



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Human Resources

491 East Pioneer Avenue

Homer, Alaska 99603

personnel@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-8121 x2225

(f) 907-235-3148

TO: City Council

THRU: Katie Koester

FROM: Andrea Browning, HR

DATE: December 10, 2019

RE: City Manager Hiring Process

In order to facilitate a successful City Manager hiring process, I am providing you with this memo to advise how the process was structured in 2014/2015, and looking for your guidance as to how you would like to proceed moving forward.

We last conducted a City Manager search in 2014, with a Hiring Committee consisting of the Mayor, three council members, plus the City Clerk and HR Director in advisory capacities. The Hiring Committee's purpose was to review applications and then narrow the field for candidate interviews. It was ultimately the Council's decision, as a whole body, who would be given a job offer based on interviews.

Advertisements appeared in the Homer and Anchorage papers, the Alaska Municipal League, International City Managers Association, city web site, and State job service web site, as well as numerous online sources, which have national coverage. The initial application period was six weeks.

The Hiring Committee reviewed applicants with the use of a scoring rubric. I have included this for your information. After Council selection of final candidates, background consent/release forms were signed. Once background checks for credit, professional credentials, and past work performance were completed, interviews were scheduled. Four telephonic interviews were conducted prior to narrowing the field for in-person interviews.

This process resulted in Council conducting two in-person public interviews. After this process did not result in the hiring of a new City Manager, the Council decided to have a shorter internal posting, which resulted in the hiring of CM Koester.

I am including a draft timeline for City Council's consideration and amendment. In addition to the timeline, Council will need to determine if travel expenses will be paid for applicants only, or applicants and their spouse.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize HR Director to advertise the City Manager position.

FISCAL IMPACT: Advertising cost of approximately \$1,000.

*Reference applicant review- I can make copies of applicant packets for each council member, or members of the committee, week by week to assure council members have adequate time to review all applicants.

Draft Timeline for CM Hiring

Advertisement/ Position Open:	December 19, 2019 – January 30, 2020
February 3, 2020	Applicant Review
February 4, 2020	Background Authorizations sent to finalists
Week of February 10, 2020	Telephonic Interviews (February 10 th is a Council Meeting date)
Week of February 24, 2020	In Person Interviews (The 24 th is a Council Meeting date)
February 28, 2020	Selection made
Week of March 1 st	Negotiations

If Negotiations are successful

April 6, 2020	Estimated start date (will depend on applicant's notice requirements, provides for 39 days between selection and start date)
April 10, 2020	City Manager Koester's last day. Provides for 1 week of overlap
April 13, 2020	New Manager Sworn in (This is a Council Meeting date)

(If the process takes a few weeks longer than anticipated, Koester is willing to ask for leave to return for some overlap, at the expense of the City. The Acting City Manager would fill in during the window between her departure and the start date of the new manager.)

If Negotiations/hiring process is not successful

March 1- March 18	Solicit interested candidates (City Manager reaches out to interested candidates and provides Council with resumes)
March 23rd Council meeting	Review candidates (Council could schedule an executive session to discuss). Make selection and provide notice to candidate.
March 13 th Council meeting	Resolution to appoint interim manager
April 3 th	City Manager Koester's last day. Provides for one meeting cycle (3 weeks) of overlap. CM search would occur under direction of interim manager.

Application

In addition to consideration of the timeline, please also consider coming up with additional questions that you would like applicants to answer within the application itself.

The City's online application will require applicants to provide basic information.

Employment History: job titles, dates employed, ending rate of pay, duties, reason for leaving, etc.

Education: College or University, Graduate School

Resume: as attachment

References: application requires three

Additional Questions: Have you previously filed an application, on what date would you be available for work, etc.

Additional Questions

I would encourage the Council to come up with some additional, more specific questions you would like answered within the application. This is an opportunity to get to know the candidates better, and help determine who the Council would like to interview.

In 2014, the only additional question added to the application was:

Do you have a Bachelor's Degree in business or public administration or a related field?

Some additional examples of questions that Council may want to incorporate are:

1. What do you think are the most important elements of the City Manager position?
2. Economic Development is a critical concern of our community. What successes have you had in stimulating or organizing economic development activities in a community?
3. Describe a professional accomplishment that you feel best demonstrates your skill as a City Manager.
4. What are some positive aspects of your last employment/employer? What are some negative aspects?
5. A new policy is to be implemented organization-wide. You do not agree with this new policy. How do you discuss this policy with your staff?
6. What is your own philosophy of management?
7. Please tell us about your previous work experience that has prepared you for this job.

Additional information

- All finalist received electronic copies of the budget and capital improvement information.
- Council has the option of sending supplemental questions to applicants prior to telephonic interviews. My experience with written supplemental question responses is that they are not as informative as telephonic interviews, and really tend to slow down the process.
- The online application will say, *"Applications and resumes are subject to review by the public and press."*

While the City has the right to make all CM applicants public, most applicants appreciate some discretion and expect that they will be notified prior to their application being made public. Often high-level applicants looking to move to a new job do not let their current employer know until they are a finalist. The Council will need to decide at what point applications are made public.

CITY MANAGER SCORING

Applicant Name:_____ **Total Score:**_____ **Rater:**_____

0-10	for BA, 5 for MBA, MPA, CPA, etc, 5 more for additional	_____
0-15	Management experience in Alaska	_____
0-15	Background as Assistant City Manager, City Manager, or Equivalent	_____
0-10	Management experience (5 years minimum)	_____
0-5	Budget preparation	_____
0-5	Background with coastal community	_____
0-15	Work history for depth and stability	_____
0-5	Negotiating experience	_____
0-10	Experience with legislative process/capital improvement projects	_____
0-5	Leadership, special projects, community activities	_____
0-5	Application/Resume thoroughness & attention to detail, writing	_____
100	Total	_____

Notes _____
