



# ALERT

November 10, 2016

## Council Tries To Choose City Manager ... Again

Scottsdale may not be the destination we all like to think it is - especially for candidates eager to be our new city manager.

Tonight the Council City tries for the second time this year to select a permanent city manager. So they've got a chance to do it right this time. However, the process has gotten off on the wrong foot, again.

For starters, after the last debacle five months ago, some councilmembers were irked that they weren't included in the screening and selection process until the last minute. So they asked to be included earlier this time.

**Working with the same candidate recruiting outfit as the first that failed to produce a permanent city manager the first time around, Human Resources Director Donna Brown and Acting City Manager Brian Biesemeyer forwarded five finalists to the Council on October 28th. But before the Council even had a chance to interview them, two had second thoughts and withdrew their names from consideration. They are the current city manager of Queen Creek and the former city manager of Corpus Christi, Texas.**

That left three candidates: Konrad Hildebrandt, Gary Luebbers and Scottsdale City Treasurer Jeff Nichols, who was also one of the three finalists for the job in June.

We all know Jeff Nichols - but who are these other two guys?

**Konrad Hildebrandt is the assistant city manager of Odessa, Texas, with half the population of Scottsdale. His candidacy is expected to give councilmembers pause. Before landing his current job in west Texas, Hildebrandt was forced to resign as city manager of Cedar Hills, Utah, a bedroom community of Salt Lake City. According to a Salt Lake City television station report, he was accused of quarterbacking a scheme to secretly transfer nearly \$400,000 in city funds to**

**subsidize a struggling golf course to make it appear profitable. There were additional allegations that Hildebrandt unlawfully received a pay increase and withheld information from the public about the process. Two other city employees thought to be involved in the golf course scandal abruptly resigned the same day as Hildebrandt.**

How Hildebrandt cleared the City of Scottsdale's vetting process is anyone's guess.

**The other candidate vying for the city manager position is Gary Luebbers, whose last job was city manager of Sunnyvale, California, with a population of 150,000 and located between San Jose and Palo Alto. Luebbers served as city manager for five years in Sunnyvale before retiring to spend time with his family three years ago. He has been lured out of retirement to apply to become Scottsdale's sixth city manager in seven years.**

It's unclear if Luebbers is thinking about the city manager position as a job or a hobby.

If, as Mayor Lane said repeatedly during his recent campaign, "Scottsdale is the best city in America," why are we attracting two second-rate candidates for city manager?

**Unfortunately, five months ago news traveled fast across the national bureaucratic network after the City Council hit a political gridlock and were unable to decide on a permanent city manager. That also influenced the decision of the two finalists to drop out of the competition - not to mention Scottsdale's horrible history with city managers over the past seven years.**

If ever there were a time to repair our city's eroding reputation and preserve the Scottsdale brand, tonight is it. The Council needs to choose a city manager who is decisive, doesn't have to learn on the job and has the credentials and commitment to Scottsdale.

And a person who is prepared to pick up where former city manager Fritz Behring left off in order to create a stable and effective city government.

Jeff Nichols.



**BITE ME!**

This week's best sound bite comes from neighborhood advocate Sonnie Kirtley whose column was published in the *Scottsdale Independent* earlier this week. In response to Mayor Lane's campaign sign that stated "Two Littlefields Are Too Much," Kirtley wrote:

**"Women are stupid. Women are not leaders. Women are puppets of their husband or other men. Women can't make important government decisions without parroting a designated male."**

**"How more insulting to women can Jim Lane's Scottsdale signs become?"**

**ALERT ARCHIVES**

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



Copyright © 2015. All Rights Reserved.

Voice of Scottsdale, 7620 E. McKellips Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85257