



Staff Report

Agenda Item: **Approval of the Town Manager's Evaluation as Written by the Mayor**
- Approval of the review of the Town Manager's Evaluation conducted on December 8, 2009, by Town of Clarkdale Common Council in Executive Session.

Sponsored By: Doug Von Gausig, Mayor

Staff Contact: Walt Good, Deputy Town Clerk

Meeting Date: February 23, 2010

Background: On December 8, 2009, the Town of Clarkdale Council conducted an evaluation of Gayle Mabery, Town Manager. This review is a discussion of the consolidation of all the Councilmembers' reviews from that evaluation and the overall Council assessment.

Recommendation: Approval of Town Manager's evaluation as written by the Mayor.

Town Manager Evaluation

January 12, 2010

On December 8, 2009, the Clarkdale Town Council met in executive sessions to discuss and evaluate Town Manager Gayle Mabery's performance for the last year. Each councilor had completed a standard questionnaire, which included a list of nine ratings on the Manager's communications skills, management effectiveness, community relations, and other skill and qualities. The ratings also asked for an "overall performance rating". These questions ranked each criterion from "1" (Exceeds Expectations), to "5" (Below Expectations). Additionally, the forms contained narrative sections relating to more subjective performance metrics, such as "strengths," "suggested improvements," and so forth.

In the first section, every Town Council member ranked Ms. Mabery's performance either "1" or "2," with the vast majority choosing "1: Exceeds Expectations." The objective sections were also overwhelmingly positive. A few comments deserve further discussion.

Several councilors cited Gayle's staff development skills, and her ability to communicate difficult and complex issues effectively. This skill has become increasingly important to the Council, as revenue projections and expenditure choices are more critical than ever in the current economy.

Councilors also stressed their confidence in Gayle, often stating that in this extraordinarily challenging financial climate, they feel certain that the Town is in excellent managerial hands. This is exceedingly important, they said, as it allows them to be more confident and effective policymakers.

Councilors used the word "talented" to describe Gayle in several different contexts. They feel that her many talents are broad-based and well-adapted for her duties. Some of these talents include outstanding communications skills, retention of institutional knowledge, staff relations and management, budgetary understanding and creativity, and regional cooperation.

No councilor mentioned any substantive need for improvement, and several listed the continuation of current Town projects, such as the Clarkdale Sustainability Park, as high priorities for the future.

In order to serve the citizens of the Town well, the Town Manager and the Town Council must work as a team. The Manager must be open and honest about all Town functions when discussing these things or the Council's job can be compromised and ineffective. The relationship between Gayle and the Council could not meet these requirements better. She is scrupulous about keeping us informed, and always provides detailed background and thoughtful exploration of issues that require a good understanding. Gayle has an excellent sense of the community, and that may be her finest trait. When we need to understand how the community feels about potentially divisive or controversial

issues, Gayle is comfortable discussing this and her counsel is always well-reasoned, empathetic and intuitive. This is not a quality or skill that can be learned—it must be innate, and in Gayle it is just that.

For the last several months Gayle and the Town Council have worked closely on the Clarkdale Sustainability Park. This single project, which promises to transform Clarkdale's economic, social, cultural, and environmental context, demands that she understand issues as diverse as sustainable energy technologies, natural biological processes, public-private partnerships, regulatory nuances and requirements, and negotiating skills. In all these, Gayle excels. The success of this Park, and indeed the Town, will to a large extent be a result of Gayle's dedication, hard work, and sound judgment.

Finally, on behalf of the Clarkdale Town Council I must say that working with Gayle is a pleasure, and a learning experience. She brings skills and qualities to the management team of our town that would be difficult, possibly impossible, to find in any other Manager. We feel fortunate and grateful to have her working for the welfare and future of our town, and look forward to many more years of her excellent management.

Sincerely,

Doug Von Gausig
Mayor