

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In The Matter of:

Election of Commission Chairman for a two-year term
beginning January 2, 2012

PROCEEDINGS: COMMISSION CONFERENCE AGENDA
ITEM 1A

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING: CHAIRMAN ART GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER LISA POLAK EDGAR
COMMISSIONER RONALD A. BRISÉ
COMMISSIONER EDUARDO E. BALBIS
COMMISSIONER JULIE I. BROWN

DATE: Tuesday, November 22, 2011

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: JANE FAUROT, RPR
Official FPSC Reporter
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FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 **CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:** Let's see. The next thing
3 on the list -- I can't quite read this. Oh, yeah, I
4 think we need to elect the next chair for the next two
5 years.

6 Commissioner Edgar.

7 **COMMISSIONER EDGAR:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 And I am so pleased that I was able to jump in
9 there first with that light. Mr. Chairman,
10 Commissioners, for me and probably for many in this
11 room, this past year has flown by. It's hard to believe
12 that the holidays are almost upon us and that New Year's
13 is truly nigh. But with that fact of the calendar, the
14 statute requires us to come together as a body and elect
15 from amongst ourselves which of us will serve in the
16 administrative role of Chairman and as chief presiding
17 officer for the next two years.

18 I have had the opportunity, as some of you
19 know, to participate in a few of these votes, and I can
20 tell you that upon occasion there is not unanimity and
21 sometimes there is even a little drama. In this
22 instance, however, I am hopeful that we are all of one
23 mind as we move forward.

24 I have said before that I believe that part of
25 the role of an effective PSC chair is to bring their own

1 unique strengths, experience, and personality to the
2 position. I also believe that the role requires
3 leadership while also recognizing the independence of
4 each of five independently appointed Commissioners. Not
5 always an easy task. It requires an ability to work
6 toward consensus and cooperation to facilitate
7 professional debate and give and take. And in this
8 instance, I believe that we have absolutely the right
9 person at the right time for the right job.

10 In a moment I'm going to nominate our
11 colleague and my friend, Commissioner Ronald Brisé, a
12 man who when I sat down to think about there were two
13 phrases that really came to mind over and over. The
14 first is still waters run deep. Commissioner Brisé is a
15 man with patience and grace, but do not let that fool
16 you, very thoughtful, very strategic, a quiet strength
17 that I know will serve us all well.

18 And the second phrase is heart of a public
19 servant. I believe that Commissioner Brisé absolutely
20 embodies public service in the way that leadership
21 requires. He will be a chair who will help us come
22 together while helping to set a path forward. And so by
23 motion, I nominate our colleague, my friend,
24 Commissioner Ronald A. Brisé for a term of two years,
25 per the statute, to begin calendar year 2012 to 2013 to

1 serve as our next chairman. I ask for a second and for
2 your full support.

3 **CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:** Thank you very much,
4 Commissioner Edgar. I will second that. I completely
5 agree with everything you just said. I think
6 Commissioner Brisé is -- I think the best word I can say
7 for it is the rock. He is the rock that is up here.
8 He's the stable guy. He's the one that you look for for
9 strength and for support.

10 I know in my past 14 months as chair sometimes
11 I have stepped out there, and I felt quite a bit of
12 opposition push, but I always knew that I had that
13 strength and that support and that rock back behind me
14 to make sure that I was secure.

15 I can't think of a better person to hand this
16 off to. This agency has gone through quite a bit of
17 turmoil over the past two to three years. And I think
18 it is stable now, and I think it's time to move forward
19 and get back to the position that this staff, that this
20 Commission has been known to be for years and years and
21 years. And I think you are that person to open those
22 doors and to steer the ship and get us to where we need
23 to be. So I would like to second that nomination, and I
24 look forward to seeing where things go from here.

25 Commissioner Balbis.

1 **COMMISSIONER BALBIS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 And thank you, Commissioner Edgar, for the
3 nomination. Obviously, you coming out in front, you may
4 have beat quite a few Commissioners to the button on
5 that, so I appreciate that. And I think Commissioner
6 Brisé will be an excellent Chairman. I agree with your
7 analogies that you used, and I would like to add another
8 analogy, and that is when E. F. Hutton speaks, people
9 listen. And I have always been impressed at these
10 Agenda Conferences when he seems to accomplish in one or
11 two sentences what sometimes takes me three paragraphs
12 to accomplish. So I think he will serve this Commission
13 well. I think his experience in the Legislature and in
14 administrative procedures will be helpful.

15 I will certainly miss Chairman Graham's
16 leadership. And, hopefully, you know, the strides that
17 we made as a Commission will continue, and I look
18 forward to future Chairman Brisé's term. Thank you.

19 **CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:** Commissioner Brown.

20 **COMMISSIONER BROWN:** Thank you. Well, it is
21 with great pleasure that I also offer my support to
22 Commissioner Brisé. It is a privilege and a pleasure to
23 sit next to you during Agenda Conference. You do
24 provide that comfort. And one skill I would like to
25 emphasize that you possess is your diplomacy, and I

1 think that will serve the Commission very well as
2 Chairman over the next two years, and I'm really looking
3 forward to you taking the helm.

4 I, also, will miss Chairman Graham. I think
5 your abilities of expediting our meetings are well
6 appreciated. So thank you, and I'm looking forward to
7 supporting your nomination.

8 **CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:** Well, there's very little
9 surprise on how this vote is going to go, but let's call
10 for it anyway. There is a nomination and second on the
11 table for Commissioner Brisé to be Chairman for the
12 years of 2012 and 2013. This term will start
13 January 2nd.

14 And if there's no further nominations, we will
15 say the nominations are closed, and we will take a vote.
16 All in favor of Commissioner Brisé being the next Chair
17 of the Public Service Commission hereby signify by
18 saying aye.

19 (Vote taken.)

20 **CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:** Any opposed?

21 By your action you have elected, appointed,
22 anointed Commissioner Ronald Brisé as our next Chairman.

23 Commissioner Brisé, do you have a word or two?

24 **COMMISSIONER BRISÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 And I want to thank each one of you, my fellow

1 Commissioners, for the confidence, the opportunity, and
2 also the responsibility that comes with the
3 chairmanship. But before that, I want to thank
4 Commissioner Graham for his gracious leadership and
5 stewardship in the last, what was it, 14 months as this
6 agency was going through a very interesting transition.
7 And I thank you for your leadership. I think that you
8 were the absolute right person during that time period,
9 and I don't think we would be in this place right now
10 were it not for you leading at that time.

11 Beyond that, I want to look forward to working
12 with each one of you to ensure that the work of ensuring
13 that we have the protection of the public interest as
14 our primary goal all the time. And regardless of what
15 the forces may be outside, that our primary goal is to
16 make sure that the public interest is always respected
17 and preserved. And sometimes that's difficult, and I
18 know that each one of you bring very specific skills and
19 approach to how we tackle the vast issues that affect
20 most Floridians in our state. And I certainly hope that
21 we will continue to work together to ensure, even though
22 we don't agree, that we can always be agreeable as we
23 move through this process.

24 And I would not be right at this moment if I
25 didn't thank a few people. If I didn't thank, as

1 Commissioner Balbis duly noted earlier, his parents, and
2 I want to thank my parents, and my spouse, JoAn, and our
3 two children. Very often those of us who are out front,
4 people think that we are the ones that suffer and go
5 through the challenges, and so forth, but the reality is
6 that our families face much more challenges than we do
7 because we have actually chosen this life. And so by
8 default they have certain challenges that come along
9 with us fulfilling these roles in service.

10 So for all the times I'm not home, when we go
11 on trips and all of that, I thank my little
12 five-year-old son for understanding that maybe dad will
13 not be there at doughnuts with dads at school, and so
14 forth. Or that because dad is out of town and baby
15 sister is so young, that it may not be appropriate for
16 mom to be there for the Thanksgiving program at school
17 and so forth. And for JoAn, too, for taking some time
18 to sacrifice a portion of her career so that we can make
19 this happen.

20 And then to my staff, current and past,
21 Baldwyn English and Pamela Paultre for being an
22 excellent staff, and Ryan West and Melanie Shanks, who
23 when I came in they were literally holding my hand
24 showing me where the bathroom was and how things should
25 go and how things shouldn't go, and so forth.

1 And to the staff overall here at the agency, I
2 think that we have a fantastic staff, a great
3 professional staff, that every day they come in and
4 y'all work very hard to ensure that you provide the best
5 product that is available. We may not always agree with
6 the product. We may send you back, and so forth, but
7 understand that we truly appreciate and value the work
8 that you bring every day.

9 I am a big believer in team work, cooperation,
10 and understand that process matters. We may want to
11 work together and we will seek to work together, but we
12 need to have a process that everyone understands that
13 this is the way we will work. And sometimes it may be
14 difficult to work within that process, because we may
15 think it would be easier to work outside of the process,
16 but it is important for us to establish and continue to
17 reestablish certain processes, as the Chairman has
18 already begun to do, so that there is a clear pathway as
19 to how we arrive at certain things.

20 So I expect all of us to work together, and
21 continue to work together to ensure that people will
22 understand that they may disagree with us, but we are
23 always working in their best interest. So with that,
24 Mr. Chairman and Commissioner Edgar, Commissioner
25 Balbis, Commissioner Brown, I accept your nomination,

1 and I appreciate the opportunity to serve.

2 Thank you very much.

3 (Applause.)

4 **CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:** So our, General Counsel,
5 Curt Kiser, can I give it to him now? (Laughter.) Just
6 kidding.

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1 STATE OF FLORIDA)

2 : CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

3 COUNTY OF LEON)

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5 I, JANE FAUROT, RPR, Chief, Hearing Reporter
6 Services Section, FPSC Division of Commission Clerk, do
7 hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard
8 at the time and place herein stated.

9 IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
10 stenographically reported the said proceedings; that
11 the same has been transcribed under my direct
12 supervision; and that this transcript constitutes a
13 true transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

14 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
15 employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties,
16 nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
17 attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
18 financially interested in the action.

19 DATED THIS 29th day of December, 2011.

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