

KEYSWEEKLY

KEY COLONY BEACH PREPS FOR CITY HALL REOPENING & COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT

By **Contributed** - February 22, 2024



Following Feb. 15 votes by the city commission to proceed with temporary repairs for KCB's existing city hall, work to repair portions of the building commenced the following week. ALEX RICKERT/Keys Weekly

Though the long-term fate of Key Colony Beach's city hall building remains to be seen, portions of the building are set to reopen in the coming weeks, according to updates provided by KCB Mayor Joey Raspe at the city commission's Feb. 12 workshop and Feb. 15 regular session.

At the workshop session, Raspe outlined a recent meeting with a structural engineer to evaluate the existing hall building. Promising updates later in the week, he said that although the inspection confirmed that the building's administrative section and area used to store building department records require repair, the existing building's Marble Hall area, post office and building department areas are "structurally safe and sound."

Raspe said he was told the structurally sound areas were "in the same condition as when (the engineer) looked at them six years ago," and that he was confident the hall could be restored to its previous condition, adding that he had confirmed since the last commission meeting that previously-canceled insurance policies for the building could be reinstated.

Cost estimates for reopening the building, later approved by the commission at the Feb. 15 regular session, include \$4,000 from AM Electric for minor electrical repairs, \$3,500 from Sunmasters A.M. for repairs to the existing building's shutters, and a total of \$25,050 from Florida Keys A/C for replacement of a split coil system in the building's post office as well as an additional condenser unit.

Following the repairs, the building will be re-evaluated for consideration of a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for the repaired portions, excluding the administrative area, Building Official Lenny Leggett said.

Raspe also submitted a quote for \$5,990 for asbestos removal in the building, though he said the asbestos in question was located in an area outside the regions set to reopen. Secretary/Treasurer Tom Harding advocated for a mold and mildew survey of the building as repairs neared completion to confirm its air quality, receiving informal approval to pursue a quote for these services.

City seeks commission candidates

Following former commissioner Beth Ramsay-Vickrey's resignation earlier this month, Raspe laid out a selection timeline for candidates wishing to fill the vacant position. Interested parties should submit a letter of interest or resume to City Clerk Silvia Gransee at cityclerk@keycolonybeach.net by Thursday, March 14 at 4 p.m. Candidates are highly encouraged to fill out an application for the city commission post, available at KCB's city hall or online, by scanning the attached QR code.

QR LINK: <https://keycolonybeach.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/02-15-2024-City-Commission-Application-REVISED.pdf>

Applicants must be property owners or long-term renters in Key Colony Beach and registered voters eligible to vote in KCB elections. Applications are set for consideration by the commission at its meeting on Thursday, March 21 at 9:30 a.m.

Re-evaluating city administrator position

The search for a new city administrator following the termination of then-administrator Dave Turner will likely take place in the late spring or summer months, Raspe told attendees at the Monday workshop. Although some discussions at previous commission meetings had questioned the need for the position, Raspe, who currently serves as KCB's administrator, supported the idea of a new hire, but said the position may be feasible as a part-time post, with certain duties passed off to other city staff or eliminated. There was general consensus among the commission that the position is due for re-evaluation, with the "sticker shock" of prior administrators' salaries and benefit packages drawing resident concerns.

"The way we'd like to proceed with this is cautiously," Raspe said. "We're not in a hurry to jump in with both feet and hire a new city administrator, especially in the same regard as our two previous administrators." He added that a hire in the coming months would allow for installation of a new administrator before preparation of the city's 2024-25 budget. With significant rising costs described by Harding at the Monday workshop, the new budget is expected to see commissioners strike a balance between raising taxes and eliminating services within the city.



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