



STATE
UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM
of FLORIDA
Board of Governors

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STATE UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

**Application Form
University Board of Trustees Position
State University System of Florida**

12 MAY 20 11 36 AM

Name: Block Trudy Alice/Gray Date Completed: 05/29/2012
Last First Middle and/or Maiden

INSTRUCTIONS

The information submitted will be used by the Board of Governors in considering action on your application. If appointed, please be advised that your appointment is subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate and you will be required to file an annual financial disclosure statement with the Florida Commission on Ethics.

Please type or print clearly. Please do not leave any questions blank - answer "none" or "not applicable" where appropriate.

All applications must be signed and witnessed by a Notary. Submit the original completed application via mail, email, or facsimile by the posted deadline to:

State University System of Florida, Board of Governors
 325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 1614
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
 Fax 850.245.9685 Chancellor@flbog.edu

PLEASE NOTE: any application submitted by facsimile or email must be received by the posted deadline and followed by the original signed application to above address.

EXCLUSIONS

The following conditions exclude eligibility for appointment as a University Board of Trustee member.

Registered Lobbyist: No Yes Dual Office Holding: No Yes

Authority:

Section 112.313(17), Florida Statutes, prohibits any citizen member of a university board of trustees from having any employment or contractual relationship as a legislative lobbyist requiring annual registration under section 11.045, Florida Statutes.

I will resign, effective immediately from Gold Key Council if appointed to the Board

Article II, section 5(a) of the Florida Constitution prohibits any person from holding more than one office under the government of the state, counties, and municipalities at the same time, except for certain exclusions stated therein (notary public, military officer, member of a statutory body having only advisory powers, etc.)

EXEMPTION FROM PUBLIC RECORDS

AS A GENERAL MATTER, APPLICATIONS FOR ALL POSITIONS WITHIN STATE GOVERNMENT ARE PUBLIC RECORDS THAT MAY BE VIEWED UPON REQUEST. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME EXEMPTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RECORDS LAW FOR CERTAIN IDENTIFYING INFORMATION RELATING TO PAST AND PRESENT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, VICTIMS OF CERTAIN CRIMES, ETC. IF YOU BELIEVE AN EXEMPTION FROM THE PUBLIC RECORDS LAW APPLIES TO YOUR SUBMISSION, PLEASE CHECK THIS BOX.

Yes, I assert that identifying information provided in this application should be excluded from inspection under the Public Records Law.

IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE AS TO THE APPLICABILITY OF ANY PUBLIC RECORDS LAW EXEMPTION TO YOUR SITUATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE GENERAL COUNSEL FOR THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

Vikki R. Shirley
General Counsel
State University System of Florida, Board of Governors
325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 1614
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
(850) 245-0466

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Block Trudy Alice/Gray Date Completed: 05/29/2012
 Last First Middle and/or Maiden

1. University Board of Interest: Are you applying for reappointment? Yes No
 FAMU FAU FGCU FIU FPU FSU NCF UCF UF UNF USF UWF

2. Residence Address: [REDACTED] Polk City FL Polk 33868
 Street City State County Zip Code
863-984-5691 [REDACTED] 630-853-3673
 Area Code/Phone Cell Phone

3. Current Employer or Occupation: City of Polk City
 Business Address: 123 Broadway Blvd Polk City FL
 Street Office City State
33868 [REDACTED] 863-984-1375 ext 237
 Post Office Box Suite Zip Code Area Code/Phone Number
trudy.block@mypolkcity.org
 E-mail Address

4. Specify the preferred mailing address: Business Home Fax # _____

5. List all places of residence for the past five (5) years.

Address	City and State	From	To
<u>618 Jonquil Avenue</u>	<u>Lisle, IL 60532</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>2009</u>
<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>Polk City, FL 33868</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>current/5430</u>

6. List all former and current residences outside of Florida that you have maintained at any time during adulthood.

Address	City and State	From	To
<u>5430 Fairview Avenue</u>	<u>Downers Grove, IL 60515</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>current</u>
<u>855 E. 22nd Street Unit 309</u>	<u>Lombard, IL 60548</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2012</u>

7. Date of Birth: [REDACTED] * Place of Birth: Chicago, IL *

8. Social Security No.: [REDACTED] *

9. Driver License No: [REDACTED] * Issuing State: FL *

***ALL INFORMATION MARKED WITH AN ASTERIK IS REQUIRED FOR CONDUCTING BACKGROUND SCREENING AND WILL BE REDACTED PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTION OF THE APPLICATION TO THE TRUSTEE NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS. REFER TO ATTACHED NOTICE ON USE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS.**

10. Have you ever been known by any other legal name? Yes No If "Yes" explain.

Trudy Alice Gray (Maiden Name)

11. Are you a United States citizen? Yes No If "No" explain.

12. If you are a naturalized citizen, date of naturalization: Not Applicable

13. Since what year have you been a continuous resident of Florida? 2009

14. Are you a registered Florida voter? Yes No

15. Have you ever been arrested, charged, or indicted for violation of any federal, state, county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance? (Exclude traffic violations for which a fine or civil penalty of \$150 or less was paid.) Yes No If "Yes" give details:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Nature</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
-------------	--------------	---------------	--------------------

16. Has probable cause ever been found that you were in violation of Part III, Chapter 112, F.S., the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees? Yes No If "Yes", give details:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Nature of Violation</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
-------------	----------------------------	--------------------

17. Have you ever been suspended from any office by the Governor of the State of Florida? Yes No If "Yes", list:

Title of Office: _____ Reason for Suspension: _____

Date of Suspension: _____ Result: Reinstated Removed Resigned

18. Are there any pending lawsuits against you or are you a party to a lawsuit in any court in which you are the plaintiff or defendant? Yes No If "yes", what type and where?

19. Have any judgments been entered against you as a result of any civil or administrative proceeding(s)? Yes No If "yes", identify the proceeding(s) that resulted in the judgment and the date the judgment was entered.

20. Are you now engaged in activities, or have you engaged in activities in the past, that will reflect unfavorably on the board to which you seek appointment? Yes No If "yes", explain.

21. Have you ever been refused a fidelity, surety, performance, or other bond? Yes No If "Yes", explain.

EDUCATION, LICENSURE, MEMBERSHIPS

22. Education:

A. High School: JF Kennedy High School Year Graduated: 1970
 (Name and Location)

B. List all postsecondary educational institutions attended:

<u>Name and Location</u>	<u>Date Attended</u>	<u>Certificates/Degrees Received</u>
St. Anne's School of Nursing, Chicago	1970-1973	Registered Nurse Diploma
College of DuPage	1979 - 1981	Associate of Science - Math
Illinois Institute of Technology	1981 - 1990	BS - Electrical/Computer Engineering

23. Have you received any degree(s) or professional certification(s) related to the subject matter of this appointment? Yes No If "Yes", list:

Electrical Engineering Degree, IT Process Master Certification, Professional Project Manager Certification

24. Have you held or do you hold an occupational or professional license or certificate in the State of Florida? Yes No If "Yes", provide the title and number, original issue date, and issuing authority. If any disciplinary action (fine, probation, suspension, revocation, and/or disbarment) has ever been taken against you by the issuing authority, state the type and date of the action taken:

<u>License/Certificate Title & Number</u>	<u>Original Issue Date</u>	<u>Issuing Authority</u>	<u>Disciplinary Action/Date</u>

25. Identify all association memberships and association offices held by you that relate to this appointment:

League of Women Voters

26. Name any business, professional, occupational, civic, or fraternal organization(s) of which you are now a member, or of which you have been a member during the past five (5) years, the organization address(es), and date(s) of your membership(s).

<u>Name</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Office(s) Held & Term</u>	<u>Date(s) of Membership</u>
Not Applicable			

27. Are you now, or have you within the past four (4) years, been a member of any club or organization that, to your knowledge, in practice or in policy, restricts membership or restricted membership during the time that you belonged, on the basis of race, religion, national origin or gender? Yes No If "yes", detail the name and nature of the organization, relevant policies and practices, and state whether you intend to continue as a member if appointed by the Board of Governors.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

28. Concerning your current employer and for all of your employment, including self-employment, during the last five years, list your employer's name, business address, type of business, occupation or job title, and period(s) of employment:

<u>Employer Name and Address</u>	<u>Type of Business</u>	<u>Occupation/Title</u>	<u>Period of Employment</u>
City of Polk City	Municipality	City Councilor	April 2010 - present
Hewlett Packard	Technology/Consulting	Program Manager	April 1990 - April 2010

29. Have you ever been employed by any state, district, or local government agency in Florida? Yes No If "Yes", identify the position(s), the name(s) of the employing agency, and the period(s) of employment, and reason for leaving:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Employing Agency</u>	<u>Period of Employment</u>
Polk City Councilor	City of Polk City	2010 - present

30. Have you ever been responsible or played a role in managing a business or other corporate entity? Yes No "Yes", state the name of the business, the dates of your involvement, and provide a brief description of your involvement.

I managed technical consulting programs for Hewlett Packard. These programs included business intelligence, managed print services, and electronic medical records. Many of these programs were global programs with offices in India and China. I won awards at HP for my work writing a methodology for a process class.

In addition, I was the Acting City Manager of Polk City for almost one year successfully bringing the city back to a state of normalcy.

31. Are you or have you ever been a member of the United States armed forces? Yes No
If "Yes" list:

A. Dates of service: _____

B. Branch or component: _____

C. Date and type of discharge: _____

32. Do you currently hold an office or position (appointive, civil service, or other) with the Federal or any foreign government? Yes No If "Yes", please list:

33. Have you previously been appointed to any office that required confirmation by the Florida Senate? Yes No If "Yes", list:

Title of Office: _____

Term of Appointment: _____

Confirmation results: _____

34. Have you ever been elected or appointed to any public office in this state? Yes No
If "Yes", state the office title, date of election or appointment, term of office, and level of government (city, county, district or state):

<u>Office Title</u>	<u>Date of Election or Appointment</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>	<u>Level of Government</u>
Polk City Council	April 2010	April 2014	Municipality

If your service was on an appointed board(s), committee(s) or council(s):

A. How frequently were meetings scheduled? once a month

B. If you missed any of the regularly scheduled meetings, state the number of meetings attended, number missed, and the reason(s) for absence(s).

<u>Meetings Attended</u>	<u>Meetings Missed</u>	<u>Reason for Absence</u>
Attended all meetings		

35. Have you ever served on any profit or not-for-profit board? Yes No If "Yes", state the title, date of appointment, length of service, and provide a brief description of your involvement.
Central Florida Development Council - Chair of the Organizational Restructuring/Finance Committee
Transportation Planning Organization, Florida League of Cities Finance and Taxation Committee - 2012
Ridge League of Cities - Legislative Committee

36. Have you ever been a registered lobbyist or have you lobbied at any level of government at any time during the past five years? Yes No If "Yes", please explain:
 A. Did you receive any compensation other than reimbursement for expenses? Yes No
 B. Name of agency or entity you lobbied and the principals you represented:

Agency Lobbied

Principals Represented

37. Describe your experiences and interests or elements of your personal history that qualify you for this appointment.

I have a proven record of financial knowledge and responsibility. I was elected to Polk City Council in April 2011. Polk City was facing financial collapse, lawsuits, contraction request, failing utilities, and an administration that stated, "...the City is experiencing an overall deterioration in its financial condition." I was appointed, by the City Council, to the position of Finance Director. Polk City was on Florida's Municipal Financial Emergency List for several years. The annual audits were downgraded to "poor" and stated, "...the City is experiencing an overall deterioration in its financial condition." I was appointed, by the City Council, to the position of Finance Director.

38. Describe your understanding of the role of a member of a university board of trustees. (I read the Responsibilities document prior to applying for this role on the Board.) This role will be to set policy and oversee the University's financial health. In addition, the Board will, following the guidance of the University's mission, to plan, implement, and maintain education programs that meet or exceed accreditation requirements. The Board will perform evaluations on University leadership and create a process that meets the state policy. The Board will recommend and approve the University's budget and financial plan.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

39. Describe any involvement with and/or relationship to the university to which you are applying (other than as a student).
Not Applicable

40. Have you, or any business of which you have been an owner, officer, or employee, held any employment or contractual relationship during the last four (4) years with the university to which you are seeking appointment? Yes No If "Yes", identify:

Name of Business

Your Relationship to Business

Business' Relationship to University

41. Have members of your immediate family (spouse, child, parent(s), sibling(s)), or businesses of which members of your immediate family have been owners, officers, or employees, held any employment or contractual relationship during the last four (4) years with the university to which you are seeking appointment? Yes No If "Yes", explain:

<u>Name of Business</u>	<u>Family Member's Relationship to you</u>	<u>Family Member's Relationship to Business</u>	<u>Business' Relationship to University</u>
-------------------------	--	---	---

42. Do you know of any reason why you will not be able to attend fully the duties of the position to which you have been or will be appointed? Yes No If "yes", explain:

I will resign my position on Polk City Council immediately if appointed to the Florida Polytechnic University

REFERENCES

43. List three persons who have known you well during the past five (5) years. Include a current, complete address and telephone number. Exclude your relatives and members of the Florida Senate.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Zip Code</u>	<u>Area Code/Telephone Number</u>
Alice Tisdell	226 Bayberry Drive, Polk City FL	33868	407-375-3250
Patricia Jackson	123 Broadway Blvd. Polk City, FL	33868	863-984-1375 ext 237
Judy Markley	186 Bayberry Drive Polk City, FL	33868	813-716-4745

CERTIFICATION

STATE OF Florida

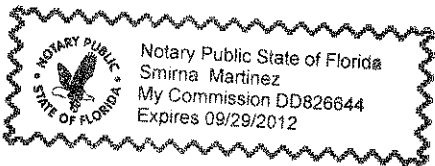
COUNTY OF Polk

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared Trudy Block who after being duly sworn, says: 1) that he/she has carefully prepared or read the answers to the foregoing question; 2) that the information contained in said answers is complete and true; 3) that he/she will, as an appointee, fully support the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Florida. Be it further known that in signing this document the undersigned understands that a background check by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement will be performed on all nominees who are recommended to the Florida Board of Governors and that he/she has received a copy of the Board of Governors' Statement on the Collection, Use or Release of Social Security Numbers.

Trudy Block
Affiant's signature

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this 29th day of May, 2012, by

Trudy Block



Smirna Martinez
(signature of notary)

Smirna Martinez
(typed, printed or stamped name)
Notary Public
Commission No.: DD826644
My Commission Expires: 9/29/2012

Personally Known OR Produced Identification

Type of Identification Produced _____

**Statement on the Collection, Use, or Release of Social Security Numbers
(Master Document – Revised August 2010)**

Florida law requires that public entities provide individuals with a written statement identifying the state or federal law governing the collection, use, or release of social security numbers for each purpose for which the entity collects an individual's social security number. The collection of social security numbers by the Board of Governors is either specifically authorized by law or imperative for the performance of the Board's responsibilities as prescribed by law and the Florida Constitution. The following list identifies the purposes for which social security numbers may be collected, used, or released, and the pertinent authority.

Applicants for University Board of Trustee Positions

- For Level 1 and level 2 criminal background checks conducted by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for employees and/or Board appointees to university boards of trustees [Required by Fla. Admin. Code 11C-6.003 and Fla. Stat. § 119.071(5) (a) 6]
- The disclosure of the social security number is expressly required by federal or state law or a court order [Authorized by Fla. Stat. § 119.071(5) (a) 6]
- The individual expressly consents in writing to the disclosure of his or her social security number [Authorized by Fla. Stat. § 119.071(5) (a) 6]

Professional Profile

TRUDY BLOCK

Trudy was elected to Polk City Council in April 2010. She was elected by her fellow councilors to serve as Vice Mayor from April 2010 through April 2012 and continues to serve as a City Councilor. Trudy volunteered to become the Acting City Manager/Vice Mayor in June 2010 and continued in that role for almost one year to lead Polk City through significant financial difficulties. She did so without compensation.

During her time as City Manager, Trudy's accomplishments included:

1. Decreasing the costs of the municipal operations
2. Restructuring the current debt
3. Outsourcing the operations of Polk City Utilities

Trudy was able to stop the city from going into financial collapse, dissolution, and/or bankruptcy with these measures and the approval of the City Council.

Trudy also serves on the following Boards:

- Central Florida Development Council (CFDC)
 - Chairs the CFDC Organizational Restructuring and Finance Committee
- Transportation Planning Organization
- Ridge League of Cities
 - Member of the Legislative Committee
- Citizens' Transit Advisory Committee

Trudy served on the Florida League of Cities Finance and Taxation Committee in 2012.

Trudy has completed the FLC IEMO Class and the Advanced IEMO Class for elected Public Officials. She has attended numerous other classes, the most recent was Building a Culture of Ethics.

Trudy was employed at Hewlett-Packard from April 1990 through retirement in April 2010.

Trudy's roles included Global Account Manager managing programs with a team of local, offshore (China and India) and third party consultants.

Trudy was a Principal Consultant for over 2 years, selling and delivering consulting services in the Midwest Region. Trudy participated in the development and delivery of Information Technology solutions across the IT enterprise. During this time Trudy developed the HP Customer Relationship Management services methodology.

Trudy has significant technology experience leading teams in requirements gathering, change management, process, and governance. She developed the training tools used worldwide to assist consultants in passing the Masters ITIL exam and won awards for the work.

Trudy defined and implemented enterprise solution architectures. The architectures supported both the business and technical requirements.

From 1979 to 1989, Trudy worked as an RN years at Rush Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago for 10 years.

Trudy received a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology in 1990, and an RN diploma in 1973. She has completed ITIL training and is ITIL Master certified. Trudy completed her PMP certification in 2005.

Ledger Articles:

- **Ex-Acting Manager Baptized by Fire**
POLK CITY | Trudy Block has many of the qualities people would say they want in a public official: intelligence, compassion, respect for opposing views and a tendency to study an issue first before taking a stand and to vote where the facts take her...
Published June 26, 2011
<http://www.theledger.com/article/20110626/NEWS/110629518>
- **Polk City's Former Acting Manager Trudy Block Honored For Unpaid Work**
While Haines City residents debate former City Manager Ann Toney-Deal's \$312,430 severance deal, Trudy Block left more quietly as acting city manager in Polk City at the same starting salary more than 10 months earlier: \$0.
Published May 16, 2011
<http://www.theledger.com/article/20110516/NEWS/110519541>
- **\$10 Mil. Bond Issue Clears Major Hurdle**
POLK CITY | Polk City's pending \$10 million bond issue cleared a major hurdle when Standard & Poor's gave it an investment grade A- rating despite the city's troubled financial history of the past several years. "Woo-hoo! Could you believe it? It's...
Published July 21, 2011
<http://www.theledger.com/article/20110721/NEWS/110729881>
- **Financial Woes Push Embattled Polk City to the Brink of Being Dissolved**
POLK CITY | "Peace and serenity" adorns the Polk City seal, but the city didn't see much of either in 2010. The city's financial crisis erupted in February, when former City Manager Cory Carrier disclosed the city faced a \$521,066 shortfall in the...
Published December 25, 2010 <http://www.theledger.com/article/20101225/NEWS97/12255018>
- **Petition Drive Targets \$2.4 Million Sewer Line Project**
POLK CITY | Trudy Block struck a nerve, perhaps even Polk City's spinal column. A petition drive protesting proposed \$2.4 million sewer line project in the Sandy Point, Edgewater and Trailview neighborhoods has drawn 322 signatures representing 244...
Published November 26, 2009 <http://www.theledger.com/article/20091126/NEWS/911265037>
- **Polk City, Previously Troubled, Gets Clean Audit**
After dealing with a string of problematic annual audits that highlighted Polk City's precarious financial situation, the City Council now has good news about its books..
Published May 26, 2012 <http://www.theledger.com/article/20120526/NEWS/120529471>

Lakeland Ledger Articles

Polk City, Previously Troubled, Gets Clean Audit

Examination finds finances are back on solid ground.

By Kevin Bouffard THE LEDGER Published: Saturday, May 26, 2012 at 10:20 p.m.

POLK CITY | After dealing with a string of problematic annual audits that highlighted Polk City's precarious financial situation, the City Council now has good news about its books..

It received a nearly perfect audit last week from Lakeland accountant Mike Brynjulfson.

Mayor Joe LaCascia credited Councilwoman Trudy Block for turning an insolvent city around. Block served as interim city manager for most of the 2010-2011 budget year.

"It's really good to see the year of my life I gave to my city is appreciated," a tearful Block said at the conclusion of the special meeting to review the audit for the year that ended Sept. 30.

The mayor said her service made the difference.

"It was the beginning of allowing good things to happen," LaCascia said.

Block served as the city's top executive from June 15, 2010, following the resignation of City Manager Cory Carrier, until May 2, 2011, when former City Manager Matt Brock began his four-month tenure.

When Block took over, Polk City faced a general-fund deficit of nearly \$500,000, not counting \$348,772 in defaulted loan payments to Polk County and another \$531,199 it owed the county for failing to pass on its share of impact fee revenue for several years.

In his fiscal year 2009 audit, Brynjulfson reported the city was technically insolvent, with a total budget deficit of \$881,068, including the general and utilities funds.

The 2011 general fund, which finances all city services except water and sewer, showed a balance of \$387,358, up from a deficit of \$420,912 in 2010.

The utilities fund ended the year with \$2.4 million in cash, up from \$224,147 in 2010, reflecting money not yet appropriated from a \$10 million bond issue.

Polk City also improved its performance in getting the annual audits in on time. They are due to the state within a year from the Sept. 30 closing of the fiscal year, but past audits missed that deadline by as many as five months because of the disarray in financial records.

"This year, it was really easy to do the audit — the easiest I've ever done," Brynjulfson told the council. "After all these years of pulling teeth at times, now we can just knock it out."

LaCascia and City Manager Patricia Jackson credited Finance Director Pam Lawson for cleaning up the city's books.

"We have allowed the finance director to do her job," Jackson said.

An independent audit after Carrier's resignation showed the city's impact fee debt stemmed from the former city manager improperly moving money to other city accounts.

Polk City did not escape Brynjulfson's latest audit entirely unscathed, however.

He cited the city for a significant accounting deficiency for failing to reconcile the utilities billing sub-ledger with the general ledger every month. Brynjulfson had cited the same deficiency in the 2009 and 2010 audit.

Lawson attributed the deficiency to a problem with the city's accounting software in dealing with credits and other adjustments some water and sewer customers get to their monthly bills. A clerk has to reconcile the adjustments manually, she said.

The clerk will get additional training to handle the reconciliations, Lawson said, and the city will try to upgrade its software.

Despite the ongoing issue, Polk City's accounting procedures have improved significantly when compared with the 17 deficiencies cited in the 2008 audit and 12 problems in the 2009 report, Brynjulfson said. Those included basic issues, such as not balancing the city's books with monthly bank statements.

"If you look back, they were very significant deficiencies," he said.

[Kevin Bouffard can be reached at kevin.bouffard@theledger.com or at 863-422-6800. Follow Northeast Polk updates on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/NEPolkbeat>.]

Copyright © 2012 TheLedger.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.

Ex-Acting Manager Baptized by Fire in Polk City

By Kevin Bouffard THE LEDGER Published: Sunday, June 26, 2011 at 11:46 p.m.

POLK CITY | Trudy Block has many of the qualities people would say they want in a public official: intelligence, compassion, respect for opposing views and a tendency to study an issue first before taking a stand and to vote where the facts take her and not for personal or political gain.

That's why she may last only one term on Polk City's City Council.

Sure, people will say they want those qualities, but when those qualities lead a public official to take a stand opposite popular opinion — or at least the most vocal segment thereof — watch the venom fly. Block experienced that since joining the council in April 2010 and especially during nearly 11 months as acting city manager at the height of Polk City's debt crisis.

She stepped down after the council hired Matthew Brock as city manager earlier this year but retained her post as vice mayor. Her council term expires in 2014.

"The anger and name-calling is just unbusinesslike. If you've got a good reason, my mind can be changed. If you call me names, that doesn't help," said Block, a former information technology executive with high-tech company HP (Hewlett-Packard). "Why would you want to hurt people? This is a big problem. I know I'm naive."

As acting city manager, Block battled an effort led by a group called Concerned Citizens of Polk City to dissolve the city as a solution to paying off \$11 million in debt, including \$1.3 million owed to Polk County. The debt crisis had led former City Manager Cory Carrier to resign in June 2010.

In October, the group gave the council a petition signed by 396 people, equal to 43 percent of the electorate, to dissolve the city. The council rejected it on the advice of City Attorney Tom Cloud, who said state law did not allow for a municipal dissolution without a valid plan to pay off existing debt.

Concerned Citizens also supported a move to return the Mount Olive water and sewer system to the county, which had transferred ownership in 2008. The city was "hemorrhaging money," Carrier once told the council, to maintain the aging Mount Olive sewage treatment plant.

Block and Mayor Joe LaCascia led the fight against dissolution and returning Mount Olive to the county. The latter move, they argued, would put Polk City in even worse financial shape because it would lose revenue from the utility's roughly 1,100 customers while retaining all the accumulated debt.

"She stayed on her mission, which was first to attack the financial bleeding," LaCascia said. "I think we're going into this (2011-12) budget year with money in the bank, and a year ago we had a half-million-dollar deficit."

Nevertheless, Block and LaCascia became the focus of personal attacks on local blogs, including one run by Concerned Citizens.

Little in her background prepared Block for the vitriol of small-town politics.

'KNOWS HER OWN MIND'

Trudy Alice Block was born Nov. 21, 1952, the younger of two daughters of Frank Thomas Gray and Alice Mae Forsberg. Her sister, now Gail Funk, lives with her in Polk City while her new home two lots away is under construction.

Frank Gray was a locomotive mechanic and tester at the local General Motors plant and her mother was a housewife. The family lived in a typical middle-class, Midwestern suburb near Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

Both parents passed along an intelligence gene, said Block's aunt, Marie Forsberg, 80, who lived in the O'Hare neighborhood before moving to Lakeland in March. But she got from her father a more scientific, analytical mind plus his work ethic.

Her mother taught Block a deep religious faith, which included the duty to serve others, and self-confidence, Forsberg said.

"I think she pretty much knows her own mind," the aunt said. "She pretty well knows what she wants in life."

Initially, that was a career in nursing, but after working for more than 10 years at a couple of Chicago hospitals, mostly in the operating room, Block switched careers.

Maggie Enich, 59, a friend since nursing school, described Block as a skillful, caring nurse, but the profession did not fulfill her creative, analytical side.

"Trudy wanted something different," Enich said. "Instead of being there to put in the pacemaker, she could help create it."

Engineering offered a fresh, intellectual challenge, Block said, and she doubted she could handle the physical demands of nursing into her middle age.

While still working as a nurse, Block studied at the Illinois Institute of Technology and received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering in 1989. At a job fair soon after graduation, she stopped at the HP booth and learned the company was creating a new, computerized medical records system, which fit her background perfectly.

Block joined HP in April 1990 and rose to a management position in information technology, working out of the Chicago office but traveling frequently in the U.S. and abroad. She and husband William Block, who also has a career in information technology, moved to Polk City in 2008.

Working in a computer-based occupation allowed both Trudy and William Block to work out of their new home via the Internet, but she retired on April 30, 2010, almost exactly 20 years after joining HP and just weeks after joining Polk City's City Council.

NO 'RUBBER STAMP'

Block came to the council as an outsider after leading a successful effort to block expansion of the municipal sewer system to her Sandy Point neighborhood and two others in late 2009.

Notably, given the encounter with Concerned Citizens, Block led a petition drive against the sewer expansion that collected 322 signatures representing 244 properties, nearly a quarter of Polk City residences. Block and the other residents argued the expansion would cost them thousands of dollars more to connect to the new sewer lines plus pay the monthly sewer fees.

Councilman Don Kimsey, who also joined the council in April 2010, said Block's campaign against City Hall suggested to him and others she would support returning Mount Olive to the county and a dissolution referendum.

"She said what so many of us wanted to hear: There's no need for a citywide sewer system," said Kimsey, who has been on the minority end of several 4-1 votes on both issues. "She switched sides. I have no earthy idea why."

Block countered that she still does not support expansion of the municipal sewer system. Both the Mount Olive and dissolution issues center around the very different question of how to pay Polk City's debts, she said.

"He (Kimsey) has no solution" to paying off the debt, Block said.

Concerned Citizens has proposed dissolving the city and having the Polk County Commission create a special taxing district to pay off the debt. But no county commissioner has come out publicly in support of such a plan, one reason City Attorney Cloud rejected the dissolution petition.

Lisa Shifflett, a Concerned Citizens leader, declined to comment for this story.

Kimsey, no stranger to criticizing Block at council meetings, agreed the personal attacks were "uncalled for" and agreed she does her homework before speaking.

"Most assuredly, probably more so than anybody," he said. "She's not going to rubber-stamp something if she doesn't feel it's justified."

Mayor LaCascia agreed.

"I thought then (in 2009) and I think now she can be persuasive because she collects facts," he said. "Would I hire her again (as acting city manager)? Absolutely."

[Kevin Bouffard can be reached at kevin.bouffard@theledger.com or at 863-422-6800. Follow his Northeast Polk updates on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/NEPolkbeat>.]

Copyright © 2012 TheLedger.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.

Polk City's Former Acting Manager Trudy Block Honored For Unpaid Work

The City Council member served as acting city manager.

By Kevin Bouffard
The Ledger

Published: Monday, May 16, 2011 at 8:21 p.m.

Last Modified: Monday, May 16, 2011 at 8:21 p.m.

POLK CITY | While Haines City residents debate former City Manager Ann Toney-Deal's \$312,430 severance deal, Trudy Block left more quietly as acting city manager in Polk City at the same starting salary more than 10 months earlier: \$0.

If you ask Block, however, she'll say she got the better deal.

The Polk City Council last week honored Block for her "outstanding leadership and dedicated service as the driving force behind the tough decisions to restore integrity and self-respect to Polk City," according to the plaque she received from her council colleagues and city managers from neighboring cities, Bobby Green of Auburndale and Doug Thomas of Lakeland.

"I was surprised" by the honor, Block, 58, said after the meeting. "My usual method is to be under the radar."

Council also honored City Clerk Patricia Jackson, a former Eagle Lake and Mulberry city manager before moving to Polk City in 2009, for helping Block, who had never held government office until her election to the City Council in April 2010. Jackson has worked more than 30 years in municipal government in Polk County.

"The accomplishments of Polk City governance during the past year could not have been achieved without your mentorship, knowledge, experience, loyalty and devotion," reads the plaque the council gave Jackson at the council meeting.

Polk City got more than its money's worth from Block during her difficult and sometimes controversial tenure running the city.

The council chose Vice Mayor Block to serve as acting city manager in June following the resignation of former City Manager Cory Carrier amid a financial crisis that surfaced in February 2010. At that point, the city's 2009-10 budget carried a debt of more than \$500,000, not including two defaulted loan payments of \$348,772 to the county and another \$531,199 owed on the county's share of impact fees.

Block had management experience as an information technology executive for 20 years with HP (formerly Hewlett Packard) in her native Chicago, and she was one of only two retired council members with time to put into the job.

Thomas recalled getting a call from Block shortly after she took the city manager's job, during which she acknowledged "I have no idea how to do this job," he said.

"I knew the business aspect, but I didn't know the government aspect," Block replied.

The budget deficit forced Block to make difficult cuts starting at the top with the layoffs of Assistant City Manager Pam Peterson, Public Works Director Gene Kniffin and another position. She also trimmed back the

contract for law enforcement services with the Polk County Sheriff's Office from six officers to one, Sgt. John Conover.

Instead of hiring a replacement for Kniffin, the city signed a contract with Woodard & Curran, the Maine-based engineering firm, that saved an estimated \$272,061 in annual operations costs.

In all, Block said, she cut more than \$700,000 out of the Polk City budget last year and in the current 2010-11 fiscal year.

What attracted more public notice and considerable backlash was Block joining a council majority in June to raise water and sewer rates by 50 percent and votes in September to approve the current budget with a 12 percent property tax increase.

A citizens' group, Concerned Citizens of Polk City, in September submitted a petition with more than 700 signatures calling for a referendum to dissolve the city. Block was the target of more criticism when she backed City Attorney Tom Cloud, who advised such a referendum would be illegal without a valid plan to pay off Polk City's \$11 million debt.

But the low point of her tenure, Block said, was the refusal by county officials to end negotiations over the city's \$1.3 million debt. County officials threatened to sue the city, which forced the dispute into ongoing mediation.

The high point, she said, was hiring Block's successor, Matt Brock, who started on May 2.

"He's very smart. I think he'll be great for Polk City," Block said.

[Kevin Bouffard can be reached at kevin.bouffard@theledger.com or at 863-422-6800. Follow his Northeast Polk updates on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/NEPolkbeat>.]

Trudy Block
Polk City Council
123 Broadway Boulevard
Polk City, FL 33868

Re: Board of Governors Appointment - Florida Polytechnic University – Board of Trustees Candidate

Office of the Chancellor
Board of Governors
Attn: Corporate Secretary
325 W. Gaines Street, Suite 1614
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
Fax : (850) 245-9685 or
Email : Chancellor@flbog.edu

Dear Board of Governors,

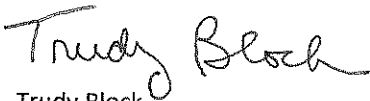
Please consider my application for an appointment to the Florida Polytechnic University Board of Trustees. I have an engineering, business management and government background that would make me a good candidate for this Board of Trustees.

I have attached the application form, recent articles, from the Lakeland Ledger, describing my accomplishments as a member of Polk City's Council, and my professional profile.

I am currently an elected official serving on the Polk City Council. I will resign this position, effective immediately, if I am appointed to the Board of Trustees.

I am excited about the possibilities the Florida Polytechnic University brings to Florida. I hope to continue to be a part of moving the University forward by becoming a Trustee.

Sincerely,



Trudy Block
Polk City Council

Polk City, FL 33868
trudy.block@mypolkcity.org
Cell 630 853 3673