Revised Agenda Item #4
for
October 8, 2024

CONSENT

4. Annual Performance Review for the County Administrator, in Accordance with Board Policy No. 11-6, "County Administrator Evaluation and Annual Reporting Process"
   (County Administrator / Human Resources)

   - SCRIVENER CHANGES AND REVISED OPTIONS

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Leon County Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Item #4

October 8, 2024

To: Honorable Members of the Board

From: Carolyn D. Cummings, Chair of the Board CDC

Title: Annual Performance Review for the County Administrator, in Accordance with Board Policy No. 11-6, "County Administrator Evaluation and Annual Reporting Process"

Review and Approval:	Vincent S. Long, County Administrator
Department / Division Review:	Ken Morris, Assistant County Administrator
Lead Staff / Project Team:	Candice Wilson, Director of Human Resources

Statement of Issue:

In accordance with Board Policy No. 11-6, this item seeks Board ratification of the County Administrator's annual performance review.

Fiscal Impact:

This item has no fiscal impact.

Staff Recommendation:

Option #1: Ratify the annual performance reviews of the County Administrator (Attachments #1 and #2) in accordance with Board Policy No. 11-6, "County Administrator Evaluation and Annual Reporting Process".

Report and Discussion

Background:

This item seeks Board ratification of the County Administrator's annual performance review. To ensure that the performance evaluation process is conducted in a fair and open manner, the Board adopted Policy No. 11-6, entitled "County Administrator Evaluation and Annual Reporting Process," which provides in pertinent part: "the County Administrator shall present an Annual Report to the Board in September of each year summarizing the state and performance of the County over the past fiscal year." Following this presentation, each Commissioner is requested to complete an individual performance evaluation of the County Administrator. Consistent with the policy, each Commissioner has completed an individual performance evaluation of the County Administrator. The Human Resources Director has compiled the individual evaluations into a summary document found in Attachments #1 and #2, for ratification by the Board. Policy No. 11-6 is also provided as Attachment #3 for easy reference.

Analysis:

As demonstrated in greater detail in the 2024 Annual Report, fiscal year 2023-2024 was another exceptional year for Leon County. Under the leadership of the County Administrator, the County continued to deliver on the commitment to maximize efficiency, drive performance, and deliver meaningful results for our community, while aggressively advancing our ambitious strategic objectives and once again receiving national recognition in setting the standard in public service.

Fiscal Year 2024 required aggressive leadership to meet the unique and extraordinary challenges the community faced. The events were a 200-year flood and devastating tornados which resulted in the costliest natural disasters in the history of our community. Under the leadership of the County Administrator, the County also responded effectively to Category 4 Hurricane Helene, which marked the third declared federal disaster over a five-month period in our area. These challenges, coupled with continued inflation, rising costs, and recurring threats from the Legislature to impose unfunded mandates, had the potential to significantly impact the fiscal well-being of the County.

In the face of future economic uncertainty, the County remained committed to addressing these significant fiscal issues in a deliberate and fiscally constrained manner. Through sound financial planning, budgetary discipline, and focus on innovation, cost avoidance, and efficiency, the County Administrator produced a balanced fiscal year 2025 budget with no recommended millage rate increase for thirteenth consecutive years. The fiscal year 2025 budget includes minimal use of fund balance which allows the County to maintain reserve funds for future years; maintains the County's strategic long-term investments in infrastructure; and includes funding to advance the Board's Strategic Initiatives. The County also maintained its high credit rating, low debt, and a grant leveraging ratio of $5.62 to $1.

In 2024, the County Administrator delivered on the County's long-term strategy to grow and diversify the local economy. The North Florida Innovation Labs at Innovation Park, a $24 million capital investment that has generated over 600 new high-paying jobs, and the expansion of Danfoss Turbocor that has constructed a new $62 million state-of-the-art manufacturing facility are two

prime indications that the Leon County area is ripe for business growth and investment. The County Administrator continued to ensure the effective management and oversight of two other major investments in the infrastructure: the groundbreaking of the Northeast Gateway, and the Welaunee Boulevard Project, which jointly, will provide the foundation for a future Interstate interchange to bolster regional mobility and connectivity. He also advanced the development proposal for the Fairgrounds Master Plan, to guide the completion of various beautification and improvement projects in the North Florida Fairground area. These long-term efforts contributed to the Leon County-Tallahassee Metropolitan Statistical Area's recognition as having the strongest economy in the country by the Area Development Magazine. This distinction demonstrates that Leon County continues to be a prime area for business growth and investment.

The County Administrator has delivered on the County's commitment to invest in the community with multiple initiatives to create places for people and businesses to thrive. He has been intricately involved in the inclusive communitywide planning efforts of the Tallahassee-Leon County Bicentennial Celebration, which includes coordination of over 200 community events with the public and private sector, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of our Leon County and the City of Tallahassee. Other direct efforts of County investment include initiating more than $2 million in enhancements at the Leon County Main Library as part of the County's Essential Libraries Initiative. Over 40,000 square feet of library space was modernized to continue to meet the evolving needs of the community. He also directed the addition and enhancement of several County park and recreational facilities for all citizens to enjoy, that included improvements to the Miccosukee Community Center and the Fort Braden Community Center; the addition of 15 miles of trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks throughout Leon County; addition of three new playgrounds throughout the County; renovation of three boat landings; significant progress on the Apalachee Regional Park Master Plan; and reaching the final stages to convert the landfill into a world class recreational facility and regional park.

Under the leadership of the County Administrator, the Tallahassee-Leon County Local Broadband Technology Planning Team led efforts to secure $6.5 million in state and federal grant funds for local broadband expansion. As a result of these efforts, $15 million will be invested to expand broadband services to 3,000 new households in rural Leon County over the next two years.

Throughout this fiscal year, the County Administrator ensured that County Government remained a responsible steward over its natural resources. Furthering one of the Bold Goals of the Strategic Plan, the County Administrator oversaw projects that removed hundreds of septic tanks within the Wakulla Springs basin. In partnership with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Leon County secured an addition $7.8 million in springs restoration funding, to support the completion of septic-to-sewer projects across southern Leon County. The County Administrator also continued to oversee implementation of the Lake Munson Action Plan to build upon the ongoing investment of more than $290 million to support the long-term water quality of the lake and surrounding water bodies.

Under the leadership of the Administrator, the County also launched its Biochar Pilot Program, the first program of its kind in the state, to allow yard waste to be converted into carbon-capturing biochar. Additionally, the County successfully secured $800,000 in direct federal legislative

appropriations to support the County's Fords Arm Restoration project. This project will construct drainage improvements to protect the water quality of Lake Jackson.

At the direction of the Board, in response to the May 10th Tornado outbreak, the County Administrator established the Targeted Emergency Assistance Microgrant (TEAM) Leon Program that provided immediate financial assistance to 419 households and 53 businesses in unincorporated Leon County. Under his leadership, this program successfully distributed $1 million in assistance throughout the community in a matter of weeks.

In the area of emergency medical services (EMS), the County Administrator also oversaw Leon County EMS's response to more than 54,000 calls for service, which was the highest annual volume of calls in the twenty (20) year history of the department. EMS also maintained a cardiac survival rate of 36% throughout the County, which doubled the national average of 18%. The County Administrator directed the County's efforts to assist thousands of local veterans and their families that resulted in the receipt of over $35 million in benefits during FY 2024. He also ensured the provision of affordable housing through the investment of almost $6 million to leverage $22.6 million in federal funding that supported the development of 400 affordable housing units in 2025.

Finally, the County Administrator was steadfast and committed in his desire to foster a strategically aligned organization that was flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. He remained focused on advancing strategic priorities of the County and achieving tangible results for the community. He succeeded. The County's fiscal year 2022-2026 Strategic Plan indicates that 74% of the County's Strategic Initiatives have been completed and the five-year Targets and Bold Goals are on track to be completed by the end of the plan. Under the County Administrator's leadership, County staff identified over $9.3 million in new cost savings and avoidances through the County's I^2 Employee Awards Program and staff also identified other cost saving efforts, for a total of almost $76 million in costs savings to date through employee led innovations and efficiencies.

In 2024, the County Administrator ensured that Leon County continued to set the standard in public service for local governments everywhere. The County received eight nationwide awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo), including one Best in Category award, which recognized Leon County initiatives as best practices in county government. In the past eleven years, Leon County has received a total of 111 NACo Achievement Awards, which is a testament to the great leadership ability of the County Administrator.

The County Administrator continues to represent Leon County on multiple levels, including locally, statewide, and internationally as one of the most well-respected County Administrators in the profession. Building on his 2022 ICMA Award for Career Excellence, which is the highest honor given to one local government CEO internationally, he has continued to elevate his reputation and to expand his professional ability. Among other professional development efforts and recognitions in 2024, he maintained the distinction as the only County Administrator on the Board of Trustees for the Florida Local Government Investment Trust (a $2 billion investment fund for local governments), a member of the Board of Directors for The Institute for County Government, and he sits as a member of the Board of Directors for the Florida Association of County Managers. We are proud and congratulate him for being awarded in 2024, the

"Distinguished Alumni Award" from Florida State University and the College of Social Science and Public Policy, which is the highest recognition given to alumni by the University.

County Commissioners' Performance Evaluations:

To assist Commissioners in their evaluation of the performance of the County Administrator, the evaluation provided in Policy No. 11-6 focuses on seven key areas:

1. Professional Skills and Status
2. Relations with Board of County Commissioners
3. Policy Execution
4. Reporting
5. Supervision
6. Fiscal Management
7. Citizen/Community Relations

The key areas encompass 44 categories that are rated on a scale of 1 to 5. In addition to the more subjective criteria County Commissioners use in the County Administrator's formal evaluation, an extensive summary of significant milestones and improvements achieved during fiscal year 2023 – 2024 were provided to further assist in individual evaluations (Attachment #4). Also, the 2024 Leon County Annual Report (Attachment #5) provides a comprehensive description of results accomplished by Leon County Government during the last fiscal year.

In accordance with Board Policy No. 11-6, the Human Resources Director has compiled a summary review of each individual Commissioner's ratings of the County Administrator and an overall performance rating (Attachment #1). The overall performance rating for the County Administrator for 2024 is a 5.00 out of a total possible rating of 5.00. Completed performance reviews by each individual Commissioner and his or her comments are included in Attachment #2.

Table #1: FY 2024 County Administrator Evaluations by Commissioner

Commissioner	Average
Commissioner Caban	5
Commissioner Cummings	5
Commissioner Maddox	5
Commissioner Minor	5
Commissioner O'Keefe	4.98
Commissioner Proctor	5
Commissioner Welch	5
Average for the FY 2024 Evaluation Period:	**5**

In accordance with the County Administrator's contract, the County Administrator shall receive the annual cost of living (COLA) increase approved for all County employees (5% for FY 2025) and an annual merit increase as determined by the Chair. Given the excellent performance of the County Administrator over the extraordinarily challenging previous year, I was inclined to approve a 5% merit increase (as reflected in the previous iteration of this item). However, after subsequent conversations with the County Administrator, he has requested that he once again not be considered for the additional merit increase.

Options:

1. Ratify annual performance reviews of the County Administrator (Attachments #1 and #2) in accordance with Board Policy No. 11-6, "County Administrator Evaluation and Annual Reporting Process".
2. Board direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1

Attachments:

1. Performance Review Summary and Overall Ratings
2. Individual Commissioner Performance Reviews of the County Administrator
3. Board Policy No 11-6, "County Administrator Evaluation and Annual Reporting Process" and Performance Evaluation Form
4. FY 2023-24 Significant Milestones Summary
5. 2024 Leon County Annual Report