills, with specific examples of where he utilized them. Mr. Shaffer reviewed his past positions and described how different small local municipalities eventually worked together to get things done. He noted he was close to his state representatives and felt building relationships with state and federal officials was important because they had to ask for funding. He added that

building relationships across many entities was important because it was in the community's best interest.

Council Member Woodson asked what critics would say about him and how he responded. Mr. Shaffer replied that he wanted to move fast and sometimes it was too fast. He was very strategic but not afraid to make a decision. He pushed organizations to improve and sometimes took a lot on himself.

Council Member Safford asked how he led a community through a significant change or recovery. Mr. Shaffer described how he dealt with straight-line winds from Hurricane Katrina that knocked out their electricity for over a week. A curfew was set and they were the only community that did not have vandalism. Water was provided to the community and a list was created to assist older adults.

Mayor Allers asked what strategies he would use to build consensus among council members, staff and community stakeholders. Mr. Shaffer replied he would have work sessions, meetings and survey the public to create a vision. He described the shoreline project he had been working on for six years and what working with the community entailed. He said they had to build consensus and bring everyone together to work through it.

John Trew introduced himself.

Council Member King asked why Fort Myers Beach. Mr. Trew said he's been visiting for 40 years and liked it. He thought it was a unique challenge.

Vice Mayor Atterholt listed the traits he was looking for. He asked if Mr. Trew shared his approach to governing and to provide examples. Mr. Trew replied affirmatively and noted that the citizens came first and they were all in this together. He described a team approach and working with the constituents and volunteers.

Council Member Woodson asked him to summarize his career path and how it prepared him for this role. Mr. Trew replied that he started operating a jackhammer in his city at 17 years old and described working up the ladder while pursuing his education. He noted he managed people well with a team effort. He explained how each of his positions helped him negotiate issues successfully.

Council Member Safford asked him to describe his experience managing municipal budgets. Mr. Trew replied that he was the CIP and handled the entire budget process. He had all the capital improvements and operating and delivered it to the mayor. The community was CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) eligible, and they had to manage about \$1 million. In another community, he handled all the utilities and their capital budget was \$12 million. He discussed working with limited resources and noted he was always under budget.

Mayor Allers asked how he would approach budgeting with limited revenue streams and fluctuating property values due to the disasters. Mr. Trew would make sure that they spent properly and they needed to be transparent. He would look for other avenues for leveraging and matching dollars and

develop private-public relationships.

Council Member King asked what he saw as the greatest challenge for the next manager. Mr. Trew thought coalitions had to be developed and to keep the state and DC coalitions going. Being visible in the community and working with members to help them was important.

Vice Mayor Atterholt asked him how he had prioritized relationship-building skills, with specific examples of where he utilized them. Mr. Trew said building relationships with the community was critical. He used a coaching approach to balance everything. He mentioned sympathy, empathy and knowing the passion some people have. He described how he ended up on a grant-making committee with the metropolitan planning organization and changed the process.

Council Member Woodson asked what critics would say about him and how he responded. Mr. Trew thought they would say he coached too much because he empowered the employees. He supported employees coming through the ranks so they could see light at the end of their tunnel. He said ensuring employees were part of the picture was important.

Council Member Safford asked how he led a community through a significant change or recovery. Mr. Trew indicated that one community was having water and sewer problems and rates were increasing, making it unsustainable. They set up an RFP to sell water and sewer and received multiple grants for the water line and the backup water supply for the county and the village. He described the challenges of a road widening project and a water line project while they were closing down SeaWorld.

Mayor Allers asked what strategies he would use to build consensus among council members, staff and community stakeholders. Mr. Trew replied that diverse opinions were easy and he negotiated contracts. They all had a common goal and had to understand and respect each other.

- B. Public Comment Regarding Prospective Town Manager Candidates Only
No public comment.

- C. Selection of Town Manager

In accordance with Town Council Policies and Procedures, Resolution 23-182: Town Council shall have a 15-minute Question-and-Answer Session with each of the applicants (previous item). Town Councilors are to have an open discussion of the candidates. Each Council member uses the provided ranking sheet to list their order of selection, with 1 being their top choice. The Town Clerk will tally the votes and announce each applicant's combined ranking score with the lowest score being the candidate selected. A contract negotiator from Town Council is selected and the transition period, if necessary, is discussed. Council Member Safford voted for Will McKannay, Jeremy Shaffer, Michael Brillhart, Patrick Jordan and John Trew.

Mayor Allers voted for Will McKannay, Jeremy Shaffer, John Trew, Patrick Jordan and Michael Brillhart.

Vice Mayor Atterholt voted for Will McKannay, John Trew, Patarick Jordan,

Jeremy Shaffer and Michael Brillhart.

Council Member Woodson voted for Will McKannay, John Trew, Jeremy Shaffer, Patrick Jordan and Michael Brillhart.

Council Member King voted for Will McKannay, Jeremy Shaffer, Patrick Jordan, John Trew and Michael Brillhart.

Town Clerk Baker stated that the final ranking was Will McKannay, Jeremy Shaffer, John Trew, Patrick Jordan and Michael Brillhart.

Vice Mayor Atterholt moved to begin the negotiation process with Will McKannay and appoint Council Member Woodson as the liaison with the negotiation, seconded by Council Member Safford.

The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Vice Mayor Atterholt informed Mr. McKannay that he received a unanimous vote. Mr. McKannay thanked Human Resources Director Talissa Oliveira and the staff for a professional and seamless process.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member King moved to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Safford. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3:01 PM.

Minutes adopted as presented, May 5, 2025. Motion by Council Member King and seconded by Council Member Woodson. Passed 5-0.



Amy Baker (May 9, 2025 16:17 EDT)

Amy Baker, Town Clerk