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TCPalm: Local News

5/24/2005

VERO BEACH , Former City Manager David Mekarski is the city's third in 15 years to resign under pressure from the City Council.

Taylor was replaced by Mekarski, a former village administrator of Matteson, Ill., in **May 2004** at a salary of \$130,000.

Mekarski was hired from a pool of 78 applicants and after an interview process that took two months.

Mekarski's contract was the first one the city had with a city manager and also was the first time in 30 years the city manager didn't act as the utility director.

Council members told Mekarski they wanted him to balance the city's budget, improve the morale of city employees and find a solution to the city's dispute with a state power agency.

However, his biggest challenge came three months later when hurricanes Frances and Jeanne roared through the area and caused at least \$30 million in damage to city owned property. The city had to take out a \$10 million loan to cover hurricane costs.

It was the decisions he made after those hurricanes to feed and house city employees and their families, and to use city materials on his home, the homes of two council members and 26 city employees that resulted in then City Council member Mary Beth McDonald, who is now mayor, to question his ability to make good decisions.

Mekarski said the decisions were to help restore the city after the hurricanes and get it done as quickly as possible.

An ethics report cleared Mekarski of any malfeasance **but said he used poor judgment in making his decisions.**

He received a severance package of \$170,000.

VERO BEACH CITY COUNCIL MINUTES JANUARY 4, 2005

VERO BEACH SPECIAL CALL CITY COUNCIL MINUTES MARCH 23, 2005

VERO BEACH CITY COUNCIL MINUTES MAY 17, 2005