



# HAINES CITY

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September 21, 2015

Honorable Mayor and City Commissioners:

The intent of this letter is to reflect on accomplishments that I believe are pertinent to the performance evaluation proceedings. As your City Manager, I have worked diligently in response to both the City Commission and your constituents' needs. Having never served in the "City Manager" role prior to my appointment, I can assure you that for the past two years, this journey has been remarkable. Obviously, I can sit here and pontificate about some of the major accomplishments that we as a team have embarked upon. However, I believe the most meaningful accomplishments that have occurred during my tenure were not solely attributable to me, but to my team. I would be remiss not to communicate my unwavering support and passion for each and every one of them. The sacrifices and challenges we have all experienced during these last couple of years have brought us all closer, and through this, we have become a better team and a better government. The items I am most proud of is the team that we have assembled and the fact that our department heads possess a vast knowledge base and skill set that will be able to address any challenges that could ever face Haines City.

Our community engagement initiative of "Taking it to the Streets" is a grassroots initiative intended to engage our residents in a less intimidating and more intimate setting that is conducive to good public dialogue. We have visited over 600 homes and have talked to over 200 people about issues and topics that are relevant to our residents' needs. We have addressed countless issues by merely walking the streets of our community and identifying areas that need our firsthand attention. We will continue to embark on this journey until we have the distinct pleasure of visiting every section of our community.

Healthcare, pension, compensation, and retirement reform have all been accomplished during this fiscal year, and we could not have done this without the support of our Elected Officials and City Staff. The executive management team has done some yeoman's work. And I'm so proud of what we have accomplished as an organization.

Infrastructure should also be mentioned, nothing is more evident than the commitment we made to construct a brand-new fire station. This state-of-the-art facility will serve our community for decades. Our partnership with BCR Environmental, the City of Davenport, Haines City High School and other agencies have reached new heights. This is a testament to the organizational changes and the culture that you as Elected Officials have instilled in each and every one of us as members of this organization's team.

## Our Mission

*"Our team of professionals will provide our residents and business community with the highest quality services in a fiscally responsible manner through cooperation, strong ethical leadership with a lifelong commitment to enriching lives."*

### **Self-Reflection:**

I have maintained a commitment to professional development, and more importantly, to the profession. Over the next year, I will focus on three critical areas which were identified as part of the results from my Applied Knowledge Assessment (Self-Evaluation) via the International City/County Management Association ("ICMA"). These areas are financial management, policy facilitation and implementation, and staff management. All three areas are critically important to the safety and well-being of the community I serve, and in particular, to me as a professional administrator. If we are ever to achieve our maximum capacity, we must address and discuss these three aspects. Words cannot convey how much I have worked through multiple issues to address the concerns of this organization. However, the most important factor is that I have learned from each and every situation regardless of how complex or minute any particular issue may have been.

As it pertains to fiscal management, one of the fields I currently teach as an adjunct professor at Polk State College is Public Budgeting and Finance. This has allowed me to share good stewardship principles as an active practitioner. I have also obtained my second postgraduate degree from Saint Leo University, where I acquired a Master's degree in Business Administration (with a concentration in Human Resources Management). During my time teaching, I will continue to use academic journals and case studies to broaden my individual horizons so that I may become an exceptional administrator and educator. I will also attend Government Finance Officers of America (GFOA) seminars for the purpose of obtaining a better understanding of fiscal policies, both now and in the future. I will look to develop investment strategies and financial management practices that will assist me in creating the long-term sustainability for our community, which in my opinion is required as we recover from one of the most challenging economic downturns in decades. As an organization, we must realize that as our community evolves and changes, so should our government. We must be responsive and innovative in a practical and pragmatic way. I will look to bring policies before this City Commission that will take account of the long-term and short-term opportunities we have in front of us. This organization also envisions submitting to obtain the distinguished budget award, which is a project I manage working in concert with our Finance Department. Conventional logic tells me that my knowledge, based on the completion of these aspects, will be far more robust than in previous years.

Second, I will focus on policy facilitation and implementation. Albert Einstein tells us that "the true definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results." I will revamp my concepts concerning policy facilitation and implementation, and seek out professional assistance from my peers. It is critically important over the next fiscal year that we develop a strategic plan to map out the course that we deem appropriate and collectively as a community, especially considering the fiscal resources we have available. Planning without implementation is hallucination; we must begin the process of setting the course of where the organization will move in the next 3 to 5 and 10 years.

Currently, I serve as a member of three advisory boards, Polk State College Business Administration Advisory Board, the University of Central Florida, and School of Public Administration Advisory Board. Lastly, I am an at-large director at the Florida City/County Management Association ("FCCMA"), the co-chair of the Communications Committee, and the chair of the Professional Development Committee. I will continue my public speaking engagements in the community. To date, I've spoken at 22 different venues on various topics. These opportunities allow me to interact with the public in a way that allows for civic engagement and participation in governance.

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Lastly, in terms of staff management, this particular objective is critically important to the well-being of our organization and has a direct correlation with the success of the City Manager. In order to better prepare to deal with the complex issues that arise in relation to staff, I will continue to read academic journals and literature about personnel management. Currently, I have read the books "*Tribes*" by Seth Godin, and I have finished Jim Collins' book "*Good to Great*," as well as "*The Art of War*" by Sun Tzu. These texts have opened my eyes to how I can be a more effective manager while dealing with the needs of five different generations in the workforce for the first time in American history. Harry Truman tells us: "Not all readers can become leaders, but all leaders must be readers." As I continue this journey as an administrator, I will maintain a steadfast approach to self-education for the purpose of growing intellectually, spiritually, and personally. By excelling in all three of these aspects, I will undoubtedly be effective as a City Manager.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan E. Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jonathan E. Evans, MPA, MBA, ICMA-CM  
City Manager

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## **SPEAKING TESTIMONIALS**

CITY MANAGER JONATHAN E. EVANS, MPA, MBA, ICMA-CM

*Having Mr. Evans speak at our 8th grade ceremony was an absolute privilege. Not only was his message one that was truly encouraging to our students, but he used examples and object lessons that allowed the students to really connect with what he was saying. He spoke not only to inspire our students, but he also had a message that reached the entire audience of family members and faculty. As you can imagine it is not an easy task capturing and keeping a middle school student's attention. However, Mr. Evans' interactive presentation was one that even the most challenging middle school student couldn't help but listen to. There is no doubt that he was able to reach our students sending them into this next stage of their lives with an encouraging and uplifting message. At the conclusion of our ceremony, I had the opportunity to speak with several parents, and all were complementary of Mr. Evans and his farewell address. I would invite Mr. Evans to speak to the students of Daniel Jenkins Academy again stands without question. I would also, recommend him as a motivational speaker to others interested without hesitation.*

**Ms. Telay Kendrick**  
**Principal of Daniel Jenkins Academy**

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*Mr. Evans is one of the most motivating speakers I have ever heard. He has so many valuable messages within his speech that can turn lives around. I know that our students as well as staff thoroughly enjoy and appreciate his messages. All of them are heartfelt and so true to life. I know that everyone leaves the facility with motivation and a better understanding of what it will take to be successful in life. I so much thank Mr. Evans for his truthfulness and kindness with all!*

**Ms. Lisa Harden**  
**Director of Ridge Career Center**

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*THANK YOU so much for the speech on last Friday. The staff and I thought it was really encouraging words. I also heard some parents behind me saying great things. Again, thank you.*

**Ms. Tisa Parrish**  
**5th Grade Teacher at Horizons Elementary School**

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*City Manager Evans gives a powerful message in a captivating, fun and interesting manner no matter the subject. Each time he speaks at a Chamber event, the guests are impressed by his passion, honesty, and his addition of stories and testimonies from his own life. His knowledge and enthusiasm as a keynote speaker has won him many praises in our community.*

**Ms. Betsy Cleveland**  
**Executive Director of Haines City Chamber of Commerce**

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*Mr. Evans spoke at Northridge Christian Academy as keynote speaker for our fundraiser and did an excellent job. He spoke to the audience so they understood clearly the intent of our gathering. He connected well with the audience and it is evident he has a heart for the community of Haines City and for our Academy.*

**Mr. Harold Butler**

**Associate Pastor/Principal of Northridge Christian Academy**

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*I was fortunate enough to attend one of Mr. Evans' presentations entitled, "Today Starts the Rest of Your Life." I cannot stress enough how impressed I was with his zest and zeal in bringing his community back to where it should be. His goals are simple, basic, yet ones some of society has sadly forgotten. After he presented, he intently listened as I shared my heart with him and some of my hopes and dreams. A motivational speaker myself, I quickly picked up on his passion and compassionate plea for his community. I live in Lakeland, drove to Haines City after being invited, as I realize community is EVERYWHERE. Not only the city we live in, but each and every one uniting to bring positive change. I look forward to hopefully networking with Mr. Evans and others as we seek positive direction to regain the momentum to take back our communities. I strongly encourage others to consider Mr. Evans to speak at any event where you anticipate the promise of a better future.*

**Tracey Dannemiller- Pres./Founder**

**Straight From The Heart of Florida, Inc.**

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*My name is Dr. Charles E. Anderson, President and Founder of Warm of Central Florida, Inc. Our organization recently held an event that focused on youth where Mr. Evans was a guest speaker.*

*I have heard Mr. Evans speak several times on various topics. He is compelling, comprehensive, and engaging. His content is superior, and his knowledge of how to engage our youth is exceptional. His message is life changing as he shares his personal story and journey to success.*

*I recommend Mr. Evans to anyone who is considering a Keynote Speaker. His success as our City Manager of Haines City, speaks volumes and it also enhances the lives of those he has touched through his message of change, ownership, and taking individual responsibility for the path to success.*

*Thank you for this opportunity. If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to reach me at (863) 438-2758.*

**Dr. Charles Anderson**

**CEO/President/Founder of**

**Warm of Central Florida, Inc.**

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*My name is Rodrick Gray, I'm the Math Interventionist and Aspiring Leader at Alta Vista Elementary in Haines City, Florida. Mr. Evans spoke at one of our Hornets to Men Mentor meetings to motivate and encourage our 5th grade male students to not only do well in school but in life. His words were very inspiring and our students really enjoyed it. It was just the boost they needed prior to the Florida Standards Assessments (FSAs). He really engaged our students and challenged them to always do their very best. The students especially enjoyed when Mr. Evans presented them a plaque, with an inspirational quote on it that both he and the students signed. We have it hanging up in our office entrance for visitors to see. I am grateful but not only did he take time out of his busy schedule to encourage our fifth grade students, but he also spent time with our fourth grade boys as well. We are all very appreciative of the positive experience and words he brought to our school.*

**Rodrick Gray**  
**Math Interventionist / Aspiring Leader**  
**Alta Vista Elementary**

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*Thank you both for your part in the So You Want To Be Session at conference. The "secret" evaluators we place in the rooms ranked you at straight 5's—the best you could get. Overall, the session was appreciated by the attendees and everyone thought it was great. Thanks for taking time from your busy schedules to come early and participate.*

**Lynn Lovallo**  
**FCCMA**  
**Executive Assistant**

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*On Monday, August 10, 2015, the Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its monthly luncheon, and our members were delighted to hear from Mr. Jonathan Evans, City Manager of Haines City. Mr. Evans was well prepared to speak on local matters including the impact of future needs for water management, development and infrastructure on our economy and growth. There were numerous questions from the members, to which Mr. Evans responded knowledgeably and with great insight. On behalf of the Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce, I thank Mr. Evans for his valuable contribution, and we look forward to a future of shared ideas and partnership in serving our business owners and communities. Nancy K. Hicks, Executive Director, Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce.*

**Nancy K. Hicks, Executive Director**  
**Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce**



July 1, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

We have greatly appreciated Mr. Evans speaking at our events and look forward to having him again in the future. Any time he has come to speak, we have been met with nothing less than utmost professionalism and passion.

If one were to look at Mr. Evans' resume, they would soon realize that he is no stranger to knowledge; however, what potentially is unseen is his application of that knowledge to wisdom. He understands that these two traits are not exclusive, but partners in our efforts to create better communities and a better world. A lover of quotes, Jonathan always has an insight to share from one of his mentors or favorite authors. One quote he shared came from John Shedd. He wrote, "A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for." I for one am glad that our city manager is not content to dwell within the harbor of what is comfortable or convenient, but desirous to reach far beyond the harbor where life takes place (and presumably where danger and risk lies). This includes Jonathan's willingness to speak transparently and with great vulnerability, even in a public venue.

I have been blessed to get to know Jonathan personally and have come to trust his insights on leadership, courage, family, and faith. I believe his insights to be honest and his love for others to be sincere. He represents our city well and will continue to be a voice for others, far beyond his role of city manager.

Yours truly,

Rev. Terrill J. Gilley