

Children's Services Council of Leon County (CSC Leon)

Executive Director Search Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 6, 2021, 11:00 am ET
Leon County Commission Chambers, 5th Floor
Leon County Courthouse, 301 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Members of the public can view the meeting via live stream on this YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc74A9evhLxbHlrH63-clbQ>.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approve Agenda
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Review Aggregate Scores from Interviews
- V. Select Applicants for 2nd Interview
- VI. Proposed Interview Format
- VII. Next Meeting Dates
- VIII. Agenda for the Next Meeting
- IX. Member Comment
- X. Adjournment

Anyone wanting to appeal an official decision made on any subject at the meeting must have a verbatim record of the meeting that includes the testimony and evidence on which the appeal is based.

In accordance with Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the Interim Operations Manager by written or oral request at least five days prior to the proceeding, at 850-764-2966 or via email at info@csccleon.org.

Agenda Item

Public Comment

Attachments:

1. Letter from Neil Skene

G . N E I L S K E N E J R .

October 4, 2021

**Search Committee
Children's Services Council
Of Leon County
Tallahassee, FL 32312
Via Email**

To Members of the Search Committee:

Choose Kelly Otte. That is the clearest unqualified recommendation I can make to you on this very important decision you have to make.

Kelly has the abilities in leadership and management, the experience in Florida and Leon County social services, and the personal energy and integrity this council needs in its executive director. Kelly's comprehensive knowledge of non-profits in our community is unsurpassed by any candidate.

Kelly is that rare leader who has successfully started an organization from scratch – and not just once. It should take nothing away from the exceptional accomplishments of Ted Granger to recognize that a lot of foundational work still lies ahead. Kelly knows the county leadership, knows the sunshine laws, knows how to both build and manage an operating non-profit, and has a deep commitment to public service in our community.

Most important is that Kelly fully understands the strategic priorities the members of the CSC have been discussing. She has lived them as executive director at Pace Center for Girls. Pace's combination of education and counseling and case coordination, in a trauma-informed and strength-based program that has been through a random-control evaluation, takes the kind of comprehensive role in girls' lives that the CSC has been discussing.

I have known and worked with Kelly Otte for about 10 years, since I joined the Board of Trustees of the Pace about the time she was selected as executive director of the Pace Center in Leon County (one of 21 Pace programs in Florida). During those years I saw the quality of her hires for leadership and professional roles and her deep caring for the 40 or so girls in the Pace center.

Kelly left Pace to run for the County Commission last year. She and Carolyn Cummings were the runoff opponents for a County Commission seat. Both candidates ran positive campaigns on the issues and qualifications.

Greater significance attaches to the list of references Kelly has from both political parties and in local government. That includes Vince Long, the county administrator, who will need to have a trusting and continuing relationship with the executive director. It includes former commissioner and business leader Bryan Desloge, a Republican; Democratic State Sen. Lorraine Ausley; the president of TCC; Tony Carvajal of Florida TaxWatch and formerly part of the Florida Chamber of Commerce leadership. In many cases these community leaders extended themselves to publicly associate themselves with Kelly's application rather than hide behind a justification of remaining neutral. I know all of these local leaders will work well with any executive director you choose, but they have publicly recognized the strength of Kelly's candidacy.

I hope you will move Kelly's candidacy to the second round of interviews, give all members of the Council the opportunity to hear from her, and then choose her as your executive director.

Thank you.



Neil Skene

Agenda Item

Review Aggregate Scores from Interviews

Attachments:

1. Interview Scoring Sheets

**Children's Services Council of Leon County
Interview Scoring (as of 10/4/21)**

First Name	Last Name	Rank 1-5																		Sub-total
		Strategic Planning						Board Relations						Communication						
Rodney	Mackinnon	2	2	4	3	5	16	2	2	3	3	4	14	1	2	3	3	4	13	43
Cecka Rose	Green	3	5	3	5	3	19	4	5	3	4	3	19	3	5	4	5	5	22	60
Kelly	Otte	3	5	4	4	4	20	3	3	5	4	4	19	4	5	4	4	4	21	60
Joe	Mahoney	2	3	3	2	4	14	3	2	2	2	4	13	4	3	3	2	3	15	42
Chris	Letsos	5	5	4	5	5	24	4	4	4	5	5	22	5	5	5	4	5	24	70
First Name	Last Name	Rank 1-5																		Total
		Results-Based Accountability						Cultural Competence						Fiscal Management						
Rodney	Mackinnon	2	1	4	3	4	14	2	1	4	4	4	15	3	2	4	3	5	17	89
Cecka Rose	Green	4	5	3	5	3	20	3	5	4	5	3	20	3	5	3	5	3	19	119
Kelly	Otte	3	4	5	3	5	20	4	5	4	3	4	20	4	3	4	3	4	18	118
Joe	Mahoney	4	2	3	3	4	16	5	2	3	4	3	17	4	2	5	4	4	19	94
Chris	Letsos	4	4	5	4	5	22	5	5	5	5	5	25	5	4	5	4	5	23	140

Agenda Item

Select Applicants for 2nd Interview

Attachments:

1. References: Cecka Rose Green
2. References: Chris Letsos
3. References: Rodney MacKinnon
4. References: Joe Mahoney
5. References: Kelly Otte

CSC Leon Reference Check Form

Applicant: Cecka Rose Green | **Position:** Executive Director

Employment Verification #1

Company: Children's Home Society

Contact: Heather Vogel

Dates of employment: 2/11/2019 - present

Applicant's title: Regional Executive Director

Reason for Leaving: n/a

Employment Verification #2

Company: Leading Age Florida

Contact: Dawn Jiménez

Dates of employment: 11/1/2017 – 9/21/2018

Applicant's title: Director of Communications

Reason for Leaving: Accepted another employment opportunity with the Andrew Gillum Campaign for Governor as the Chief of Staff.

Eligible for rehire: Did not disclose

Employment Verification #3

Company: Florida Housing Finance

Contact: Cynthia Moran (cynthia.moran@floridahousing.org)

Dates of employment: 10/1/2007 – 10/18/2017

Applicant's title: Voluntary Resignation

Reason for Leaving: Voluntary Resignation

Eligible for rehire: Did not disclose

Personal Reference #1

Name: Virginia "Ginny" Dailey

Affiliation: Tallahassee office of Pans and Lower Law Office, First Lady, Volunteer with Our Kids First

Phone: 850-284-8328

What is your relationship with the candidate? Known her through a variety of ways; volunteer and Board member with CHS, local/regional 10 years (off for 3-4 years), handful of ED s come and go, pro bono work with CHS statewide work, commented since she has taken over really nice to have our region NOT be one of the problem children any more. She's done a really good job turning the region around, handling the bureaucratic process very well.

Also connected via UPHS on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task force for the last 18 months. This was a brand-new area where UPHS had nothing before – guiding principle, strategic plan, built consensus.

Watched as she built collaborative between UPHS, INIE, COCA in the DEI space and doing a great job! She's very real, authentic and graceful in the role. That is the kind of leadership I like to see.

Also know her through church activities.

How well does the candidate relate to others? One of her strengths. Very well regarded and connected in the local community. She not only understands needs, but knows the providers. A real asset relationship building. She's professional, polished, authentic and change oriented.

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? She is a hard worker. I do not do well with fluff and she is definitely not fluff. follow through on what she says and she is willing to say no.

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. The thing I saw her do that really impressed me is the work with UPHS on DEI. There was a lot of people "wanting to do something" and Cecka leaned in. There was no extra money in that work but she really was the one who took the initiative on, distilling what she was hearing in the community and bringing them together to move forward.

What she accomplished at Sabal Palm Elementary with Anna Kay Hutchinson was phenomenal. We have never had a community partnership school and she made that happen; building on the success of other communities determined how we could build one of those systems here in Leon County that is not only effective, but sustainable.

Strengths: consensus builder, professional management experience with huge wins within a highly bureaucratic system.

Opportunities: the organization must be able to innovate as they move forward since it is so new

Personal Reference #2

Name: MaryKay Cariseo-Detzner

Affiliation: Retired

Phone: 850- 491-2433

What is your relationship with the candidate? We worked at FAC together, previous ED, she was in Comms, great employee. We try and stay in touch regularly.

How well does the candidate relate to others? Very well, "She got along with people I don't get along with."

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Excellent, Always willing to pitch in to get the job done, Very able to communicate to colleagues what she needs from them

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. Started an alumni fundraiser campaign for FAMU "10 for 10" that really took off; she's such a creative thinker.

Strengths: Great communicator, advocate, solid "employee"

Opportunities: "The world is her oyster." Doesn't do things for the money; very passionate.

CSC Leon Reference Check Form

Applicant: Chris Letsos | **Position:** Executive Director

Employment Verification #1

Company: Knox Education Foundation
Contact: Stephanie Jinkins
Dates of employment: currently employed
Applicant's title: CEO
Reason for Leaving: n/a

Employment Verification #2

Company: Boys & Girls Club of Tampa Bay
Contact: Valerie Kendall
Dates of employment/ Applicant's title:

- 2015 – 2020: President & CEO
- 2011 – 2015: Vice President of Club Operations
- 2009-2011: Executive Director, Pasco County
- 2006-2009: Director of Grants & Programs

Reason for Leaving: did not disclose
Eligible for Rehire: did not disclose

Employment Verification #3

Company: Boys & Girls Club of the Big Bend
Contact: Kacy Dennis
Dates of employment: 2003-2006
Applicant's title: Grants Manager / Director of Programs
Reason for Leaving: Moved to Tampa Bay BGC
Eligible for Rehire: Yes

Professional Reference

Name: Matt Ryerson
Affiliation: President & CEO, United Way of Greater Knoxville
How well do know the candidate? Very well
Describe how the candidate relates to others. very well
How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Hard worker
Strengths: very impressed with him; great ability to connect with people, cast a vision, and inspire others to follow; always one of the smartest people in the room but still great at building relationships, alliance building and partnerships; transformed quickly to address COVID
Opportunities: None disclosed

Professional Reference

Name: Emery Ivery

Affiliation: Chief Impact Officer - Northern Region, United Way Suncoast

How well do you know the candidate? pretty well

Describe how the candidate relates to others. Relates very well

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Hard worker

Strengths: very committed to helping kids and driven toward that; smart

Opportunities: None disclosed

Personal Reference #1

Name: Joe Davis

Affiliation: CEO/President, Florida Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs

What is your relationship with the candidate? Ran a great club, developed unique partnerships; very capable financial manager

How well does the candidate relate to others? Knows how to build strong partnerships and get the right players into the right rooms

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Very smart, sharp and focused

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. "I'm sure its on his resume but did you know he started here in Tallahassee?"

Strengths: relatively low staff turn over, Good, well-spoken representative

Opportunities: None disclosed.

Personal Reference #2

Name: Sheriff Chad Chronister

Affiliation: Hillsborough County Sheriff

What is your relationship with the candidate? Close to 7 years; the previous Sheriff served on the BGC Board but could never to attend so I got to go the meetings. We were able to build a strong partnership between the Sheriffs and the BGC that resulted in juvenile crime prevention. We now have multiple locations with Deputies stationed at, generating economies of scale – more dollars serving kids.

How well does the candidate relate to others? Great partner with an open minded; always looking for opportunities to enrich programs; knew how to get financial commitments/fundraising; created opportunities for kids; not bashful or shy about generating interest

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Knows how to do the heavy lifting; has intense passion and amazing vision that is comprehensive not only for the youth but the staff as well; takes a wholistic approach to community service

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. Family man. "I may seem old fashion when I say that, but I admire that."

Strengths: Visionary that does very well in the application phase by making goals a reality.

Opportunities: Moving to a new area, he's going to have to build new relationships. He's adept at it so I'm sure he'll be just fine.

Personal Reference #3

Name: Sheff Crowder

Affiliation: CEO, Conn Foundation

What is your relationship with the candidate? Known Chris 10-15 years, very involved in a project together in a local neighborhood and spoke a lot about strategy for success for the Clubs

How well does the candidate relate to others? He is a task master. While people loved him and we miss him all around here, he also provided a great balance of being able to push people to get things done.

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Very visionary and innovative; incredibly hard working; very ethical

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. He worked with a CSC from the "user side" and saw some challenges. That perspective will serve him well and Leon County as your CSC grows.

Strengths: Visionary and innovative. He's the perfect combination.

Opportunities: He comes from the provider side of things and will have to navigate the personalities and politics of a new community.

Comment: I wish we had him back in Tampa.

CSC Leon Reference Check Form

Applicant: Rodney MacKinnon | **Position:** Executive Director

Employment Verification #1

Company: Office of the Chief Inspector General

Contact: Amanda

Dates of employment: August 2019 – current

Applicant's title: Director of Auditing

Reason for Leaving: Currently Employed

Employment Verification #2

Company: Florida Office of Early Learning

Contact: Barbara Buda

Dates of employment: Sept. 2007 through Aug. 2019

Applicant's title:

- GOC III Sept-2007 to Oct-2011 (entry)
- Assistant General Counsel Oct-2011 to Dec/2012 (promotion)
- Inspector General Jan-2012 to June-2016 (promotion) selected by the CIG, Melinda Miguel
- Director of Early Learning July-2016 to Aug. 16, 2019

Reason for Leaving: Governor Office/DOE transition

Provided Comment: Rodney MacKinnon was a valued employee with Early Learning for 12 years. I had the privilege of working with him during the time he served as Inspector General and then promoted to Director of Early Learning. Mr. MacKinnon is a talented professional who demonstrates the highest work ethics. He is a true leader who treats everyone with respect. Early Learning accomplished many improvements under his leadership that are still evident today.

Personal Reference #1

Name: Andrew Harrison

Affiliation: Marketing Exec, Bank of America

Phone: 850-566-4326

What is your relationship with the candidate? We have been friends for 7-10 years. We play on the same adult league soccer team.

How well does the candidate relate to others? Exceptional ability to relate to others, very likeable, compassionate and easy going; genuinely cares about the people he works with and for

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Rodney is a very hard worker, evident from his extensive educational background, passionate about what he does, impressed by his commitment to the public sector; good steward of public resources and wants to get the most bang for the public's buck.

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. He is an exceptional basketball player; played college ball player in the Dakotas. "Rodney is always open to new opportunities and new experiences."

Greatest Strengths: His work ethic and his compassion for serving others; he is a truly dedicated public servant. There are a lot of generalizations for folks in this sector and he has truly worked to break down those stereotypes and set a shining example.

Areas for Opportunity: Never worked with him in a professional capacity, so cannot offer an opinion to this question.

Personal Reference #2

Name: Michael Smith

Affiliation: ARNP, Heart Surgery Group at TMH

Phone: 850-556-5216

What is your relationship with the candidate? Friendship, 12+ years, Groomsman, No professional ties

How well does the candidate relate to others? Genuine, great listener, has amazing life experiences

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Unmatched, dedicated, prioritizes well

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. 5-6 years ago, he decided to start playing soccer having never played the sport. He wanted to try something new and conquer it. Today, he plays on an adult traveling team.

Greatest Strengths: Calmness, Pragmatism in a stressful situation, Problem Solver, Mr. Tallahassee

Areas for Opportunity: Can't think of one

CSC Leon Reference Check Form

Applicant: Joe Mahoney | **Position:** Executive Director

Employment Verification #1

Company: Pueblo Housing Authority

Contact: LEFT MESSAGE

Dates of employment: January 2020-February 2021

Applicant's title: Chief Operating Officer

Reason for Leaving: did not disclose

Eligible for Rehire: did not disclose

Employment Verification #2

Company: Catholic Charities of Pueblo, CO

Contact: LEFT MESSAGE

Dates of employment: January 2010-January 2020

Applicant's title: Executive Director

Reason for Leaving: New Position

Eligible for Rehire: Yes

Professional Reference

Name: Shanna Farmer

Affiliation: President & CEO, United Way of Pueblo County

How well do know the candidate? Very well

Describe how the candidate relates to others. Very well; takes time to really get to know people

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Hard worker, strategic

Strengths: logical; strongly supports his staff and board

Opportunities: None disclosed

Personal Reference #1

Name: Tim Hart

Affiliation: Director of Human Services of Pueblo County (retired)

What is your relationship with the candidate? Worked together when I served as the director of human services in Pueblo County and he was working with Catholic Charities; we met through the provision of human services; known for about 10 years; developed lots of programs together including pathways out of poverty; worked on child care services, food distribution, home visiting programs, etc.

How well does the candidate relate to others? Relationship building is a huge strength of his, especially with the leaders of influential organizations and academic institutions; to create lasting impact; He is very focused on utilizing a two-gen approach; understands how to navigate the political process to move agendas that benefit children and families; also has the ability to relate one on one with customers to make them feel heard, understood and supported

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? At one point I would tell you all he did was work, now he knows how to find balance and be more well-rounded; driven and persistent, and learning to be patient especially when influencing policies and processes that are underpinned in government that

inherently run slower; consumer of leadership books; finds a good balance between control and influence

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. Working through Ruby Payne Bridges out of Poverty with the community college, created a program (success coaches) that has spread across the state; One thing that I find endearing is his sense of humor that actively engages the individuals he is around, thus enabling him to easily establish relationships with virtually anyone; teaches leadership courses at community college; worked in Louisiana during Katrina recovery that heavily influenced his ability to innovate and lead in other communities.

Strengths: His ability to lead others, especially through difficult decision making; his focus on results and efficiencies to lead his decision-making; ability to see the big picture, have a vision, share that vision with others and get their buy-in before implementation; he is very honest, even when that may not benefit him; has a passion for public service.

Opportunity: continuing to develop the patience he needs to stay on a path without feeling frustrated; he is a big picture kind-of guy and doesn't enjoy the details as much.

Personal Reference #2

Name: Steve Shirley

Affiliation: Vice President of IT, Parkview Medical Center, Former Board Chair of Catholic Charities of Pueblo

What is your relationship with the candidate?

How well does the candidate relate to others?

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic?

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume.

Strengths:

Opportunity:

CSC Leon Reference Check Form

Applicant: Kelly Otte | **Position:** Executive Director

Employment Verification #1

Company: Oasis Center for Women & Girls

Contact: Kathleen Brennan (Board Chair)

Dates of employment: 2007 – 2011; 2020-present

Applicant's title: Executive Director

Reason for Leaving: not applicable

Employment Verification #2

Company: Pace Center for Girls / Leon County

Phone: 904-421-8585 **Contact:** Lauren

Dates of employment: 1/2011-6/2020

Applicant's title: Executive Director

Reason for Leaving: not able to disclose

Professional Reference

Name: Maria Marx

Affiliation: Executive Director, PACE Center for Girls

What is your relationship with the candidate? Hired Ms. Otte as a trainer for ethical conversation; recommended as EC Pace Leon; "Ms. Otte was not a direct report to me but to the people who report to me."

How well does the candidate relate to others? Extremely passionate about gender and racial equity issues; very much an activist in the community; worked with a lot of community partners and well-known as an activist in the community; On a scale of 1-10 as a supervisor, 5/6

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Very strong

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. Declined to answer.

Strengths: Passion

Opportunities: "During her time at Pace, building a Board and fundraising; helping to build a strong confident team."

Personal Reference #1

Name: Kristin Snyder

Affiliation: Vice Chair for Pace Center for Girls; just joined national board Chosen (child welfare)

What is your relationship with the candidate? Known her for years, through my mom, I've volunteered with her, worked with her, served as Board chair

How well does the candidate relate to others? Very well; she is very knowledgeable, adaptable, and a fierce advocate who fights for what she believes in; very respectful of those she works with

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? "Beyond anyone I have ever seen." Kelly really does her research and is very analytical; impressed by her writing style, "she gets all the factual info to back up what's she advocating for and then gets the right people in the right room to make the change she is trying to make."

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. She's funny! We laugh nonstop.

Strengths: Relationships she has in the community.

Opportunity: Sometimes she needs to take a step back and re-evaluate when something is not fitting right.

Personal Reference #2

Name: Tony Carvajal

Affiliation: Executive VP, Florida Tax Watch & President Carvajal Consulting

What is your relationship with the candidate? Known her for 22 years; worked together on projects at Oasis and UPHS, some consultancy work

How well does the candidate relate to others? Way stronger than I would have ever given her credit for; strong woman, good listener and collaborator, she works through difficult situations by asking questions

How would you evaluate the candidate's work ethic? Diligent, she will get work done on time and always ensures its exceptional; her work is not about her, it's about a lot of other things; she started Oasis – you can take an idea and not only implement it and make it work but also step away from it and the mission persists

Tell me something about this candidate that might not be listed on their resume. She lives and breathes nonprofit and community work. I think that comes across in her volunteer work or teaching at FSU or writing for the Democrat. These may come across as things to build a resume but this is truly who she is, Ms. Community.

Strengths: She is willing to be a collaborator and humble, but that she has the ability to take something from idea to concept to implementation without leaving any one behind.

Opportunity: She's a hard worker and very passionate, so sometimes she forgets to "turn it off."