



Board of County Commissioners
Leon County, Florida
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Agenda Item
Executive Summary

September 14, 2010

Title:

Acceptance of the Nominating Committee for the Leon County Research Development Authority Nominees for Appointments to the Leon County Research Development Authority Board of Governors

Staff:

Nominating Committee for the Leon County Research and Development Authority

Parwez Alam, County Administrator and Chairman *PA*

Sue Dick, President of the Tallahassee-Leon County Economic Development Council *Sue Dick*

Dr. Ching Jen-Chen, Dean of the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering *Ching Jen-Chen*

Brian Fairhurst, Associate Director for the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory *Brian Fairhurst*

Windell Paige, President of the Capital City Chamber of Commerce *Windell Paige*

Issue Briefing:

This agenda item seeks Board acceptance of the Nominating Committee (Committee) for the Leon County Research and Development Authority Board of Governors (Authority) list of nominees for two vacancies scheduled to take place on September-30, 2010.

The Authority, which oversees Innovation Park, is comprised of nine individuals with four members appointed directly by the full Board. The remaining membership consists of the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, or its designee; the Mayor of the City of Tallahassee, or its designee; the Presidents of Florida A&M University (FAMU), Florida State University (FSU), and Tallahassee Community College (TCC), or their designees.

County Ordinance #00-29 establishes the Nominating Committee for the Leon County Research and Development Authority, chaired by the County Administrator, to provide recommendations to the Board for appointment of members on the Authority.

On September 2, 2010, the County Administrator convened a meeting of the Committee to review applications that had been submitted for consideration. After a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed to forward a short list of four names of candidates to the Board for appointment to the Authority as follows: John Bell, Barney Bishop, Eric Miller, and David Ramsay.

Fiscal Impact:

This item has no fiscal impact.

Staff Recommendation:

Option #1 Accept the Nominating Committee's short list of four candidates and select two from this list for appointment to the Leon County Research and Development Authority Board of Governors.

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Report and Discussion

Background:

The Leon County Research and Development Authority, which oversees Innovation Park, is comprised of nine individuals with four members appointed directly by the full Board (Attachment #1). The remaining membership consists of the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, or its designee; the Mayor of the City of Tallahassee, or its designee; the Presidents of Florida A&M University (FAMU), Florida State University (FSU), and Tallahassee Community College (TCC), or their designees.

The four members appointed directly by the full Board serve four-year terms and are eligible for reappointment as required by law. The remaining members serve in perpetuity by virtue of the office that appointed them (i.e. Mayor, FAMU President, etc.).

The terms of Mr. Tom Barron and Mr. Bill Hebrock on the Leon County Research and Development Authority (Innovation Park) Board of Governors (Authority) are set to expire on September 30, 2010. Mr. Tom Barron informed staff that he does not wish to be reappointed to another four-year term. Mr. Bill Hebrock has expressed his interest to be reappointed to the Authority.

County Ordinance #00-29 establishes the Leon County Research and Development Authority Nominating Committee (Committee) to provide recommendations to the Board for appointment of members on the Authority (Attachment #2). The Committee is comprised of the following members:

- County Administrator or designee (serves as Chairman of the Nominating Committee)
- President of the Tallahassee/Leon County Economic Development Council (EDC)
- Director of the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory at Innovation Park
- President of the Capital City Chamber of Commerce
- Dean of the Florida A & M University/Florida State University College of Engineering

In order to promote public awareness of the vacancies and the opportunity to serve on the Authority, staff placed ads in the *Tallahassee Democrat* on Wednesday, August 18, 2010 and Sunday, August 22, 2010 announcing that the County was seeking applications for the Authority. In addition, the vacancies were advertised on the County's website. As a result, 10 applications were submitted for appointment to the Authority. The ten applicants were as follows:

1. John Bell (Attachment #3)
2. Barney Bishop (Attachment #4)
3. Eric Miller (Attachment #5)
4. David Ramsay (Attachment #6)
5. Robert Newburgh (Attachment #7)
6. John Fleming (Attachment #8)
7. Tyler Gautier (Attachment #9)
8. Bill Hebrock (Attachment #10)
9. John Thomas (Attachment #11)
10. Thomas Allen (Attachment #12)

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Analysis:

On September 2, 2010, the County Administrator convened a meeting of the Committee to review applications that had been submitted for consideration of appointment to the Leon County research & Development Authority. The Committee members that attended included:

- Parwez Alam, County Administrator,
- Sue Dick, President of the EDC,
- Brian Fairhurst, Associate Director of the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, and
- Dr. Ching-Jen Chen, Dean of the Florida A & M University/Florida State University College of Engineering

Windell Paige, President of the Capital City Chamber of Commerce, did not attend the meeting due to a scheduling conflict; however, he did provide, through correspondence, the names of the applicants he wished to nominate for appointment to the Authority.

Prior to reviewing the applications as a body, the Committee agreed that it was important to identify candidates with extensive financial experience, engineering background, and have the capability to commit the time that will be required to serve on the Authority. In addition, the Committee agreed that it would recommend a short list of four names to the Board for appointment due to the substantial number of applicants.

After a lengthy discussion that included individual member ranking, the Committee agreed to nominate John Bell, Barney Bishop, Eric Miller, and David Ramsay for Board consideration of appointment to the Authority. The following provides a short summary on each candidate:

John Bell

Mr. Bell is local business owner. He is an engineer and serves on the FAMU/FSU Civil and Environmental Engineering Advisory Board. His community service experience includes serving on the Board of Directors for the Suwannee River Boy Scouts of America.

Barney Bishop

Mr. Bishop is the President and CEO of Associated Industries of Florida. His past community service experience includes serving on the City of Tallahassee Airport Advisory Committee, Florida Commission on Community Service Board of Directors, the Volunteer Florida Foundation Board of Directors, and the Volunteer USA Foundation Board of Directors.

Eric Miller

Mr. Miller has more than 15 years experience of advising and investing in early stage and startup companies involved in technology, manufacturing, financial services, and telecommunications. He is currently the vice president/general manager of CenturyLink North Florida and Alabama.

David Ramsay

Mr. Ramsay is a retired banker who served as chairperson, president, and CEO of SunTrust Bank, Northwest Florida. He served as chairperson of the local EDC, the United Way of the Big Bend, and Governor Jeb Bush's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Volunteer Florida).

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The Board has the discretion of choosing two of the four candidates nominated by the Committee or choosing another candidate(s) from the other eight candidates that submitted an application for consideration. It is important to note that.

The appointments to the Authority made by the Board require a simple majority vote. The terms of the candidates appointed by the Board would commence on October 1, 2010 and expire on September 30, 2014.

Options:

1. Accept the Nominating Committee's short list of four candidates and select two from this list for appointment to the Leon County Research and Development Authority Board of Governors.
2. Do not accept the Nominating Committee's short list of four candidates and select two from all applicants for appointment to the Leon County Research and Development Authority Board of Governors.
3. Board Direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1.

Attachments:

1. Current Members of the Leon County Research and Development Authority Board of Governors
2. County Ordinance on the Nominating Committee for the Leon County Research and Development Authority
3. Application for John Bell
4. Application for Barney Bishop
5. Application for Eric Miller
6. Application for David Ramsay
7. Application for Robert Newburgh
8. Application for John Fleming
9. Application for Tyler Gautier
10. Application for Bill Hebrock
11. Application for John Thomas
12. Application for Thomas Allen