

Time for a Fresh Start

To: Council

Re: Nominations for President and Vice President of Council

Fr: Sherri Myers, Pensacola City Council

Dt: November 27, 2012

This is a day to recognize the contributions of the former council members and celebrate the installation of the new members. It is also the day we make an important decision regarding who will serve as president of the city council. According to the charter and council rules, the president presides over council meetings and has other important functions. An important function the president serves is to be the face of the city council. The person who sits in the president's seat should be perceived by the whole community to be a person of integrity, one who is forthright, honest and transparent in dealing with the council, the mayor's office and the public.

Of all of the nominations for council president, only two nominees presented any qualifications for us to consider. Councilman Bare went into detail regarding his qualifications. Ms. Cannada – Wynn cited as her qualification that she has served on city council before; but, so have some of the others who are nominated. Larry Johnson states that Mr. Spencer has broad community support but offered no empirical evidence.

Councilman Wu and Spencer demonstrated poor judgment in their dealings with council and the public when they recently appeared at a press conference with the mayor to confirm how they were going to vote regarding a veto issue they knew was coming before the council the next day for a vote. The picture and article that appeared in the PNJ, which did not go unnoticed by the public, the citizens, lawyers, judges and other public officials who are familiar with Florida Statute 286.011 known as Florida in the Sunshine, cast a shadow of doubt over all of the participants.

Furthermore, based on information and belief, the mayor has engaged in lobbying council members to vote for Councilman Wu and Spencer. Why is the mayor so interested in who presides over the city council? And why the same two individuals who joined him in a press conference that I in what appears to be a violated Florida in the Sunshine? Why is the PNJ the newspaper that engages in weekly nonstop council bashing so interested in who is council President?

The selection of council president needs to be removed from politics. Starting today I will work to reform the President selection process to remove this issue from self serving political interest.

The city council president must be a person who demonstrates good judgment, whose character is above reproach (doesn't have to be perfect) and who brings good organizational skills to the table. For this reason, I will cast my vote for Councilman Charles Bare and urge the rest of the council to do the same. **It is time for a fresh start.**

Furthermore, while Councilwoman Pratt did not list any qualification on her nomination form, most of us have had the pleasure of working with her and observing her over the years. I support her nomination for Vice President.