

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: David Chanski, City Administrator/Clerk
RE: Hiring of Planning & Zoning Administrator
DATE: December 4, 2023



Background

A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator position is included in the 2024 Budget. This position would replace the current part-time contract planner position, and the City Council authorized staff to conduct the hiring process for this position at the September 5 City Council meeting.

The benefits of this change include:

- A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will provide faster response times to inquiries and faster permit turnaround times than a part-time employee.
- A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will be able to be more proactive in regularly reviewing the Zoning Code, implementing the Comprehensive Plan, and conducting code enforcement.
- A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will relieve pressure from the Deputy Clerk/Office Manager as this position will be responsible for all Planning Commission related tasks including public notice preparation and publication, meeting packet preparation and publication, development of zoning resolutions, and intake and issuances of building permits. It will also relieve pressure from the City Administrator and Assistant City Administrator (as well as the Deputy Clerk) as there will be significantly less time these positions spend attempting to answer planning & zoning questions because the planner isn't in the office. Additionally, the position will be responsible for Short Term Rental enforcement, which is currently done by the City Administrator and Assistant City Administrator.

Hiring Process

The hiring process for the Planning & Zoning Administrator position began in September. In late October, City Administrator Chanski, Deputy Clerk/Office Manager Runksmeier, and Planning Commission Chair Marcy Weaver interviewed 5 candidates for the position. After all candidates had been interviewed, one candidate rose to the top, and Administrator Chanski and Assistant City Administrator Eick held a second meeting with the individual to further assess the individual's fit with the organization. Ultimately, City Administrator Chanski issued a contingent offer of employment to the individual following that second meeting.

Selected Candidate

Of the 5 candidates interviewed, staff believes that Mr. Peter Gansen is the right person to fill the role of Planning & Zoning Administrator for the City of Breezy Point and will be an excellent addition to the team.

Mr. Gansen holds a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture, has over 17 years of experience in planning, zoning, and environmental services, and is a licensed septic inspector. He is currently the Zoning Administrator for the City of Crosslake, spent 15 years as the Assistant Zoning Administrator for Aitkin County, and is also a former township supervisor.

Council Action

Staff recommends hiring Peter Gansen as Planning & Zoning Administrator per the terms agreed upon in the Offer Letter of Employment including a starting wage of Step C of the 2024 Planning & Zoning Administrator wage grid (\$42.61/hr) and an employment start date of January 2, 2024.