

Destin Log

BY: Fraser Sherman Staff writer

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Headhunter good match for Destin, cities say

Customers of the recruiter who's hunting for Destin's next city manager say hiring Colin Baenziger was a smart move

"We were really rather pleased with his services," Mayor Randy Mearns of Marathon, Fla., said in an interview. Baenziger found Marathon's present city manager last year.

"He did a good job, not only in finding people but managing the selection process, walking us through that. Us being a new city, it was very helpful," Mearns said.

This is the first time the Destin City Council has used a recruiter to find an employee in this case, to replace City Manager Jill Silverboard, who resigned last week. She's moving with her family to the Atlanta area, where her husband, Reid Silverboard, relocated.

Mayor Craig Barker has said the city has found two of its four city managers by creating a search committee to review applicants and make recommendations to the City Council. More recently, after the council fired City Manager Larry Rubenstein last year, it promoted Silverboard, Rubenstein's deputy, to fill the job.

Last month, Silverboard presented four alternatives to the city for replacing her: Promote another staffer; create a search committee; work with the Florida League of City/County Managers; or hire a recruiter. The council decided to hire Colin Baenziger and Associates for \$17,500.

City Human Resources Manager Chuck Garcia told the council Baenziger made the lowest bid and guaranteed he'll find a replacement, free, if his candidate leaves within a year.

Baenziger has been receiving applications for the past several weeks. He has told the council he expects to bring the five top applicants to Destin at the end of October for the council to meet and evaluate, followed by selection in November with the new city manager starting work before the end of the year.

With selection committees, Barker has said, it can take six to nine months to complete the process.

Several of Baenziger's past clients in which include Palm Bay, Palm Beach Gardens, Lantana, Islamorada, Marathon and Lake Park in which said the city had made a good choice.

Mayor John Mazziotti of Palm Bay said he was very satisfied with the manager Baenziger found last year.

"I wouldn't get rid of this (manager) on a bet," Mazziotti said, adding he also liked Baenziger's working methods. "He did a great job with us. He worked well with all the council people; he doesn't try to ram (a candidate) through for the majority."

Islamorada City Councilor George Geisler told a newspaper earlier this year that Baenziger

found not only the city's manager but the deputy city manager and several other employees.

Fraser Sherman can be reached at (850) 654-8442.