Moulder to sign pact soon

But Abbeville has yet to be notified of his departure

BY CARLOS GALARZA
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WALHALLA — It's premature to speculate as to when Scott Moulder will report to duty as Oconee County's new administrator because he has yet to sign on the dotted line.



Moulder

In Abbeville, where Moulder is the sitting government director, County Council Chairman Claude Thomas said Wednesday his council has yet to be notified that their man is leaving.

"He told us he was one of the final two candidates," Thomas said. He added that Moulder told him personally a few days ago that he would talk to his family about any job offer he got from Oconee County before making a final decision.

Thomas also declined to talk about what kind of job Moulder has done in Abbeville.

"I will hold off commenting until we know what he's going to do," he said.

County Council unanimously selected Moulder to be the new county boss at Tuesday night's meeting.

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On Wednesday, several councilmen said they were not worried about Moulder holding them over a barrel.

Interim County Administrator Gene Klugh said the county attorney could have a contract finalized Wednesday, and Moulder would travel to Walhalla to sign it "in the next couple of days."

Councilman Paul Corbeil said the county search firm, The Mercer Group, had worked out the parameters for a contract with Moulder, as well as with another candidate also given strong consideration for the job.

"Before last night, we had narrowed the field, and Mercer had talked with the candidates," Corbeil said.

Basic issues, such as compensation, were broached, Corbeil said.

"I hope (Moulder) sees this as an opportunity," Corbeil said.

Councilman Wayne McCall said Moulder and County Attorney Tom Martin have gone over the contract as well. McCall said council wants to be fair with Moulder, but they also want to make sure the county does not get stuck with a lopsided contract tilted the other way as he said was the case with former County Administrator Dale Surrett.

"That was an iron-clad contract in favor of Surrett," McCall said.

McCall went on to say that council's selection of Moulder was not an easy one because the other top choice, Cynthia Coto of Florida, was a strong contender.

"Picking between these two was like a photo-finish in a race," he said. "That's how equal they were."

Members of a select citizen group that participated in interviewing the finalists for the administrator's job were more than pleased with Moulder's selection.

Rosemary Bailes, a School District of Oconee County board member, said Moulder has the attributes of a strong leader.

"He seems to be an extremely bright young man with a winning personality and abundant energy," Bailes said. "This young man appears to have the gift to bring people together."

Mendel Stone also complimented council's choice, although he added he would have been just as comfortable if Coto had been chosen.

Stone said he too was impressed with Moulder's energy and the way he answered questions.

Details released by Martin of the unsigned contract call for Moulder to be paid $125,000 the first year. Assuming favorable job evaluations, Moulder's salary would increase to $135,000 the second year and $145,000 the third and final year of the contract.

Thomas, Abbeville's council chairman, said Moulder's current salary is $91,000 and his contract is in perpetuity, although either party could terminate it.

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