

Nola.com, New Orleans recreation director search committee meeting is canceled

A search committee vetting four candidates vying to head New Orleans' recreation program canceled a scheduled meeting for the second time in a week on Tuesday. The panel postponed the 5 p.m. session, where it had planned to reduce the number of contenders, just minutes before it was set to begin.

The Times-PicayuneNew Orleans City Hall

Committee chairman Roy Glapion said the meeting has been rescheduled for 5 p.m. Wednesday at City Hall in the eighth-floor conference room in the Office of Homeland Security.

Questions arose Tuesday about whether the rescheduled meeting had been given proper public notice. While e-mails announcing it went out Friday, it was unclear whether a meeting notice had been posted inside City Hall, as required.

In addition, at least one committee member was not expected to attend Tuesday's session.

Glapion said the meeting was rescheduled again to ensure the public received proper notice. He also said all six committee members are expected to attend today.

Still in the running for the executive director's position are former NORD director Vic Richard, who has overseen the city's recreation programs since June 2010; Charlene Braud, an ex-NORD director who now heads the Atlanta recreation department; former pro football player Reggie Williams, who played a key role in the creation of Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando; and Wanda Durden, a technology executive who formerly ran the Recreation and Parks Department in Baltimore.

The job will pay between \$83,000 and \$130,000.

Applicants were assembled by DHR International, an executive search firm. After considering more than 100 candidates, DHR narrowed the list to 13 names, which the search committee winnowed to five before one candidate withdrew.

Nicholls State University Athletic Director Robert Bernardi dropped out, telling a DHR official that he believed the appointment of Richard, who was hand-picked by Mayor Mitch Landrieu, was all but a done deal.

Glapion said last week that his plan was to narrow the list from five to three contenders. Those three would then attend a special meeting of the full New Orleans Recreation Development Commission, where the public would be given an opportunity to ask them questions.

But Glapion said it will be up to the full search committee to map out the process going forward. Glapion has said he wants the panel to recommend a single name for the commission to consider in February.