

Replacing staff leads sewer district discussion

BY THERESA JAVA

Free Press Staff

KEY LARGO — The Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District commissioners last week didn't formalize or wordsmith the two-page general manager job description and requirements, but they did give staff direction to pare it down and run an employment ad.

Commissioner Andy Tobin suggested striking redundant verbiage, citing, "Analyze unique, complicated and difficult complaints from customers to determine causes and initiate problem resolution."

Both Chairman David Asdourian and Commissioner Sue Heim said they weren't comfortable running the ad without vetting it. Asdourian elected to work directly with interim manager Peter Rosasco to refine and run the ad by next week.

Commissioners also discussed putting in place an IT system in lieu of Director of Administration Rob Bulkiewicz's recent departure.

Two IT consulting groups presented their credentials and offered their services to the dis-

trict. EssentialNet and Codified Consulting Corp. pledged similar offerings with 24-hour monitoring and support. According to Rosasco, both companies are fully capable of being the district's outsourced IT provider.

Codified was roughly \$14,000 cheaper than EssentialNet at \$57,000 annually, and that figure includes the district's existing contract with Codified to house its seven servers for \$510 a month.

Commissioner Steve Gibbs said either company would be cheaper than former employee Bulkiewicz's \$90,000 salary and questioned if the district needs an in-house full-time IT employee.

The district's IT team used to be robust with four employees: former district manager Paul Christian, Bulkiewicz, Kevin Becerra, who still remains, and one other employee who relocated last week.

Becerra will hold down the IT department for now and was asked to keep commissioners apprised of further in-house staffing needs within the department.

There was one sticking point. Both IT consultants allud-

ed to not being able to support the district's SewerCare custom software.

"The district is in a precarious situation with SewerCare," said Ernesto Milan, owner of Codified Consulting Group. He said his company is capable of supporting the infrastructure of the custom software but ultimately not the program itself.

Former manager Christian developed the program specifically to fit the district's needs. Both consultants called into question how long the program would continue to run without any updates or adjustments.

Milan initially suggested retaining Christian to support it, which some board members dismissed. He then recommended that the district look into viable boxed software to replace it.

Rosasco, directed by the board, agreed to have the two companies provide more comprehensive proposals now that the two are aware of the district's custom software.

Last month, the board approved the general counselor employment ad. Candidates have until Friday, April 28, to submit an application.

Current attorney Ray Giglio tendered his resignation in January directly following the board's decision not to renew Christian's contract. Giglio's last day is effectively April 30, but he has agreed to stay on until the district finds a replacement.

Giglio said that nothing regarding his position would happen until May at the earliest.

In other news:

- The American Legion has requested that the district install a new lateral connection point to their location alongside Ocean Bay Drive, rather than Seagate Boulevard. In doing so, the veterans organization will be able to save a mature mahogany tree but may bear the additional cost. The board added the item to the May 2 agenda.

- Elizabeth McNerny's request to waive assessment and connection requirements for a third contiguous lot on her family's property was approved 4-1, with Heim dissenting. McNerny initially applied for the waiver last August and has no plans to develop the lot. If, in the future, development plans change, the lot can then be assessed.

- Rosasco reported a successful

trip to Washington, D.C., seeking funds. He and Commissioner Robby Majeska, along with other Keys officials, met with Democratic U.S. Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, who serves on the House Appropriations Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water, which funds the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

- The district purchased M-Files Software, a record management software package, for \$9,200. The program was deemed "necessary" by Rosasco to digitize paperwork stored at district headquarters.

- Gibbs proposed installing solar panels on the district headquarters. The district spends approximately \$6,000 annually on electricity at the headquarters. Tobin asked to roundtable the matter until staffing issues are addressed.

- The district discussed providing life insurance to the five seated commissioners at a cost of about \$1,000 annually. The board will vote on that item at its May 2 meeting. The meeting starts at 4 p.m. at the district headquarters.

tjava@keysnews.com