

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 9

E. Lynne Ladner

*Juno Beach Town Manager
Candidate Report*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
COVER LETTER AND RESUME	1
CANDIDATE INTRODUCTION	7
BACKGROUND CHECKS	13
CB&A REFERENCE NOTES	17
INTERNET SEARCH	27

Cover Letter and Resume

LYNNE LADNER, MPA, ICMA-CM

Greenacres, FL 33413 • [LinkedIn Profile](#)
elizabethlladner@gmail.com • (785) 760-1714

January 22, 2025

Honorable Mayor Peggy Wheeler and Council Members
City of Juno Beach, FL
340 Ocean Ave
Juno Beach, FL 33408

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Members of the Juno Beach Town Council,

I am excited to submit my application for the Town Manager position in Juno Beach, a role that fits perfectly with my extensive experience in municipal management and my commitment to fostering vibrant, well-managed communities. With a Master of Public Administration, ICMA-CM credential, and over 15 years of executive leadership in local government, I bring a unique combination of strategic vision, coastal and environmental management, and a dedication to community engagement.

As the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Ocean Ridge, FL, I led transformative initiatives that enhanced administrative operations and strengthened community connections. By securing over \$1.25 million in grant funding, I advanced resilience initiatives and infrastructure improvements that will benefit residents for years to come. My focus on innovation and efficiency resulted in a reduction in building permit cycle times and increased customer satisfaction through online process implementation.

Juno Beach's focus on preserving its natural beauty and fostering a close-knit community resonates with my values and professional achievements. During my tenure as City Manager in Hart, MI, I played a critical role in resolving federal consent decrees related to environmental compliance while advancing major economic initiatives. My experience managing coastal Florida communities builds upon my practices of preservation and sustainability at work and home during calm and emergent conditions. My leadership consistently balances the needs of residents with long-term planning to ensure sustainable growth and financial stability.

Key attributes I offer include:

- **Strategic Planning Expertise:** Successfully developed and executed comprehensive plans addressing infrastructure, land use, and organizational efficiency.
- **Community-Centric Leadership:** Cultivated open-door policies, hosted public forums, and actively participated in community events to build trust and transparency.
- **Fiscal Stewardship:** Managed multimillion-dollar budgets, ensuring resource optimization and financial accountability in lean organizational structures.

Section 9

- **Technology and Process Improvement:** Led organizational technology implementations reducing processing times, providing greater access to public information, and leveraging technology for organizational efficiency and data-driven decision-making.

I am inspired by Juno Beach's commitment to maintaining its small-town charm while preparing for strategic growth. I would be honored to bring my experience, leadership, and passion for community development to serve as your next Town Manager.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how my skills and experiences align with your vision for Juno Beach's future.

Warm regards,



Lynne Ladner, MPA, SHRM-SCP, ICMA-CM
elizabethladner@gmail.com
(785) 760-1714

LYNNE LADNER, MPA, ICMA-CM

Greenacres, FL 33413 • [LinkedIn Profile](#)
elizabethladner@gmail.com • (785) 760-1714

CITY MANAGER

- SHRM-SCP certified human capital strategist, executive business partner, and culture agent. Built and led high-performing human resources organizations in the public/not-for-profit space that elevated engagement and reduced risk.
- Played an integral role in guiding communities in critical redevelopment via public-private partnerships, infrastructure improvements, strategic policy implementations, and collaborative funding.
- Broadly recognized for an ability to anticipate and respond to the needs of diverse constituents and workforces. History of establishing positive relationships and building credibility toward managing effective change.

COMPETENCIES: Finance and Budgeting • Strategic Planning • Vision Definition • Organization Development • Leadership Development • Succession Planning • Shared Services • Business Transformation • Governance • Change Management • Labor Relations • Collective Bargaining • Policy • Human Resources Management • Talent Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE & SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

TOWN OF OCEAN RIDGE: Ocean Ridge, FL 2022–Present
Chief Administrative Officer • Director – Human Resources (Consultant 2022–2023; Full-Time 2023–Present)

Recruited to transform and lead administrative operations of 1,800-resident municipality after departure of town manager. Provide direction in organizational goals and operations, collaborating with and executing vision of town commission on short-term and long-term strategy, \$12.4M budget, service delivery, people policy, regulatory compliance, and capital and operational investments. Oversee workforce of 5 direct reports and 31 total employees in administration, fiscal operations, human resources, employee relations, police, public works, building department, IT, and police union relations.

- **Obtained state grant funding** totaling \$1.25 million for conservation and resilience initiatives.
- **Strengthened administrative operations.** Sharpened focus on service delivery, influenced infrastructure investments, upgraded key building department staff, digitized municipal records, and used AI to streamline budget process.
- **Directed BS&A HRIS/ERP implementation, shortening payroll cycle by 90% and driving operating efficiencies.** Selected vendor; oversaw platform development, customization, and deployment; and led user training and change management.
- **Led major CAPEX projects, including \$2.5M water main improvements and \$1.1M conservation property acquisition.**
- **Developed 8-year CIP plan** for potable water main replacement and improvements to ensure the system's long-term health while preparing recommendations for financing the improvements.

LADNER CONSULTING: Greenacres, FL 2021–2022
Executive Consultant – Human Resources & Nonprofit Administration

Directed enterprise strategic vision and consulting operations as strategic advisor and as outsourced Chief Human Resources and Chief Administrative Officer to nonprofit organizations, municipalities, and other enterprise clients both directly and via 3rd-party consulting firms. Conceptualized and managed broad spectrum of integrated strategies including policy development, business transformation, organization dynamics, employee relations, talent management, culture, systems implementation, and other matters. Notable client engagements:

City of Pahokee (FL):

- **Contracted to transform people and administrative operations for 5,400-resident municipality as interim executive,** rebuilding core HR and operating processes to return to compliance following multiple years of missed financial audits.
- **Accelerated 360^o change efforts via cultivation of HR best practices.** Socialized vision, best practices, KPIs, and workstreams to rebuild handbook, create engagement, upgrade staff onboarding, recommend benefits, and retain talent.
- **Safeguarded community economic interests via delivery of documentation enabling retention of state-leased marina.**

Town of Kenneth City (FL):

- **Directed community transition following separation of prior town manager and staff.** Ensured continuity in HR and financial services, recruited replacement, opened police union collective bargaining, and improved public transparency.

CITY OF HART: Hart, MI
Chief Administrative Officer

2018–2021

Appointed by 2,400-resident, full-service community to manage administration and people operations, partnering with mayor and city council on strategy, \$9.8M budget, financial operations, human resources, and municipal services including police, fire, water, wastewater, and power generation. Sat on Hart Energy Authority board and state board to negotiate power purchasing and distribution agreements. Supervised direct and matrixed organization of 38 employees.

- **Led successful negotiation of collective bargaining agreements with 2 labor unions.** Delivered critical financial insights and managed process, partnering with council on approach attaining mutual agreement and zero work stoppages.
- **Rebuilt human resources function, improving regulatory compliance, risk posture, and staff satisfaction.** Saved \$80K YoY on health benefits with expanded coverage, implemented remote work, and instituted zero-tolerance drug policy.
- **Played integral role in major economic initiatives,** including resolution of state/federal consent decrees on power generation dam, corporate expansion and development agreements, and launch of e-commerce municipal billing.

CITY OF SOUTH LYON: South Lyon, MI
Chief Administrative Officer

2014–2018

Directed strategy, operations, and human resources for fast-growing municipality of 11,000+ residents as turnaround expert.

- **Improved HR service delivery,** through outsourcing of payroll and building department, updating of job descriptions, benefits enhancements, policy upgrades, and ERP/HRIS system migrations.
- **Orchestrated successful collective bargaining negotiations with police, public works, and clerical unions to closure.** Paid down \$3M in overhead liability, boosting retirement system funding from 54% to 59%.
- **Project managed \$7.3M in public improvements to water treatment, water distribution, and public roads.**

CITY OF HIAWATHA: Hiawatha, KS
Chief Administrative Officer

2006–2013

Stood up best-in-class human resources, administrative, and financial enhancements translating to improved public services.

- **Successfully obtained state and federal grants in FY 10, 11, and 12** in excess of \$2.5 million for redevelopment, public safety, and infrastructure projects.
- **Execute strategies for service delivery** while managing an annual budget over \$5.6 million controlling costs, decreasing tax mill levies, and reducing staffing levels by 10% while scheduling multiple capital improvement projects for FY 2012
- **Coordinated public-private partnership** and managed the completion of the relocation of City administrative offices to the newly renovated Francis Sewell Plamann History Center.
- **Managed community and economic development** including the development of a comprehensive incentive program for new lodging development, facilitated the development of new commercial development between local property owners and two new national franchise businesses

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY: Allendale, MI
Master of Public Administration (MPA)
Bachelor of Science in Political Science

CERTIFICATIONS

University of Virginia – Graduate, Senior Executive Institute
SHRM-SCP – Senior Certified Professional
International City/County Management Association – Credentialed ICMA Manager

ACTIVITIES

Florida City County Managers Association – 2022 – Current, Conference Planning Comm – 2024, Membership Comm - 2025
Palm Beach County City Managers Association – Vice-President 2024-2025
Florida League of Cities – Finance & Taxation – 2023-2024, Municipal Operations - 2025

Section 9

Candidate Introduction

LYNNE LADNER

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI
Bachelor of Science, Political Science, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI
Senior Executive Institute Graduate, University of Virginia, Weldon Cooper Center
Leadership ICMA Graduate, 2014

EXPERIENCE

Town Manager, Town of Ocean Ridge, FL	2023 – Present
Interim Town Manager, Town of Ocean, Ridge, FL	2022 – 2023
Contract Human Resources and Finance Director, Pahokee, FL	2022 – 2022
Interim Town Manager, Town of Kenneth City, FL	2021 – 2021
City Manager, City of Hart, MI	2018 – 2021
City Manager, City of South Lyon, MI	2014 – 2018
City Administrator, City of Hiawatha, KS	2006 – 2013

BACKGROUND

Ocean Ridge is a serene, residential barrier island community located in Palm Beach County, Florida. This peaceful area is free from retail and commercial activity and is home to 1,800 year-round residents, with the population swelling to 2,800 during the winter months. Famous for its pristine beaches and tight-knit community, Ocean Ridge is divided by the A1A highway, with access provided via drawbridges on Ocean Avenue and Woolbright Avenue. These bridges connect to Boynton Beach, offering convenient access to local amenities and I-95, which leads to the Palm Beach International Airport, West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami.

Ocean Ridge is currently addressing several key challenges:

- **Water Infrastructure Replacement:** The town owns and maintains the potable water distribution system, covering repairs, maintenance, and upgrades. In FY 24, the town invested \$2.9 million in system replacements, with \$1.75 million planned for FY 25. Additionally, a comprehensive eight-year capital replacement plan has been adopted to further upgrade the water mains.
- **Employee Retention:** The police department plays a vital role in the community, offering proactive policing and ensuring a sense of safety. However, Ocean Ridge faces challenges in retaining experienced officers, as competition for qualified law enforcement personnel is high across Palm Beach County and Florida. To reduce turnover, the town must remain competitive with officer compensation and benefits.

- **Development in Boynton Beach:** Ocean Ridge is closely monitoring the planned high-rise residential developments along Federal Highway in Boynton Beach. The construction of multiple large buildings is expected to increase traffic congestion for residents, making daily commutes more difficult. There is also concern that the growth may contribute to a rise in misdemeanor offenses within the community.

GENERAL, MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

Juno Beach's emphasis on preservation and thoughtful growth strongly aligns with my career philosophy. Throughout my roles in municipal leadership, I've championed initiatives that balance community development with environmental stewardship. For example, I successfully worked with state officials to preserve mangrove properties and create public access areas to educate future generations about conservation. I am confident that my leadership style and strategic vision would support the Town's priorities while fostering long-term stability and growth.

My management philosophy is rooted in servant leadership. I adapt to the unique needs of each team member, providing close mentorship when required and empowering others to excel independently. This approach has fostered a culture of accountability and growth in every organization I've served. Colleagues and elected officials describe me as a supportive leader who values transparency, mediates conflicts effectively, and ensures all voices are heard.

In my career, I've encountered and resolved diverse personnel challenges, from mediating employee grievances to guiding individuals through professional improvement plans. While such situations can be difficult, I strive to handle them with empathy and fairness. When separations occur, I ensure the process is respectful and thorough, providing necessary resources and reflecting on what the organization can learn to improve future outcomes.

My staff and my elected officials will tell you that I am a strong advocate for all employees. I will always have their back and if there is a concern or complaint by an elected or community resident, I will do everything that I can to resolve it in a way that allows all parties to feel heard, understood and though they may not feel as though they won, they don't feel as though they lost in the outcome. As the manager all issues and concerns flow up to my desk or down to my desk and I take responsibility for anything that does not end in a positive manner, while giving recognition and praise where it is due to elected officials or staff.

One of my proudest achievements is mentoring employees who have advanced to leadership roles. For instance, I hired a water system operator in Hiawatha, KS, who, under my guidance, rose to become the City Administrator. While general accounting is a less enjoyable aspect of my role, I've strengthened my skills through collaboration with financial experts, ensuring accuracy and effective budget management.

LYNNE LADNER

One of my greatest strengths is my commitment to continuous learning. As an ICMA Credentialed Manager and SHRM-SCP, I consistently seek opportunities to expand my expertise, particularly in areas like emergency management. While general accounting is not my strongest skill, I have taken proactive steps to enhance my knowledge and ensure fiscal accuracy by collaborating with financial teams and leveraging technology.

When I look back at my career, my biggest regret was not completing all of the necessary projects during my tenure in Hart, MI that would bring the city's electric generation utility into full compliance of the consent order that was placed by the United States Department of Environment. The order required us to complete several tasks aimed and reducing the water temperature in the late summer months that collected and the Hydroelectric dam to improve the conditions for native fish species to breed. We submitted several plan options during my tenure but by the time I left the City and DEP had not reached an agreement for the plans to remediate the issue.

In my first six months, I would prioritize building relationships with staff, residents, and elected officials by attending community events, engaging stakeholders, and reviewing ongoing projects to ensure alignment with the Town's goals. My long-term focus would be fostering stability and advancing initiatives that preserve Juno Beach's unique character while embracing opportunities for strategic growth.

I strive to always have a positive relationship with members of the traditional media platforms. Being responsive to their inquiries can improve communication but also build a bridge of trust that allows me to become a trusted source that members of the media can turn to for information on public issues. I strive to maintain a reputation as someone that can be a positive influence and role model, I take my position in your community seriously and manage my life so that I can live one that when I look back I don't have any regrets or embarrassment. While I don't spend a significant amount of my time on personal social media, I have worked in other communities to ensure that the community has a presence on different platforms that allow for greater outreach to residents. It is important to acknowledge that different audiences are reached by using different platforms and that the message often needs to be tailored to that audience. When possible, I work with others in the organization that can assist with our messaging to the various audiences. I believe that it is important to use social media to communicate with the residents and will do so by working to provide regular project updates, answering questions that have been posed through other outlets and being generally available.

I ensured transparency with my current commission by discussing my application individually with each member to address any questions or concerns."

In my free time I like to spend time in and around my pool, planning and meal preparation for the upcoming week and reading. I've recently taken up jogging as a way to manage health and stress, appreciating its positive impact on my well-being.

LYNNE LADNER

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES YOU WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF

- Compassionate
- Approachable
- Knowledgeable
- Innovative Thinker
- Principled
- Diplomatic

REASON FOR WANTING TO LEAVE CURRENT JOB SECTION

After implementing various technology projects to improve operational efficiency and outsourcing positions in the building department and community standards, I realize I miss contributing to communities where my expertise in economic development and parks and recreation is useful. My grant application skills for community development and parks projects are underutilized in Ocean Ridge, with only one town park and a ban on commercial/retail projects.

CURRENT SALARY

My current salary is \$154,113 and \$3,600 in car allowance.

Section 9

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
ELIZABETH “LYNNE” LYNNE LADNER**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Palm Beach County, FL	No Records Found
Washtenaw County, MI	No Records Found
Hillsborough County, FL	No Records Found
Pinellas County, FL	No Records Found
Oceana County, MI	No Records Found
Oakland County, MI	No Records Found
Brown County, KS	Not Available*
State	
Florida	No Records Found
Michigan	No Records Found
Kansas	Not Available*

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Palm Beach County, FL	No Records Found
Washtenaw County, MI	No Records Found
Hillsborough County, FL	No Records Found
Pinellas County, FL	No Records Found
Oceana County, MI	No Records Found
Oakland County, MI	No Records Found
Brown County, KS	Not Available*
Federal	
Florida	No Records Found
Michigan	No Records Found
Kansas	Not Available*

Motor Vehicle

Florida	No Records Found
Michigan	June 2018 – Speeding Violation 85/70 August 2018 – Suspension, failure to comply with judgement Disposition: August 27, 2018, Suspension Ended August 28, 2018

* Records are only available in this state for the past seven years and the candidate worked there prior to that period.

**Background Check Summary for
ELIZABETH “LYNNE” LYNNE LADNER**

Credit	Very Good
Personal Bankruptcy	July 2014 – Bankruptcy, Chapter 13 Disposition: February 2017, Discharged May 2017 , Terminated <i>*See Personal Disclosure and Below for Candidate Explanation of Records Found</i>
Sex Offender Registry	Not Listed
Education	Confirmed
Employment	Confirmed
Social Media	Nothing of Concern Found

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681Y, credit and bankruptcy information are very sensitive and should not be used in the consideration of hiring. The information is included for each candidate because we do not want you to be surprised if third parties raise what they consider to be a concern. Also, some states have limited the reporting to seven years, so any records older than that will not be available in those states. In addition, motor vehicle reports are limited to three to seven years, depending on the state.

From: Lynne Ladner <elizabethlladner@gmail.com>
To: lynelle@cb-asso.com
Subject: Re: Background Check Records That Require an Explanation

Lynelle,

Despite my best efforts, I experienced financial hardship due to medical debt and unemployment that left me no other option but to seek bankruptcy protection. This decision was incredibly difficult, greatly impacting my credit score and financial health. Despite this setback, I took the necessary steps to rebuild my credit and financial stability.

Thank you,
Lynne

**Background Check Summary for
ELIZABETH “LYNNE” LYNNE LADNER
Personal Disclosure**

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: Lynne Ladner

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No 2014 - fully discharged
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No A part-time employee filed a discrimination complaint against me in early 2023 when she was not offered a full-time position, it was investigated and I was fully cleared.
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been charged with driving while intoxicated, driving under the influence, operating a vehicle impaired, or a similar offense?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Please list all your social media accounts (Facebook / X (Twitter) / Instagram / LinkedIn, etc.) and your personal web page if you have one.
facebook.com/lynne.ladner, instagram.com/lynne_ladner, twitter.com/lynne_ladner, www.linkedin.com/in/lynne-ladner-mpa-shrm-scp-1203436/
9. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No
10. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.
Wittman v City of Hart

Attested to: 
Signature of Applicant

CB&A Reference Notes

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

Geoff Pugh - Mayor, Ocean Ridge, FL 561-346-6887

Mr. Pugh has known Ms. Ladner since she started at Ocean Ridge in 2022. She has done a satisfactory job with her current expectations. She has a vast understanding of municipal proceedings which lends itself to a smoothly run government. Mr. Pugh enjoyed interacting with her. She has been responsive to feedback in an ongoing effort to expand her professional abilities.

When contracts needed to be negotiated, Ms. Ladner excelled. She was instrumental in the acquisition of property using grants. The land was obtained for conservation. She effectively negotiated with a new building official company for town inspections. She makes good decisions overall. In her current capacity, she is asked to maintain the current level of function. She does this effectively, while also introducing ways to improve the status quo.

Ms. Ladner is comfortable when interacting with the public. She maintains a friendly demeanor and makes herself available for their questions. She can manage day-to-day financial needs, but has struggled with the intense demands of their finances. Mr. Pugh wishes they could hire a financial director so she could focus her attention on improving the town. Because she values residents and business owners, she wants their experience in Ocean Ridge to be positive. As a result, she is responsive and values the opinions and visions of others.

Mr. Pugh recommends Ms. Ladner to any organization looking for a smart and responsive leader. She has not been part of any controversy and has a clean background. Nothing in her conduct is cause for concern.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Hardworking,
- Loyal, and
- Intelligent.

Strengths: Expansive knowledge about grants. Government experience. Strong work ethic.

Weaknesses: Accounting, mainly budgetary. Also, taking comments from commissioners personally and responding in the heat of the moment.

Steve Coz – Vice-Mayor, Ocean Ridge, FL, 561-329-3533

Mr. Coz has known Ms. Ladner since 2022. Mr. Coz interacts with her frequently and has observed her sound decision making skills. He appreciates her knowledge of municipal policies. She is also familiar with the unique needs of a coastal area.

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

Ms. Ladner has been a conduit for updates to the Ocean Ridge government. She introduced new software that expedited the process for building permits. Before this new technology, building permits had to be done by hand and took months to process. The community responded with overwhelming approval when this software became accessible. Additionally, she made it possible for residents to communicate with their government via website. This helped in creating a culture of trust in the community. Additionally, she set up a booth on a popular ocean-side trail. She welcomed questions from the residents of Ocean Ridge, furthering her understanding of the community's needs.

As a leader, Ms. Ladner uses a collegiate approach. She values the input of others. She works well in a team and has good relationships with her employees. She has an even temper and does not react outwardly to stress.

Mr. Coz recommends Ms. Ladner to any organization. She is capable and eager to learn new things. Her behavior or background do not have any areas of concern. She is a wonderful addition to any organization.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Knowledgeable,
- Runs a team well, and
- Likable.

Strengths: Pleasant. Polite. Deescalation. Relationships with the residents.

Weaknesses: Not an accountant.

Ron LaPorte – Former Mayor, City of Hart, MI, 231-730-0731

Mr. LaPorte hired Ms. Ladner as City Manager in 2018, near the end of his term as mayor. She worked with them for about three years, and if Mr. LaPorte was still there as mayor, Ms. Ladner would still be in that same position. However, the incoming mayor had a conflict with Ms. Ladner, and subsequently did not extend her contract. It was not a legitimate parting, as far as Mr. LaPorte was concerned. Mr. LaPorte loved having her as city manager and all the employees enjoyed working with her as well.

Mr. LaPorte worked for 33 years in local government. He worked with numerous city managers during that time, two while acting as Mayor. Ms. Ladner brought in prior experience and a wealth of knowledge that served her well. She learns quickly and adapts to new situations. The City of Hart has a hydro-electric dam, which was unfamiliar to Ms. Ladner, but she quickly familiarized herself with the system and took on the challenge with gusto.

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

Ms. Ladner has excellent financial skills. There is nothing that she did not understand or could not handle. She is customer service oriented. She answered questions professionally and patiently. She helped people move through their concerns. She was frequently out in the community and very hands-on with the public. She talked with business owners in town and never shied away from challenges.

Ms. Ladner was an excellent city manager for the City of Hart. As a former mayor, and someone who worked closely with Ms. Ladner, Mr. LaPorte fully supported her and did not see any negatives. He recommends her to any municipality for the City Manager position.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Smart,
- Experienced,
- Hands on,
- Confident,
- Customer service oriented,
- Guarded, and
- Knowledgeable.

Strengths: Ms. Ladner came in not knowing the community at all. She did not have any problems jumping right in and learning what was important to the citizens. Mr. LaPorte very rarely had to step in and help her. She cleaned up several items that had been neglected over the years.

Weaknesses: Can be perhaps a little brisk, or a little guarded at first, but when you get to know her, it is not an issue.

Mark Van Allsburg – Former City Attorney, Mike Myers PLC, MI, 616-632-8039

Mr. Van Allsburg and his firm served the City of Hart as city attorneys while Ms. Ladner was City Manager. He is mostly retired now but was the lead attorney while Ms. Ladner was city manager from 2018 to 2021.

Quite often, city managers come to Mr. Van Allsburg with very basic questions, but he did not have this experience with Ms. Ladner. She always came to him after doing her research and was well prepared. She was already very knowledgeable about municipal management, and really studied prior to going to Mr. Van Allsburg for additional support. She approached him in a collaborative, partnership style, rather than simply going to him whenever she had any questions or problems at all.

**Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner**

The City of Hart is a small community, and was in a transition period in moving more towards tourism and renovation. Ms. Ladner was frequently out in the community. She helped plan and participate in summer activities, festivals, and other community functions. She is not afraid to be out front and leading the way. She is creative and has a strong leadership style. Before Ms. Ladner became city manager, the city invested a large amount of time and money in a development opportunity that had gone south. They thought they had essentially lost all their investments. Ms. Ladner came up with a creative idea to recuperate some of their losses, and after pitching it to the council, convinced them to move forward with the plan, which culminated in success for the city.

Ms. Ladner had to work with a very difficult set of individuals during her last year as city manager, which was not her fault at all. This situation was frustrating for Ms. Ladner because she wanted to move forward with the city, but was blocked by prominent people in the community and certain city officials. It was frustrating for Mr. Van Allsburg to watch and to have his hands tied on what he could do to help. She had many good ideas and projects for the city, but she was not able to carry her vision through because the mayor actively fought against her every step of the way. This was ultimately the reason her employment was not continued.

If a community is looking for a go-getter, creative thinker, and needs someone who is exceptionally knowledgeable about city management, they will be pleased to hire Ms. Ladner as a manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Thoughtful,
- Intelligent,
- Pleasant,
- Partner,
- Friendly, and
- Knowledgeable.

Strengths: Very knowledgeable. Because of her background she was very familiar with all the different programs and statutes that would be beneficial to the city.

Weaknesses: Ms. Ladner has a direct, clear communication style. Some might think she is too direct and prefer a sugar-coated approach. She lays things out well and honestly.

Steve Bruck – Community Activist, City of Hart, MI, 616-890-9281

Mr. Bruck is a financial advisor in Hart and is active on several city boards and committees. He worked with Ms. Ladner between 2019 to 2021. Although he did not work closely with her all the time, sometimes going over a month without seeing her, at other times he interacted with her

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

three times a week. It was varied based on what projects the city had going on. Ms. Ladner did an excellent job as City Manager. She knew the ins and outs of municipal life and was always there to help anyone in need.

Because the City of Hart is a small town, one of the challenges is overcoming the mentality of always having done things one certain way and not wanting to change. Ms. Ladner was refreshing in that regard because she always tried to think outside the box and bring in new ideas and perspectives, especially on the economic development side of the city.

Ms. Ladner was an engaged leader. Although there were some difficult business owners in the community, she did not let them intimidate or bully her. She had lunch in their establishments and sought opportunities to talk to them to try to work together. She was active in the community and very involved in the daily affairs of the city.

The City of Hart lost an excellent city manager when Ms. Ladner left. Mr. Bruck fully recommends her to any municipality.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Capable,
- Sincere,
- Well educated,
- Honest,
- Fair, and
- Innovative.

Strengths: High level of competence.

Weaknesses: Because Ms. Ladner cared so much, she tried to get too much done. She tried to help everybody and that stretched her a little too thin at times.

Cheri Eisenlohr – Deputy City Clerk & Human Resources, City of Hart, MI, 231-873-2488

Ms. Eisenlohr worked with Ms. Ladner for three years from 2018 to 2021. They were also next-door neighbors during that time. Because of their positions at work, and proximity to each other at home, they interacted daily with each other. Ms. Eisenlohr has a very high opinion of Ms. Ladner. She was an excellent city manager as well as a kind neighbor and friend.

Ms. Ladner is customer service oriented. She knows how to stand her ground, which sometimes bothered people, but she knew how to create personal and professional boundaries and hold her own against people who were belligerent. She handles stress well. She was put into some very

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

difficult situations with certain individuals within the city, but Ms. Ladner kept her composure and was always professional. She rose above any insults.

Ms. Ladner makes good decisions for the city. She researches all the options before presenting the information. She listens to others' feedback before making her final decision. Ms. Ladner is innovative. She brought the city up to speed with their computer programs. She is willing to try new ideas. When COVID hit, she met it head on and quickly implemented policies to keep them on the right track. She communicates easily with the public and elected officials. She speaks to everyone as an equal.

Ms. Ladner was not involved in anything controversial or embarrassing at the City of Hart. She did not always have friends on the city council, but she had a council who did not appreciate how smart she was. Ms. Eisenlohr does not understand why they did not renew her contract. The decision was not a reflection of Ms. Ladner's conduct or ability to perform as city manager.

Ms. Ladner cares about her employees and the people in the community which she serves. She has excellent financial skills and an incredible amount of knowledge regarding municipal administration. She will be a welcome addition for any city as its manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Efficient,
- Smart,
- People person,
- Kind,
- Innovative, and
- Easy to work for.

Strengths: Strong memory and well versed in all municipal aspects.

Weaknesses: Tends to not delegate as much as she should. Because she likes to make sure everything is done correctly, she ends up doing much of it herself.

**Scot Beal – Executive Director, Silverlake-Sand Dunes Area Chamber of Commerce, MI
231-742-3883**

Mr. Beal has known Ms. Ladner since she was hired as City Manager in 2018. He is still the Executive Director of the Silverlake-Sand Dunes Area Chamber of Commerce. From what he was able to observe, Ms. Ladner was very advanced as far as technology, knowledge about city government grants, and managing the finances of the city.

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

Mr. Beal coordinated closely with Ms. Ladner on the Main Street Program, a national program to help develop and promote the downtown area of small cities. They worked together not only on the day-to-day operations, but also in applying for grants. Ms. Ladner was not only proficient at discovering grant opportunities, but also in applying for and winning those grants. In 2019 when they realized that Hart was ready to graduate from the Main Street Program, Ms. Ladner was instrumental in transitioning them away from the Main Street Program and established an Economic Development position. She wrote the by-laws and job description for this new position, which has been very successful, because this new position focuses on the economic development of the entire city and not just the main street. Graduating from the program and developing this new position was a crucial transition period for the city, and Ms. Ladner made the process very smooth and seamless.

Under Ms. Ladner's leadership, the city continued to be very successful with their revenues and budget planning. She is comfortable being in front of others and is thorough in her communication with the elected officials, both in person and in written communication. There is nothing embarrassing or controversial in either her personal or public life. The City Council wanted to move in a different direction and voted not to renew her contract, but this is not a reflection of how she performed as City Manager. With her base of knowledge and can-do attitude, she will be an asset to any community who hires her as Manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Detailed,
- Fast,
- Quiet,
- Smart,
- Proficient, and
- Intuitive.

Strengths: Quick to respond and address any issues. Strong communication style.

Weaknesses: Sometimes a little too shy and could speak up with more confidence. Has great ideas but does not always let others know what her ideas are until after the meeting is over or after all other options have been discussed.

Diane LaPorte – Community Activist, City of Hart, MI, 231-730-0545

Ms. LaPorte has known Ms. Ladner since the latter was hired as City Manager in 2018. Ms. LaPorte was a volunteer for the Hart Main Street Program and was also on the planning commission. Her husband was the former mayor and they both had a great relationship with Ms. Ladner. Ms. LaPorte has a high opinion of Ms. Ladner.

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

Ms. Ladner communicates with the public well. She is organized and gets everything done in a timely manner. She is an independent worker and would rather do the work herself rather than involve others. She is a go-getter and a problem solver.

Ms. Ladner typically gets along with others, although she can be a bit short with others if they persistently ask her the same questions without listening to her response. She is quick to apologize if she answers with a negative tone in her voice. It is hard to deal with people who come in determined to be belligerent and ornery. She generally does a great job in keeping her cool and responding with professionalism and patience.

When Ms. LaPorte's husband, the mayor, was termed out and a new mayor was elected, the new mayor had a personality conflict with Ms. Ladner and turned the city council against her, ultimately deciding not to renew her contract. This was a great loss to the city, and something that Ms. Ladner did not deserve after the good work she did for the city. If chosen as manager for another location, she will continue to be a great manager. She is knowledgeable about municipal administration, cares for her employees and the community, and has a kind and caring personality. Ms. LaPorte fully recommends her for a municipal administration position.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Cheerful,
- Enthusiastic,
- Intelligent,
- Private,
- Funny, and
- Organized.

Strengths: People like being around her. Everyone in the office loved working with her.

Weaknesses: Could be kind of authoritative, but she was in charge, so she was supposed to be.

Sharon Hallock – Former Writer, Oceana Herald Journal, MI, 231-923-9613

Ms. Hallock was a part-time writer for the Oceana Herald Journal in Hart, Michigan. She primarily covered municipal reporting, which included attending city council meetings. Ms. Hallock now works for the Oceana Echo. She began covering municipal reporting in 2019, which is how she met Ms. Ladner. Because Ms. Hallock was new to that position, she was very grateful to Ms. Ladner for helping her with the background information on every topic she covered. Ms. Ladner was very gracious in answering all Ms. Hallock's questions.

Ms. Ladner brought many new ideas and projects to the city. She was willing to look outside the box, which might have been some of her undoing. She was an outsider to the community, and the

Reference Notes
Lynne Ladner

people in power wanted to keep things status quo. Ms. Ladner tried to do her best despite the opposition. When the city needed to hire a new attorney, she did all the background work, interviewing several different firms and creating a large spreadsheet for the council so they could better evaluate all the pros and cons of the various firms.

During the election of 2020, there was a legal issue when one of the poll workers wore a politicized shirt at the polling stations. Ms. Ladner asked the poll worker to either change into more appropriate attire or to leave. This poll worker was looking for trouble and caused a scene as a response to her request. She handled this experience very well and made a rule moving forward that all poll workers were to be given uniforms to wear so they would not face this issue again. She is a problem solver and acts quickly.

There is nothing embarrassing in Ms. Ladner's conduct. She is well suited to the position of city manager. She has good ideas and is willing to look at issues from new viewpoints. She will be an asset for any community as its manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Lynne Ladner:

- Personable,
- Respectful,
- Present,
- Thorough,
- Timely, and
- Fair.

Strengths: She overstated the details and was very thorough in her presentations to the city council.

Weaknesses: This was not offensive to Ms. Hallock, but some of the city council members commented during the selection process for a new city manager that they were opposed to Ms. Ladner staying because they felt like she was condescending or talked down to them. Ms. Hallock did not have this experience and felt like Ms. Ladner used an appropriate voice for a leadership role.

Prepared by: Trieste Sessions and Amanda Jenkins
Colin Baenziger & Associates

CB&A Internet Research

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Palm Beach Post, The (FL)
January 30, 2025

Chipper incident kills tree trimmer

Author: Julius Whigham II

A man working for a tree trimming vendor at Ocean Ridge Town Hall died Tuesday morning in an incident involving a wood-chipping machine, town officials said. Officials did not immediately identify the man. Town manager **Lynne Ladner** said the man worked for Carlton's Tree Service. A woman who answered a call to a number listed for the tree service said the company did not have any statements regarding the matter.

According to a town statement, the incident happened at about 9:30 a.m. at the complex along State Road A1A north of East Ocean Avenue. **Ladner** said the employee was operating a wood chipping machine when he got caught in the machine. Ocean Ridge police officers responded and found that the employee had suffered fatal injuries. Authorities notified the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration, or OSHA. Investigators were en route to the scene Tuesday. No other injuries were reported. Boynton Beach Fire Rescue is providing grief counseling for town employees and vendor staff.

Town manager **Lynne Ladner** said the employee was operating a wood chipping machine when he got caught in the machine.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Coastal Star
July 31, 2024

Ocean Ridge: Commission plans to add lobbyist and code enforcement officer

By John Pacenti

Ocean Ridge’s proposed \$10.4 million budget includes money for a lobbyist and a part-time code enforcement officer. Town Manager **Lynne Ladner** told commissioners at their July 25 meeting that a \$30,000 appropriation for a lobbyist would be money well spent. “That is not something we’ve done the last couple of years,” **Ladner** said. “But we’re continuing to ask for grants from the state and for potential legislative appropriations.”

Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy said the state Legislature this year granted Ocean Ridge a \$250,000 appropriation to find, fix or replace buried water valves. Gov. Ron DeSantis, however, vetoed it. “It was made very clear to us that without a lobbyist you are not going to get through the governor’s office,” Cassidy said.

A code enforcement officer would be added by expanding the town’s professional services agreement with Hy-Byrd Inc. Inspections, which currently provides services for the building department, **Ladner** said. The code enforcement officers would work between 12 and 20 hours per week, relieving police from having to write up residents for dirty roofs or unmowed lawns.

Commissioners worried that the hourly rate agreement could lead to abuse and told **Ladner** they wanted to cap the contract at \$40,000. The commission will meet on Aug. 5 to hammer out further details of the budget.

Ladner proposes that the tax rate stay the same as last fiscal year at \$5.40 per \$1,000 of taxable value. Residents can still expect higher bills next year, though, because property values rose 9.6%, excluding new construction, she said.

Homesteaded properties, however, are capped at a 3% increase under Florida law, while business, rental property and second homes are capped at 10%. That means the owner of a second home or rental property with a \$1 million taxable value last year, which also matched the town’s 9.6% growth in value, can expect to pay about \$518 more in taxes to Ocean Ridge. However, for most residents, the homesteaded rate for the same \$1 million home would be \$162 more.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Coastal star
January 31, 2024

Ocean Ridge: New commission appointees to serve until March election

By Anne Geggis

The Ocean Ridge Town Commission has five seats, but January’s meeting brought to 10 the number of commissioners who have sat on the dais in the past year. Ainar Aijala Jr. and David Hutchins were sworn into office to replace Commissioners Philip Besler and Ken Kaleel, who turned in their resignations effective Dec. 30. Kaleel said he was resigning rather than comply with a new state law that requires those serving on local elected commissions and councils to file a detailed disclosure of personal assets, effective Jan. 1. Besler was hanging it up for personal reasons, he said.

Aijala and Hutchins swore to faithfully execute all the duties of town commissioner to applause from the crowd at the Jan. 8 meeting. Their appointments are good only until the March 19 election, when voters will decide who fills three commission openings — including their seats — that are on the ballot. Both Aijala and Hutchins have qualified to run in that election. Hutchins, a town resident since 1990, said he hopes to put his eight years of experience serving on the Planning and Zoning Commission to work in this new role. He is optimistic about the town’s direction but sees some areas that could use improvement. “Repairing and replacing existing, worn infrastructure is a priority always, but living within our means has to be part of the equation,” he texted about why he stepped forward to serve.

Aijala, who hails from Michigan, said serving on an elected board fulfills a longtime interest in public service that he couldn’t pursue beyond nonprofit roles because of his position at Deloitte, the largest professional services firm in the world. There, he was CEO of its global consulting practice. The town is on the right track, and he intends to use his professional experience in strategic planning to help it operate even more efficiently, he said after he was sworn in. “Ocean Ridge is a very special place,” he said.

The past year has been rife with the town’s leaders coming and going, however. The two exiting commissioners, Besler and Kaleel, were appointed to replace two other commissioners who resigned in 2023, Martin Wiescholak and Kristine de Haseth. In addition to that, Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy became a new face on the dais last April, after finishing ahead of then-Mayor Susan Hurlburt, who came in last in a three-way race for two commission seats. Wiescholak, the other winner in the March 2023 election, resigned at the same April meeting at which he was sworn in for a second, three-year term. His resignation came minutes after the commissioners agreed in a split vote to hire Town Manager **Lynne Ladner** on a full-time basis. Two hours later, at the same meeting, de Haseth resigned, saying she wanted to spend more time with her family.

So, Mayor Geoff Pugh and Vice Mayor Steve Coz are the only holdovers from before the last election. Aijala and Hutchins were selected for commission appointments out of eight applicants. The town’s charter calls for vacancies to be filled at the next election instead of having an

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

appointee fill out the remainder of an unexpired term — something that’s done in other communities such as Manalapan and Gulf Stream. The seat originally held by de Haseth was up for election this year anyway, but the seat once held by Wiescholek wasn’t supposed to be up for election for another two years.

Aijala, Hutchins, Pugh and political newcomer Nick Arsali will compete for a pair of three-year terms on the commission and another two-year term. Pugh acknowledged at the Jan. 8 meeting that he might lose as the commission agreed on a workshop date for training on the new system for town business on April 8 — after the next election.

The Coastal Star
January 2024

Ocean Ridge

State makes town reapprove budget and tax rate over advertising error

By Larry Rarszewski

A mistake that Florida revenue officials determined "to be in violation of the law" forced Ocean Ridge town commissioners into a special meeting Dec. 21 for a "do-over" of the resolutions they approved in September setting the town's tax rate and budget.

Town officials used the wrong figures in a published advertisement notifying residents of the September public hearings where commissioners set the tax rate and budget for fiscal year 2024, which started Oct. 1.

Fortunately, with millions of dollars in town taxes already paid by property owners over the past two months, the commission didn't have to change the tax rate or budget from the ones approved in September. The correction means the town is now expecting to receive \$58,738 more in property taxes than previously thought, which will reduce the amount of money taken from its reserve funds to support the budget by the same amount.

"We have an additional \$58,000 in the budget, so it is a good mistake, not a bad mistake," Vice Mayor Steve Coz

said.

Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy, who in September had supported approving a tax rate lower than the \$5.40 per \$1,000 of assessed value that was eventually adopted, wasn't as forgiving. Cassidy said if commissioners had been aware of the extra dollars, that may have convinced them to drop the rate to \$5.35 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

For the owner of a home valued at \$1 million, that change would have produced an extra \$50 in savings on their taxes.

Terry Brown, the only resident to speak at the special meeting, wanted to know who was responsible for the mistake. Town Manager Lynne Ladner took responsibility.

"The law was that we were to use the gross taxable value of the town, not the net, and I mistakenly put the net taxable value in the advertisement. It was my mistake," Ladner said. She added later, "It was not a mathematical error."

Brown, however, wasn't satisfied.

"I think it was noted when you were hired by this group, not the previous group, that you publicly stated that that was one of your weaknesses, budget work," Brown said. "They know

your weaknesses. And there are some other weaknesses, too, which we won't talk about today. But that's something that you-all are responsible for."

While Coz said the mistake shouldn't have been made, he noted that outside financial consultants hired by the town to review Ladner's work didn't catch the mistake, either.

"That's their entire business — it's a little [portion] of your business — and they missed it as well," Coz said. "I'm really amazed at the state. I have new faith in the state. A tiny town like us and they catch that? That's great." ★

LETTERS: *The Coastal Star* welcomes letters to the editor about issues of interest in the community. These are subject to editing and must include your name, address and phone number. Preferred length is 200-500 words. Send email to editor@thecoastalstar.com.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Issue
October 2023

Town seeking grant to fix water valves

By Larry Barszewski

Ocean Ridge commissioners on Oct. 2 approved applying to the Florida Legislature for a \$250,000 grant to find, fix or replace the buried water valves in town. The grant would cover half the estimated \$500,000 cost of the work.

“If you have matching funds ... if you have some money put aside to help that project, whatever that may be, it always helps. It looks good on the application. You have some skin in the game,” said state Rep. Joe Casello, D-Boynton Beach, who attended the meeting and has assisted the town with information on the grant process. “As far as appropriations go, they’re big

on water projects.”

According to an application included in the commission agenda packet, “The project will verify the accuracy of GIS maps for shutoff valves, place valve can extensions & concrete collars at buried valve locations.”

“We are talking about potentially raising the valves in the water distribution system by putting a valve can extender and then a concrete collar” around each valve, Town Manager Lynne Ladner said. “It doesn’t raise the actual valve off the water line. What it does is it puts an extension onto the can that surrounds the valves ... to make them more easily accessible. And then the concrete collar keeps

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

them from being overgrown by people's grass and different things like that as they mow."

In addition, the application says the town "will strategically place new valves on existing pipes to enable public works staff to check existing old pipes, reducing emergency repairs & emergency shutdowns. Installation of insertion valves would reduce disruption to residents."

In other news:

- The owner of a home under construction for more than eight years at 6273 N. Ocean Blvd. has until Feb. 15 to complete the work or face a \$5,000 daily fine up to a maximum fine of \$150,000. In addition, if the work isn't finished even earlier — by the

end of the year — including receiving a certificate of occupancy, owner Andrew Rivkin has agreed to pay the town \$50,000 to make up for missed property taxes the town would be entitled to if the home were finished in 2023.

- New regulations are still on the way concerning where and how big oceanfront property owners in town can build. Final approvals have been delayed as commissioners continued to tinker with the wording of the proposed ordinances in recent months. Final approvals are now expected at the commission's Nov. 6 meeting.

- The commission voted to end its contract with Blue Iguana for iguana removal services "without cause." The

company had removed more than 1,800 iguanas from town property over the past year, officials said, but at a recent meeting commissioners questioned if those numbers could be verified.

- Ladner has been appointed to serve on the Florida League of Cities 2023-2024 finance, taxation and personnel committee, one of the league's five legislative policy committees. Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy was appointed to the league's utilities, natural resources and public works committee.

- The town has decided to continue posting notices about lost pets on its Civic Ready site.★

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Issuu
October 2023

Commisioners set lower tax rate after some initial dissent

By Steve Plunkett

In the end, the discussion of Ocean Ridge's budget for 2023-24 was a matter of nickels and dimes, with an emphasis on the nickels.

For the Town Commission's fifth meeting on the budget this year, Town Manager Lynne Ladner prepared scenarios with a tax of \$5.50 per \$1,000 of taxable property value — the same rate as the 2022-23 budget year — as well as at \$4.89 per

\$1,000 and five stops in between.

"I've also provided you with additional breakdowns at every 5 or .05 amounts so that you can see what any change between \$5.25 and \$5.50 does and what it does to your anticipated unaudited fund balances," she explained at the start of the Sept. 5 session.

The town tax bill for a \$500,000 property would have ranged from \$2,445 to \$2,750 in the different scenarios, a difference of \$305. For the

five intermediate 5-cent steps, \$5.25 to \$5.50, the difference narrowed to \$125.

"We're really talking about peanuts," Vice Mayor Steve Coz said.

"That's what I'm trying to tell you. It really comes down to, like, nickels and dimes," Mayor Geoff Pugh said.

After almost endorsing \$5.45, commissioners settled on the \$5.40 rate per \$1,000 for a bill of \$2,700 on a \$500,000 home.

"I was hoping for 5.35 and,

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

you know, given what we understand about the budget, that would work. But you know, 5.4 I'd be OK," said Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy, who participated via telephone and could not vote.

Coz had argued for the highest rate.

"I think I said this last year when we had the 5.5. I said we're going to have to go through two to three years of this in order to have the money to deal with our infrastructure problems," he said.

Commissioner Philip Besler agreed.

"We're going to start putting money away for the septic-to-sewer. It's going to happen. It might not happen till 10 years but it's sort of like retirement plans. Do you want to start putting your money away when you're 50 years old or is it better to put it away when you're 30 years old?" he said.

This was Ladner's first year of preparing Ocean Ridge's budget, and friction was apparent as she and commissioners continued to get used to each other.

When Cassidy suggested trimming costs to reach a lower tax rate, Ladner said she should have proposed that at the earlier budget meetings.

"Right now we're at the tentative budget hearing," Ladner said. "If we were going to have cut expenditures, it would have been appropriate for the commission to have given some input on where they wanted those cuts to be."

At a later point Coz

At the final budget hearing on Sept. 18, Coz directed his disappointment toward former manager Tracey Stevens, saying she left no budget information behind. Commissioner Ken Kaleel, who did not attend the Sept. 5 session, thanked the staff for putting the budget together under "tenuous circumstances." Commissioners then approved the \$5.40 tax rate per \$1,000 of taxable value.

The tax revenue will fund the bulk of an \$11 million operating budget, up 7.4% from the year that ended Sept. 30. Ocean Ridge's tax base rose 12.9% to \$1.36 billion.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

complained that Ladner was earmarking money for items such as the Harbour Drive drainage project when the work was not close to beginning. Ocean Ridge customarily kept such money in reserves until it was needed, he said.

"I'm, I'm lost and I cannot believe these numbers," the vice mayor said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Coastal Star
April 4, 2023

OCEAN RIDGE: Two town commissioners resign after hiring of full-time town manager
By Joe Capozzi

In a span of less than two hours Monday night, Ocean Ridge gained a full-time town manager and lost two town commissioners.

Commissioner Martin Wiescholek announced his resignation an hour after being sworn in to his second three-year term April 3, then stood up and walked out of Town Hall with the commission's April meeting still in progress. Commissioner Kristine de Haseth announced her resignation nearly two hours later, at the very end of the meeting, citing a need to spend more time on family obligations.

Wiescholek resigned just minutes after the commission voted 3-2 to hire interim Town Manager **Lynne Ladner** as the full-time town manager, a move that reversed the commission's 3-2 vote Feb. 27 to not give her a contract for the full-time job.

Ladner's hire Monday night is a direct result of a change in Town Hall power dynamics that arose from the March 14 municipal election when newcomer Carolyn Cassidy and Wiescholek won a three-way race for two commission seats. Incumbent Mayor Susan Hurlburt finished third, losing her commission seat. Hurlburt, Wiescholek and de Haseth often voted in concert, as they did Feb. 27 when they voted against **Ladner's** hiring because of concerns that she had aligned herself with a faction of two other commissioners and their community supporters.

Cassidy was endorsed during her campaign by incumbent commissioners Geoff Pugh and Steve Coz, and on her first night as a commissioner Monday she voted with Pugh and Coz to hire **Ladner** full-time. "I think **Lynne** has been doing an outstanding job in reaching out to the community," Cassidy said. "We've had a very unstable work environment that has suffered a bit from a lack of leadership. I think the time for healing has to start now."

Wiescholek reminded the commission why it voted in February to not hire **Ladner**, who he said had been influenced by two commissioners to fire Police Chief Richard Jones (who has since left to take the police chief job in Gulf Stream). At the Feb. 27 commission meeting, Jones corroborated Wiescholek's concerns when he described how **Ladner** came into his office two days after he'd announced his resignation and told him "that the commission wished for me to leave early. At this point I go, 'The commission?' It was clarified, 'at least two commissioners,'" Jones said. Pugh and Coz denied pressuring **Ladner** to fire Jones.

On Monday, Wiescholek said: "There's this whole thing about who-said, what-said, but somebody walked into Chief Jones' office and said the commission wants you fired. Either **Lynne** did that on her own and lied about it or she was instructed by two commissioners to walk into Chief Jones' office and say the words 'the commission wants you fired' without talking to

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

the other three commissioners. It's inappropriate or it's a flat-out lie. That in itself disqualifies anybody from holding a position in this town."

The commission had been scheduled to select town manager finalists on May 1 and interview them May 9. The firm the town hired for \$29,500 to find candidates, Colin Baenziger and Associates, considers the latest pool of 18 applicants "superior" to the previous candidates, said de Haseth, who said she'd been in contact with Baenziger. "We started the (search) process. We have a process to follow and we need to continue the procedure and move forward from there," de Haseth said. "You can't do an about-face in the middle of the stream."

"That's exactly what the commission did (Feb. 27)," Coz retorted, pointing out how the commission in January had selected **Ladner** on a 5-0 vote while officials drafted a contract that was supposed to be approved Feb. 27. "I think the town is in a period of healthy rebirth. I think **Lynne** is part of that," Coz said before the commission voted to hire **Ladner**, who will make \$142,000 a year. Her predecessor, Tracey Stevens, was making \$132,500 when she left Sept. 11 to become town manager in Haverhill.

A few minutes after **Ladner**'s hiring Monday, as the commission was considering a new agenda item, Wiescholek interrupted and said, "Based on the decision that was just handed down, with the renewal of the contract for **Lynne Ladner**, I feel that town is doing itself a grave disservice. I feel that the town is putting itself at great risk. The implications that pass off that are staggering at best. I will not have my name associated to that. Hereby, I resign."

Many of the 50 or so people in the audience cheered as Wiescholek stood up and walked off the dais, happy to see him go. In an interview outside Town Hall a few minutes later, Wiescholek said he had no plans to change his mind. "What they have there right now is a town manager that they can tell what to do: 'You need to hire this person and that person.' They can manage and massage anything into their own world. I am not going to be a part of it," he told The Coastal Star.

After the meeting, de Haseth said she had been considering since December to step down because of family obligations, but decided to wait until after the election. "I was sorry to see her go," Coz, who was selected as vice mayor, said after the meeting. "She was a great asset to the commission."

Pugh, who was selected Monday as mayor, said after the meeting that he expected the town to put out a notice for candidates to apply to fill the remaining terms of Wiescholek and de Haseth. The final selection for each vacant commission seat will be voted on by the Town Commission, possibly at a special meeting, he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://issuu.com/thecoastalstar.com/docs/edition168/s/20067461>
March 2023

Three top officials leaving in latest Town Hall turmoil

By Joe Capozzi

Less than two weeks before an election that could shift the balance of power on the Town Commission, three top Ocean Ridge officials are on their way out. Interim Town Manager **Lynne Ladner** will not get the full-time position, a job for which the commission chose her in January, because of concerns by three commissioners that she has aligned herself with a faction of two commissioners and their community supporters. Police Chief Richard Jones will leave by May 11 after agreeing to take the chief's job in Gulf Stream. And building official Durrani Guy submitted his two-week notice on Feb. 27. Two other Town Hall employees have left since the beginning of the year. Although **Ladner** agreed to stay on as interim manager for another 90 days while the town conducts what will be a third search for a top administrator, she will not be considered for the full-time job, a divided commission decided Feb. 27. The margin was 3-2, with commissioners Geoff Pugh and Steve Coz on the losing end of a vote to finalize her contract as intended.

The backdrop of the three departures is the March 14 election, when Mayor Susan Hurlburt, Commissioner Martin Wiescholek and resident Carolyn Cassidy are running for two seats. Cassidy has been endorsed by Pugh and Coz, a pair that has been on the short end of votes by a majority made up of Hurlburt, Wiescholek and Vice Mayor Kristine de Haseth. Among Cassidy's campaign pledges is to overhaul the building department, a mandate that has been echoed by Pugh and Coz and has prompted concern by employees at Town Hall. The latest turmoil came to a head at the commission's special meeting Feb. 27 to consider **Ladner's** contract, an agenda item that would've been routine if not for behind-the-scenes communications **Ladner** had with Pugh and Coz in recent weeks about whether Jones should leave before May 11. Jones submitted his resignation Feb. 10 and under terms of his contract must give 90 days' advance notice before he leaves.

Those communications came to light in an email Wiescholek said he mistakenly sent to fellow commissioners in late February about "serious second thoughts" he had about hiring **Ladner**. In the email, which was meant only for Colin Baenziger, a recruiter hired to help commissioners find a manager, Wiescholek said he was concerned that **Ladner** "had been influenced by two commissioners to immediately fire chief Jones." Wiescholek based his concerns on information shared with him by Jones about conversations the chief had with **Ladner** two days after he announced his resignation. Although Wiescholek's email never identified the two commissioners, it was made clear Feb. 27, when the email was dissected in a public meeting, that he was referring to Pugh and Coz. Pugh and Coz said they spoke individually to **Ladner** about whether it made sense to let Jones leave before May 11 and replace him with an interim chief. But they said they did not pressure her to terminate Jones. "I've never had a conversation with **Lynne** about terminating a police chief," Coz said. "I would never have that conversation. It's ludicrous. Somehow this entire collusion with myself and Geoff and **Lynne** grew out of fantasy.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

It doesn't exist." Jones, however, had a different take on his conversation with **Ladner**. Two days after he announced his resignation, "I received some text messages from the town manager indicating that a resident in town had chosen who the next police chief should be," Jones said without elaborating. A day after that, a Monday, **Ladner** came into Jones' office. "I was then informed that the commission wished for me to leave early. At this point I go, 'The commission?' It was clarified, 'at least two commissioners,'" the chief said. Jones said he was not told, nor did he ask, the names of the two commissioners. Before Jones described his conversations with **Ladner**, Vice Mayor de Haseth said she believed the interim town manager had "aligned herself" with "select commissioners" and "a small faction in this town." **Ladner** also "has exhibited questionable behavior," de Haseth said, explaining how she warned **Ladner** in her early days as interim manager to be careful about information she receives from town residents. "And she told me, 'Don't worry about it. I secretly record conversations with residents on a regular basis.' To which I said, 'I do believe that is illegal,'" de Haseth said. Although de Haseth said **Ladner** told her the recordings "helped her create notes later," she said **Ladner** was "counseled"

The Town Commission by a 3-2 vote reversed its decision to hire **Lynne Ladner** as town manager, meaning it will conduct a third search for that job. Jerry Lower/ The Coastal Star by the chief and town attorney not to record residents without their consent and knowledge. **Ladner** said, "When I found out that Florida was a two-party recording state, I had not made any recordings to record my meetings, I made sure to take only handwritten notes." Before coming to Ocean Ridge, **Ladner** held management and consulting positions in Pinellas County and Pahokee government. As for her conversations with Pugh and Coz, **Ladner** said she told them her intention was for Jones to stay as long as he could and help find his replacement. She also said she asked the town attorney about "the cost implications" if the town let Jones leave before the 90-day departure period outlined in his contract.

Ladner was set to get a \$142,500 salary in her contract; an earlier version called for her to get \$155,000. Ocean Ridge's previous town manager, Tracey Stevens, was making \$132,500 when she left Sept. 11 to become town manager in Haverhill. Not only is the town back to square one on finding a town manager, it also has to find a new police chief and a new building official. Commissioners voted 4-1 to retain **Ladner** for another 90 days while they find a new interim or full-time manager. "What I see pretty much is a vote of no confidence" in **Ladner**, said Hurlburt, who called for an end to the "micromanagement" of Town Hall from outside sources. "This latest incident is being used by a minority of residents as another political football. Ocean Ridge should be operating with good governance as the priority, not a stage for folks with personal axes to grind," the mayor said. "These power plays are doing harm to Ocean Ridge and I'm concerned our town manager might have played right into it." Pugh and Coz also took issue with language in Wiescholek's email that described "two commissioners who are dead set on burning down this town." Wiescholek apologized to both commissioners for his choice of words in the email. The meeting was interrupted multiple times, prompting the mayor to call three separate recesses, when a few of the 40 residents in the audience shouted at commissioners.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Coastal Star (FL)
November 30, 2022

Ocean Ridge: Sale of Aging Co-op to Developer is Next Wave, Some Say

Author: John Pacenti

Duncan Burke fell in love some 50 years ago with the understated individually owned apartments next to Ocean Club of Florida. His godparents owned in Ocean Maisonettes across the street and he bought into the apartments. “My wife and I loved it. It was small but wonderful,” said Burke, who travels around the globe but is based in Greenwich, Connecticut. But Burke and the other owners at 6855 N. Ocean Blvd. in Ocean Ridge decided to say goodbye. The oceanside complex sold for \$29 million on Oct. 18, according to Palm Beach County official records. The money will be split among owners according to the size of their units, 22 in all. The 60-year-old building was a co-op, meaning that to sell it, all owners of the studio and one-bedroom units had to agree. Owners had already agreed not to inhabit the property recently as repairs mounted. “It ends a long period of uncertainty as to what to do about the building, which was frustrating,” Burke said. “It was bittersweet for those of us who have been down there with family since the 1970s.”

New construction along Ocean Boulevard — be it condominiums or multimillion-dollar spec mansions — represents a confluence of spiking land values, an influx of new year-round residents and new regulations ushered in by the collapse of Champlain Towers South in Surfside in June 2021. It is “Logan’s Run” for aging complexes that once were the backbone of the area’s charm. The co-op follows the path of Wright by the Sea, the historic Delray Beach hotel that sold four years ago for \$25 million to make way for the ultramodern Ocean Delray condominiums. With more than 200 feet of direct ocean frontage, the co-op possesses the same allure of unobstructed ocean views that made Wright by the Sea desirable.

The new owner of the apartments — or more important, the 2.1 acres they sit upon — is an affiliate of Edwards Cos., a Columbus, Ohio-based family-owned holding company that advertises a host of developments: mixed-use urban, multifamily, student housing, condominium construction. It is the mixed-use part that has some Ocean Ridge residents alarmed. The Edwards Cos., under a limited liability corporation, also is behind Delray Beach’s Atlantic Crossing, a \$300 million multiuse project slated to have offices, shops, restaurants and condos. The company did not respond to an email for comment. Also, the Ocean Club — the beach and tennis club next door to the co-op — would not talk about the sale. Betty Bingham’s father — former Ocean Ridge Mayor H. Peirce Brawner — was one of the original members of the Ocean Club. She said there is plenty of concern among Ocean Ridge residents about what the Edwards Cos. will construct. “I doubt seriously they will be able to put stores and offices,” said Bingham, who is not an Ocean Club member.

Ocean Ridge interim Town Manager **Lynne Ladner** said the zoning is high-density residential multifamily. There is a height restriction of four stories. “There has been no permit pulled. They have not started any land development with our building department,” **Ladner** said. “They

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

haven't done anything but change ownership. There has been no discussion with the town. "We have quite a few people who are asking about it and I am telling them the same thing."

The Edwards Cos. isn't talking, but the affable lawyer who helped manage the sale said the plans will be to construct up to 20 luxury condominiums after the razing of the old apartments. The lawyer, Brad Capas, executive director of Cushman & Wakefield, said necessary repairs in the wake of the Surfside collapse were going to be costly for owners of the apartments. "Nobody wants a repeat so everybody is paying attention to it," he said. "In this particular case, residents were not full-time and did not want to pay to do the capital improvements to pass inspections."

New regs for old buildings

They are not alone. Coastal residential buildings are reckoning with the Surfside tragedy, forcing residents to incur hefty assessments for upgrades or repairs. The Florida Legislature ushered in reforms last session, mandating that condos and co-ops three stories or taller and within 3 miles of the coast must have a "milestone inspection" 25 years after opening and every 10 years thereafter. The first inspection for those farther from the coast would be 30 years.

Condo associations must have enough money in their reserves by 2025 to fund all necessary repairs to maintain the structural integrity of their buildings. Ocean Ridge Management, which managed the apartments, did not have any comment and efforts to reach board members on the exact nature of pending repairs were unsuccessful. "It's my understanding that the owners voluntarily moved out — out of an abundance of caution," Capas said. There were about five serious bidders for the property, but Capas said it was a complex sale because of the zoning restrictions on it, such as height and easement. "The site planning of the property, the design of the building, is a little complicated because there are some obstacles that they have to work through," Capas said. He estimated that the new condominiums will run about \$2,000 per square foot — about the same as at the recently completed Ocean Delray.

Former Ocean Ridge Mayor Ken Kaleel said Ocean Ridge is no different from barrier island communities throughout South Florida. "The market value of the land and aging buildings are prompting some developers to come in and take an interest," he said. "That has been happening for quite some time. It is completely different than it was 30 years ago. The pandemic just put it on hyperdrive." Realtor Nick Malinosky said seasonal residents have been increasingly replaced with families moving primarily from the Northeast, California and Chicago and staying year-round. He said these older buildings' time has come. "They're ugly to look at, the windows are small. Typically, the vegetation in the landscape isn't great," Malinosky said. "The development, assuming it stays within the standard zoning and regulations, will be a great improvement to the area." Duncan Burke represented the typical resident of the apartments. Burke said he and his family used it for two or three weeks in March, maybe a weekend in November and another weekend around New Year's Day. It was certainly enough time to create some great family memories. "It was about as nice as it gets in Florida around there," he said.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Elizabeth Lynne Ladner** is listed below.]

<https://meetings.municode.com/adaHtmlDocument/index?cc=PAHOKEEFL&me=8808c542effb4ad289d3defb49ec0cfe&ip=True>
September 12, 2022

City of Pahokee
City Commission Regular Meeting

**E. PUBLIC COMMENTS / PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS /
PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS**

2. Certificate of Appreciation - **Lynne Ladner**

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Coastal Star (FL)
August 31, 2022

Ocean Ridge: Interim Manager Gets Started, Expresses Interest in Full-Time Job

Author: Joe Capozzi

Lynne Ladner, a former interim town manager in Pinellas County, will take over as interim town manager in Ocean Ridge. Town commissioners voted 4-0 on Aug. 8 to hire **Ladner** after interviewing one other candidate, former Lake County Manager Alan Rosen. Commissioner Geoff Pugh was absent. **Ladner** formally accepted the job on Aug. 10. **Ladner** planned to start Sept. 1, working alongside departing manager Tracey Stevens, whose last day is Sept. 11. Stevens has accepted the town manager job in Haverhill.

Commissioners hope to interview candidates for a full-time town manager in October and hire one by Thanksgiving. **Ladner** told commissioners she is interested in the full-time position. “I am thrilled at this opportunity and I am excited to come next week and get started,” **Ladner** told commissioners after they approved her contract at a special meeting Aug. 25. “I look forward to working with all of you and everyone in the town.”

Commissioners were impressed with Rosen, but felt **Ladner** was the better fit. Rosen had told commissioners he probably would not be interested in the full-time position because of family commitments. “I think **Lynne** would be a good fit for keeping the boat afloat for the three months while we are looking for somebody else,” Mayor Susan Hurlburt said.

Ladner has more than 15 years of experience working in local governments in Florida, Michigan and Kansas. More recently she served as interim town manager in Kenneth City, a suburb of St. Petersburg. She also has been working as a consultant for the city of Pahokee, a job she planned to leave before starting in Ocean Ridge. **Ladner** will draw a paycheck based on a \$100,000 annual salary for the first two weeks. On Sept. 12 her pay will increase to \$132,500 a year, which Stevens was making. The commission also gave **Ladner** permission to serve on a Florida League of Cities committee that will require her to attend a meeting once a month in Kissimmee.

At the Aug. 25 meeting, Ocean Ridge resident Terry Brown, a former commissioner, asked commissioners to give **Ladner** an overview about the town’s neighborhoods and political factions. “I’m not trying to be cute or anything, but I want to be sure as soon as possible” that officials “give an orientation to the town in terms of demographics and neighborhoods where various tensions exist,” Brown said. It’s important that **Ladner** is “aware of what happens in the town with various groups so there are no surprises. You dig what I’m saying?” Brown said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Press Release Distribution (FL)
February 10, 2022

Imagine That Performance Welcomes Senior Consultant Lynne Ladner

Author: Imagine That Performance, LLC

TAMPA, Fla. - Imagine That Performance welcomes **Lynne Ladner** as a Senior Consultant to the growing company focused on local government leadership. **Lynne Ladner** brings more than 15 years of experience in local government, including her most recent appointments as Interim Town Manager of Kenneth City, FL, and City Manager for Hart, MI. She holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science. Her role as Human Resources Director and City Manager in the communities she has served has allowed her to build strong and impactful leadership teams that successfully serve their communities.

Lynne is excited to be joining the team, offered this statement: "I collaborated with Imagine that Performance in Kenneth City, FL and recognized that we have a shared belief in the benefits of cultivating highly committed leaders into high performance teams in the public sector. "**Lynne** brings a well rounded with direct experiences in leading many local government functions" said Rob Duncan, Managing Director of Imagine That Performance. "She's not afraid to get her hands directy to get a task done – no matter the task – a great quality for our growing team."

Lynne Ladner will directly serve Imagine That Performance customers, bringing new ideas that drive culture, performance, and accountability in local governments.

Imagine That Performance, LLC envisions a world where local government leaders are always striving to learn and implement evolving leadership principles, so that they can nurture trusting teams, advance employee development, expand citizen participation and further community trust. The consulting firm that has established nationwide Virtual Think Tanks for City Managers and County Administrators. These professionally-facilitated groups offer Chief Administrative Officers the real-time platform to leverage other leaders' experience to ask the right questions and offer insight prior to developing solutions. With Local Government Consulting and Professional Facilitation Services, Imagine That Performance is providing hands-on resources to get work done that generates the desired outcomes for municipalities.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Press Release Distribution (FL)
June 10, 2021

Kenneth City Expands Consulting Agreement and Selects New Interim Town Manager
Author: Imagine That Performance, LLC

The Town of Kenneth City voted last night to expand the agreement last night with Imagine That Performance to appoint Steven Spina, Ph.D. as the Interim Town Manager at the conclusion of current Interim Manager **Lynne Ladner's** term ending on June 11. The Council voted unanimously to enhance what has been in place since May 12th providing professional services to the Town in the role of Assistant to the Town Manager. Dr. Spina, a senior consultant with Imagine That Performance, brings more than 20 years of City Manager experience from managing the City of Zephyrhills, Florida, where he oversaw a \$56 million budget, including three enterprise funds, and 170 employees. Dr. Spina also currently serves as an instructor at the University of South Florida, in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program.

In addition to the appointment of Dr. Spina, Jocilyn Martinez, Ph.D. has been appointed as Interim Town Clerk. Dr. Martinez, also a senior consultant with Imagine That Performance, worked in local government for over 10 years, most recently for the City of Port Richey, Florida as Assistant City Manager. Dr. Martinez has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in Public Administration at Florida Atlantic University, Barry University, and the University of South Florida, where she currently teaches. "The appointments are a short-term solution until the Town Council is able to select a new Town Manager," said Rob Duncan, Managing Director of Imagine That Performance. "We are honored to provide assistance during this time of transition in Kenneth City." In addition to the appointments, Mr. Duncan will continue to serve as the Assistant to the Town Manager. The town is currently executing a plan to fill the Town Manager position by August, with FCCMA Senior Advisors assisting with the search. Applications for the position are being accepted until June 25th.

Outgoing Interim Town Manager **Lynne Ladner** left a mark in a short term as Interim Town Manager. "The time that you have been here, you have taught me more how this town operates how it should operate and why it operates the way that it does," said Mayor Robert Howell, "in the short period of time you've been here, you taught me the why and how, thank you." As Interim Town Manager, **Ms. Ladner** inherited an organization depleted of staff, but found creative solutions to ensure no disruption of services to residents.

Imagine That Performance, LLC is a consulting firm that has established nationwide Virtual Think Tanks for City Managers and County Administrators. These professionally facilitated groups offer Chief Administrative Officers the real-time platform to leverage other leaders' experience to ask the right questions and offer insight prior to developing solutions. With direct assistance local government consulting, Imagine That Performance is providing hands-on resources to get work done that generates the desired outcomes for municipalities.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.oceanacountypress.com/2021/04/21/city-manager-says-departure-was-prompted-by-council-not-renewing-her-contract/>

April 21, 2021

City manager says departure was prompted by council not renewing her contract.

Author: Allison Scarbrough

Hart City Manager **Lynne Ladner** said her departure from employment with the city was prompted by the city council not renewing her contract. The city council voted in March to not renew her contract, which expires in July. “I was left with no other option but to seek other employment.” Her last day as city manager is May 7, and she has accepted another position in Florida.

According to the minutes of the March 23, 2021 meeting, the council voted 6-1 to not renew **Ladner**’s contract and voted unanimously to have the city attorney “prepare the appropriate documentation to support the motion.” “I felt it was best to make a clean break with the city,” she said.

Ladner said she submitted a letter of “notice of leaving” April 15 to Mayor Vicki Platt, which states the following: “I would like to inform you that I am resigning from my position as city manager for the City of Hart effective May 7, 2021. I will be utilizing several vacation days during this transition period but will be available via phone and email on days that I am not in the office. “Thank you very much for the opportunities that I have experienced during my time with the community, I have enjoyed my time here and the friends that I have made during my tenure. In acknowledging the Council’s decision at the March 23, 2021 meeting, it is best for myself and the community that I move forward with transitioning at this time. I will work with city staff and consultants to assist during this period to the best of my ability.”

Platt said the council voted to not renew the contract because it wasn’t written professionally, and a new contract has been drafted. “It is significantly more professional this time around.” The mayor said it was not her job performance that was the reason for the contract not being renewed, but the decision was made due to the contract’s wording.

Ladner was hired in 2018 when long-time Hart City Manager Stan Rickard retired from the position. She previously held city manager positions in South Lyon, Michigan and Hiawatha, Kansas. The position, which is in the salary range of \$85,000-\$105,000, has been posted on various web sites, such as LinkedIn, said Mayor Platt.

“It’s fair to say we were going to work well together for a little longer,” said Mayor Vicki Platt. “**Lynne** brought a lot of good things to the city.” The city council is planning to appoint an interim city manager at its next regular meeting Tuesday, April 27, said Mayor Platt.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

https://www.shorelinemedia.net/oc-eanas_herald_journal/news/general_news/amercian-rescue-act-funds-could-help-fund-street-projects/article_d04787de-d5b9-57e5-a382-20051722c996.html
Oceana's Herald-Journal
March 29, 2021

Amercian Rescue Act funds could help fund street projects

Author: Sharon Hallack

After two years of unsuccessful applications to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for the completion of a Hansen Street road project, the City of Hart March 23 authorized and awarded the bid for the final design, bidding and construction engineering as part of FY 2021, to Prein & Newhof Engineering (P & N).

The estimated total for the Hansen Street project is \$194,000, which includes \$167,500 for construction and contingency and \$26,500 for engineering costs. In conjunction with the Hansen Street project, the city authorized the final design, bidding and construction engineering to P&N for an adjoining section of Dryden Street, which would include a water service line replacement and sewer main extension. The estimated total for the Dryden Street project is \$501,300 with \$450,800 for construction and contingency and \$50,500 for engineering.

Council had considered approval for the Hansen Street project at its March 9 meeting, however, wanted to know how much it would cost to add the paving of Dryden Street. "The Dryden Street project is a bit more complex as the properties along that section of Dryden are currently served by septic systems not sanitary sewer. Completion of this project without the extension of a sewer main at this time would necessitate the removal and reconstruction of the road surface. This project may or may not also necessitate the replacement of water service lines, per the state mandate for service lines that are connected to lead service lines or connections," stated a memo to council from City Manager **Lynne Ladner**.

Barbara Marczak of P&N told the council they estimate a savings of about \$10,000 in engineering if both projects are designed and constructed together. "While Dryden is not currently a high-use road, it does frequently incur large truck traffic exiting the Dollar General property, bus traffic to access the Oceana Council on Aging garage and large city trucks utilized by the DPW," said **Ladner**. In addition to the two major road projects, the city also previously secured bids on the paving of the DPW gravel parking lot. The total for that project is estimated at \$117,000.

Prior to approval, the council discussed the financing of both projects. **Ladner** told the council that the MDOT has commented in the past the city needs to spend down money in its local streets fund. Also with the passage of the federal American Rescue Act, the city is estimated to receive funds just over \$204,000. "Once these projects are bid out, the city will have the option of awarding all three contracts, any combination of the three or none of the projects. But it's not a bad idea to have some designed projects 'on the shelf.' MDOT often presents grant funding with a 90-day turnaround, and it can be hard to meet those parameters if you don't have

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

something in the wings. Dryden would be one of the next likely streets to be paved within the city,” **Ladner** said.

The city’s parks and recreation master plan expired in 2020. To be eligible for recreational project funding, the city must have a current plan on file with the state. For the update, the city sought proposals and received three different quotes from Prein & Newhof for \$9,600, the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Corporation (WMSRDC) for \$7,500 and Fleis & VandenBrink for \$4,900. The council awarded the contract to Fleis & VandenBrink (F&V) in the amount of \$4,900. The proposal letter submitted by F&V stated that, “Work will include updating demographic and economic data, updating an inventory of recreational facilities, conducting public workshops to identify current community needs and developing a recreation plan to meet the needs of the community. The plan will be used to identify recreation programming needs and existing recreation opportunities. This plan will also be used to qualify the city for Michigan Department of Natural Resources recreation grants for the next five years.”

Three public meetings, involving the community specifically, will be held; the first start-up meeting will be to hear input from stakeholders at an informal workshop; the second meeting will define and prepare community goals and objectives by involving key representatives from area groups, such as rec league organizers, senior groups and young people; lastly a public hearing will be held to review and comment on the recreation plan draft. The entire process is expected to take 90 days. F&V plans to begin on the update this summer or early fall, to meet the Feb. 1, 2022 deadline.

Infrastructure and equipment items were also on the agenda, including accepting a bid from Nutrigo Environmental in the amount of \$459/dry ton for the hauling and land application disposal of biosolids from the wastewater treatment plant through calendar year 2025. The bidding requirement was waived, as Nutrigo was the only contractor to submit a bid. Because landfill disposal is so costly, biosolids are trucked to area farms and applied to approved cropland.

The council accepted a proposal from Power Line Supply for the replacement of the switch gear at the industrial park, for the Federal Pacific Switch, in the amount of \$19,104. The approval also waived the low bidder requirement, as this switch is similar to present equipment, allowing for the use of the existing base and terminals. It will also allow the Energy Department to recondition removed equipment for back-up. Energy Superintendent Mike Schiller projects that by not having to replace the base and terminals, as well as the switch, \$10,000 could be saved, making the Federal Pacific bid and project cost the lowest.

The city approved a FY 2022 pre-purchase for a new aerial bucket truck as part of the Energy Department capital improvement plan. This purchase would replace the city’s aging 1997 aerial bucket truck. “Due to a shortage of computer chips to operate the electrical systems in large trucks, manufacturing is being temporarily discontinued. I learned very late today that D&K Truck, selected through the State of Michigan MiDeal competitive bidding process, has a limited number of truck chassis available and because of the demand, the company is requesting a

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

commitment as soon as possible. If the city is willing to commit to the purchase of the truck, we could accept delivery on a new truck in FY 2022. The Freightliner truck chassis would be sent to Versabuilt (also selected through the MiDeal selective bidding process) for a total cost of \$230,254 and be ready for purchase in the FY2022 budget,” **Ladner** said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

WZZM 13 ABC
December 24, 2020

Banned Jesus T-shirt sparks federal lawsuit against western Michigan city

Author: John Hogan

An election worker in Oceana County is suing the city of Hart, claiming she was wrongly prohibited from wearing a religious-themed shirt during the Nov. 3 general election. The shirt stated: My Heart will TRUST in you JESUS. Margaret Wittman says the shirt did not support any candidate or issue. And being told to remove it was seen as “an offense to God.” “Jesus holds no political office and was not on the ballot,” Wittman contends in the 11-page lawsuit filed this week in Grand Rapids federal court.

The lawsuit says Wittman “does not cease being a Christian when she is performing her duties as an election worker for the city.” City officials would permit a Muslim election worker to wear a hijab and a Jewish election worker to wear a Yamaka while working at the polls. Yet Wittman was prohibited from wearing her Jesus shirt because Hart officials view Wittman’s religious beliefs as political, she contends.

Wittman is being represented by the American Freedom Law Center in Ann Arbor. She is seeking damages as well as a declaration that the city’s policy violates her constitutional rights. Defendants named in the lawsuit are the city of Hart, City Manager **Lynne Ladner** and Clerk Cheryl Rabe. City officials were unavailable for comment on Thursday.

Wittman says she signed up to be a Nov. 3 election worker for \$10.50 an hour. At a training session the day before, election workers were told they could not engage in political speech while working the polls on election day. “In other words, the election workers were told that they could not advocate for or against any candidate or ballot issue,” the lawsuit states. A letter from city officials also directed election workers to “please make sure that there is no visible campaign material in/on your car if you choose to park at City Hall. Also, you should not wear any item that may appear to support a candidate or issue.”

When Wittman arrived at the polls on election day, Rabe approached her and directed her to turn her “trust in Jesus” shirt around and wear it backwards because it was considered to be “political speech,” according to the lawsuit. She refused. Wittman was then told to wear a sweater to cover the shirt; she again refused. Wittman “sincerely believes that Defendant Rabe’s order was an offense to God,” according to the lawsuit. Wittman says she lost her job as an election worker because she refused to remove or conceal the shirt.

City policy restricting political speech provides no definition of political “nor guidelines as to how this amorphous ban on ‘political’ speech can be objectively applied,” according to the lawsuit. The city policy violates Wittman's First Amendment right to freedom of speech and her right to free exercise of religion. Her 14th Amendment right to equal protection under the law

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

was also violated, according to the lawsuit. The case has been assigned to U.S. District Court Judge Paul L. Maloney.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

[CB&A Note: To view the entire case, please follow the link below.]
<https://www.americanfreedomlawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Complaint-Filed.pdf>

December 22, 2020

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN;**

MARGARET WITTMAN, Plaintiff

CITY OF HART, Michigan; **LYNNE LADNER**, individually and in her official capacity as City Manager, City of Hart, Michigan; and **CHERYL RABE**, individually and in her official capacity as City Clerk, City of Hart, Michigan, Defendants.

PARTIES

12. Defendant **Lynne Ladner** is the City Manager for the City of Hart. As the City Manager, Defendant **Ladner** is responsible for creating, adopting, approving, ratifying, and enforcing the policies, practices, customs, and/or procedures of the City, including the challenged policy as set forth in this Complaint.

26. Plaintiff was then directed to speak with Defendant **Ladner**. During Plaintiff's conversation with Defendant **Ladner**, Defendant **Ladner** confirmed that Plaintiff's TRUST in JESUS shirt was "political speech" and that Plaintiff could not wear it while working at the polls.

27. Accordingly, Plaintiff was "relieved of her duties" as an election worker because she refused to violate her deeply held religious beliefs and convictions and because of the viewpoint expressed by her TRUST in JESUS shirt.

28. Plaintiff remained in the voting precinct, observing from the public viewing area for the remainder of the day until the building closed at midnight. If Plaintiff's TRUST in JESUS shirt was "political speech"—i.e., advocating for or against a candidate or a ballot issue—then she should not have been allowed within 100 feet of the polls pursuant to Michigan election law.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Targeted News Service (USA)
June 9, 2020

**Michigan Economic Development Corp.: City of Hart Receives Certification as
Redevelopment Ready Community**

The Michigan Economic Development Corp. issued the following news release:

For their efforts in establishing a solid foundation to attract private investment and further build on municipality assets, the City of Hart has been awarded the Redevelopment Ready Communities(RRC) certification, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) announced. The MEDC formally recognizes the City of Hart as a Certified Redevelopment Ready Community. Hart joins 44 other Michigan communities in all corners of the state that have qualified as "thoroughly prepared" when it comes to planning and zoning to remove traditional barriers and promote opportunities for prospective investors.

"The RRC process gave the City of Hart the opportunity to engage the community in a comprehensive assessment of our community and economic development practices," said Hart City Manager **Lynne Ladner**. "The help that we received in creating a cohesive community marketing strategy was immensely valuable and has helped the city with focusing our long-term efforts and in identifying ways to assist our businesses throughout the COVID pandemic crisis. As an RRC community, the resources that we have been able to access and continue to have access to will strengthen our community going forward."

As an RRC participant, the City of Hart received a comprehensive assessment that measured current community and economic development practices compared to RRC Best Practice standards. The program evaluates and certifies communities that integrate transparency, predictability and efficiency into their economic development practices. Certification status is a compelling indicator that a community has removed development barriers and streamlined processes to be more competitive and attractive to investors. To reach certification, the City of Hart worked to improve upon numerous policies and processes. The city's efforts are highlighted by developing an overarching economic development and marketing plan in 2019, creating a comprehensive development review guidebook and the development of flowcharts that clarify the steps in each of the city's development review processes. The city's efforts have produced high-quality documents and processes that will continue to generate value.

"Our mission at MEDC is to support Michigan's strong economic momentum and empower communities to establish a strong planning, zoning and economic development foundation," said MEDC Senior Vice President Michele Wildman. "Hart is well-positioned to implement their vision for the future and further improve the quality of life for residents. We look forward to continue building upon our relationship with the city and supporting local economic development efforts."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

PR Newswire (USA)
June 13, 2019

The City of Hart joins the MITN Purchasing Group in Michigan - City of Hart has officially joined the MITN Purchasing Group, one of BidNet's regional e-procurement solutions, providing vendors throughout Michigan easy online access its upcoming solicitations.

Author: Not Listed

The City of Hart has officially joined the MITN Purchasing Group, one of BidNet's regional e-procurement solutions, providing vendors throughout Michigan easy online access its upcoming solicitations. City of Hart invites all vendors to register online at <http://www.bidnetdirect.com/mitn>.

The regional purchasing group connects local governments with vendors looking to do business with public agencies. On the MITN Purchasing Group, vendors seeking business with over 200 participating agencies can register online to gain access to a single point of entry for opportunities throughout Michigan. By posting upcoming bids and RFPs on the MITN Purchasing Group, the City of Hart ensures an entire community of vendors can view their solicitation, download documents, and receive notification of addenda. The vendors self-register and ensure their contact information is up to date.

"Because we aren't the only agency posting and distributing bids, the MITN Purchasing Group provides City of Hart more vendor competition, which we hope will help cut costs." said **Lynne Ladner**, City Manager of City of Hart when asked why their department decided to join the MITN Purchasing Group. "We also like that it can help our current vendors expand their business opportunities."

City of Hart invites all local vendors to visit <http://www.bidnetdirect.com/mitn> and register to receive access to its upcoming solicitations as well as the upcoming bids and RFPs from 212 other public agencies participating on the MITN Purchasing Group. Registered vendors have the option to upgrade their service to receive customized bid alerts, notification of term contract expiration, and notification of a real-time addendum.

About The City of Hart:

The City of Hart is a thriving economic center located in Oceana County, MI. With a diverse population of over 2,200 we are a full service community providing Police, Water, Wastewater, Electric and Public Works services to our residents under the Council-Manager form of government. Hart is home to several large food production and packaging companies, many retail and commercial businesses and is home to the Starting Block food business incubator.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Ocean County Press
June 8, 2018

Former South Lyon city manager accepts Hart job.

Former South Lyon City Manager **Elizabeth Lynne Ladner** accepted the position of city manager for Hart, said Hart City Manager Stan Rickard who is retiring from the position in August. Hart City Council offered the job to **Ladner** earlier this week, and she accepted the job Thursday, June 7, Rickard said. Negotiations on an employment agreement have not yet been finalized, Rickard said.

Ladner has held city manager positions in South Lyon, Michigan and Hiawatha, Kansas over the last 12 years.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Elizabeth [Lynne] Ladner** is listed below. Omitted is the information on the approved company to lead the replacement search.]

<https://www.theoaklandpress.com/2018/04/25/lynne-ladner-out-as-south-lyon-city-manager/>
April 25, 2018

Lynne Ladner out as South Lyon city manager

Author: Mark Cavitt

South Lyon needs a full-time city manager. **Lynne Ladner** has been on medical leave since early January, her third since taking office in June 2014. She told The Oakland Press in late December that she anticipated being out for four to six weeks beginning Jan. 3. Well, that time has since past as her leave expired March 28. Police Chief Lloyd Collins, who has been serving as city manager in the interim, said an active search for **Ladner**'s replacement has begun.

Collins said that **Ladner**, city council and the city attorney negotiated a separation agreement that took effect March 29. It was signed by **Ladner** on Monday, which officially ended her tenure.

Since **Ladner** left office Jan. 3, Collins said he has not had any direct contact with her and said he wasn't sure of **Ladner**'s intentions, whether she would return or not, prior to her taking medical leave. "I can only speak to what she did and didn't say to me and I have no knowledge as to the reason for why she's leaving," said Collins.

Before serving as city manager, **Ladner** worked as city administrator for Hiawatha, Kan. where for seven years where she oversaw day-to-day operations, researched and administered grant applications, managed human resources, and managed budget operations.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Whmi
March 8, 2018

Collection Of Review Fees Under Scrutiny In City Of South Lyon
JM

There appears to be some discrepancies when it comes to collecting review fees in the City of South Lyon.

Police Chief Lloyd Collins is serving as interim city manager while **Lynne Ladner** is on her third, unspecified medical leave. Collins recently reported to council that at the end of the last fiscal year, **Ladner** allegedly directed city auditors to write off \$50,000 that wasn't billed or collected for different review fees. The fees are associated with building construction or other work that requires a review by consultants. Since the fees were not collected, the city was stuck with the bill. Fees are typically collected to cover the expenses and put into an escrow account, but that has apparently not been happening in the City. The South Lyon Herald quoted Collins as saying there is \$38,406 in fees that haven't been billed or collected during the current fiscal year. Collins questioned why the fees were not being collected or billed accordingly, and immediately brought the issue before council. He had only been serving in the interim role for about two months before making the discovery. In speaking with former employees and others, Collins said it appeared no one was ever directed to take over those duties.

The City has been dealing with some pressing budget issues and unfunded pension liabilities, which **Ladner** was supposed to handle. That's in addition to negotiations with employee labor unions and shifting to a defined contribution pension plan for new hires. It's unclear how long **Ladner** will remain on leave, as she was expected to return in February but that has now reportedly been extended to June.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Elizabeth Lynne Ladner** is listed below.]

Oakland County Michigan Board of Commissioners
Press Release
May 30, 2017

Commissioner Phil Weipert Secures Funding for Area Road Projects
Oakland County Matching Funds Program Results in More Than \$204K in Local Road Projects (Pontiac, Michigan)

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners have unanimously passed resolutions sponsored by Commissioner Phil Weipert securing a total of \$53,673 in matching funds for local road projects located in the Village of Milford, cities of Wixom and South Lyon and Lyon Township. These funds will be matched by local governments to complete an estimated total of \$204,905 in road repair projects. The projects are being funded by the Oakland County Pilot Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) and the Tri-Party Road Improvement Program. “I am glad to have had the opportunity to work with the other Commissioners and local municipalities to bring much-needed road funding to the communities in my district,” said Commissioner Phil Weipert (R-South Lyon).

The City of South Lyon received \$12,578 to put towards an estimated \$37,733 project to install a traffic signal at Pontiac Trail and Marjorie Ann Street. This project was funded by the Tri-Party Road Improvement Program and was funded equally by Oakland County, the City and the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC). Commissioner Weipert has also secured the passage of a resolution reserving \$9,859 in county funding for the future repaving of North Hagadorn Street within the County’s LRIP.

“The City of South Lyon is excited for the opportunity to partner with Oakland County on a significant local road project,” said **Lynne Ladner**, City Manager. “As all residents and taxpayers understand there is considerable pressure placed on our elected officials and local government employees to stretch each dollar we have to return the greatest investment to our taxpayers and residents. The Local Road Improvement Program is providing South Lyon with just such an opportunity to make major improvements to an area of our local road system that would otherwise be reliant solely on a pot of money that is not eligible for other revenue sharing or grant funding opportunities.”

The Oakland County Pilot Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) provides limited financial assistance to Oakland County cities and villages for repairs and improvements on roadways under their jurisdiction. Local municipalities must match funding from Oakland County and projects should supplement, not replace, existing local road repair efforts. The Oakland County Board of Commissioners has allocated up to \$1 million annually since the program was launched in 2016. Communities are allocated a share of these funds based upon a formula consisting of road miles and population. The program supplements the long-standing Tri-Party Road Improvement Program, which provides a 1/3 share in matching funds for

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

repairs on local roadways under the control of the RCOC.

“The long-term lack of investment from the state and federal governments in local road infrastructure has taken a heavy toll on our roadways,” stated Board Chairman Michael J. Gingell. “Poor conditions on our roads create an impediment to the economic development of our region and diminish the excellent quality of life our residents expect. Oakland County is demonstrating leadership and innovation by making a \$1 million investment in immediate road repairs equal to approximately \$11 million in total road projects. These are the kind of results Oakland County residents have come to expect from Oakland County’s leadership team, from our County Executive, L. Brooks Patterson, and from the ongoing bi-partisan efforts of the members of the Board of Commissioners.”

The Board of Commissioners LRIP recently received national recognition with a 2017 National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award in the category of Community and Economic Development.

Commissioner Weipert is a Republican who represents the 8th District, which includes the Cities of South Lyon and Wixom, Lyon and Milford Townships, and the Village of Milford. He was first elected to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners in 2010. For more information, please contact Commissioner Weipert via email to weipertpj@oakgov.com. You can reach the Board of Commissioners at 248-858-0100 or visit their website at www.oakgov.com/boc.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Detroit Free Press
May 26, 2017

Small downtowns like South Lyon are bouncing back

Bill Laytner

Across Michigan and the nation, small towns are on the chopping block. Small downtowns with mom-and-pop shops must do or die, say retail experts, or they'll be swamped by a rising tide of Internet sales, along with competition from flashy malls, big box stores and superstores like Walmart. Except that one burg is defying the death knell: South Lyon, a town of about 12,000 people in southwest Oakland County. Since the Great Recession of 2008-12, South Lyon has made a comeback and then some.

Last Tuesday, Mayor John Galeas Jr. and City Manager **Lynne Ladner** didn't just cut a ribbon for one or two new stores. They scissored through a blue ribbon stretched right across their downtown's main artery, Lake Street, blocking traffic just long enough to mark what they called a grand opening for, well, the whole quaint little downtown. "We've had 17 businesses either open or expand significantly in the last year," **Ladner** said.

And South Lyon isn't alone. Selected older downtowns in many locations are bouncing back, reinventing themselves while some of the nation's most familiar retail names like Kmart, Sports Authority and Borders have either gone bankrupt or seem headed that way. "It's very nice to see the pendulum swinging our way," said Jerry Dettloff, executive director of the Michigan Downtown Association, a statewide group that promotes traditional shopping districts from Allen Park to Zeeland. "If you look at age groups, the millennials are looking for places to hang out, and the slightly older people with families want the experience of being together," Dettloff said. Since the Great Recession waned, new businesses as well as apartments and condos have popped up in numerous small downtowns — from some of Detroit's close-in suburbs to ex-urban spots reaching north and west as far as Michigan's summer colonies, he said. "But it doesn't just happen. You need somebody — a person, a group, an organization — that supports your existing businesses and recruits the right kind of new ones, the kind that will do well," Dettloff said.

Vibrant downtowns are perfect fits for technology firms

In Macomb County, "we're seeing this happening in quite a few locations," said Jon Paul Rea, Macomb County director of Planning and Economic Development. Private investment in Utica, boosted by state-issued brownfield tax credits, turned an old landfill into a \$15-million minor league ball field, unleashing a small storm of new bars, restaurants and ice cream spots. St. Clair Shores continues to leverage its nautical theme with plans to increase public access to its waterfront while incentivizing new restaurants and condominium construction tied to the business district's lakefront location, Rea said.

In Wayne County, a big success story is Grosse Pointe Park's linear downtown on Kercheval, where empty storefronts, a vacant gas station and nearly defunct church have become a bakery, chic restaurant and microbrewery, respectively. For South Lyon, it was no easy task to take on

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

the swarm of big box stores beckoning a quick freeway spin west in Brighton, and Novi's glittering 12 Oaks Mall 15 miles to the east, not to mention the siren call of Internet marketers from every computer screen and smartphone, South Lyon City Councilwoman Maggie Kurtzweil said. "I'll tell you, three years ago this downtown was a dust bowl. Our vacancy rate was high," Kurtzweil said. Reviving the shopping district fell to Bob Donohue, the city's economic development director, who also heads the merchant-driven Downtown Development Authority.

Donohue — on the job for just a year and in a new position for the city, after two decades overseeing downtown redevelopment for Oakland County — said South Lyon's downtown has grabbed onto "the three key ingredients for success — place, products and personal service." Those elements can work in any commercial district, but they especially allow an aging one to leverage its assets. That means restoring vintage buildings and creating a pedestrian-friendly setting for a special feeling of small-town "place"; encouraging a mix of unique retailers and services, with few or no chain outlets, to offer unusual products and brands that can't be found at, say, a mall or big box store; and providing training for entrepreneurs about giving "absolutely unmatched, over-the-top customer service," Donohue said.

Oh, and by the way, it doesn't hurt to have convenient parking — which in South Lyon, is free, right on the street. A big part of the evolution of downtowns is acknowledging that Americans do have many options for shopping but they can't eat out or try new cocktails on the Internet. That's led numerous downtowns of all sizes to welcome bars, restaurants and nightclubs — to excess, Donohue said. "I think some communities are beginning to see it's a mistake to overload on bars and restaurants" because doing that drives up lease rates and can make a downtown nothing but a pricey dining destination, vulnerable to economic downturns, he said. "A well-managed downtown should have a mix" of dining, bars, retailers and services, "but that said, we need one or two upscale restaurants here in South Lyon — and I'm looking," Donohue said. A boutique-sized eatery could tuck nicely into any one of South Lyon's beautifully restored, circa-1900 storefronts.

After this week's ribbon cutting, Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner craned his neck at the downtown's movie-set aura and couldn't help but cheerlead. "You certainly can't experience this feeling on Amazon," Meisner said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Tribune, The (Royal Oak, MI)
December 20, 2016

South Lyon City Council approves new five-year Master Plan

Author: Mark Cavitt

Things are looking up for South Lyon heading into 2017 and beyond. The South Lyon City Council has approved a new five-year Master Plan that outlines both the vision and goals for the city in terms of development, both commercial and residential, land-use, transportation and access.

City Manager **Lynne Ladner** said she's excited about the progress the city is making and expects a lot of growth in 2017. 'I am very happy with the Master Plan,' said **Ladner**. 'We have several new businesses that are currently in the process of renovating or bidding on renovations for space in the downtown area. Our economic development director is also working closely with potential investors/owners regarding new restaurants in the downtown area. This has been a very positive move forward for the City.'

Leading up to the council's adoption of the plan has been a multi-year process of updating and reviewing. 'Most notably in the updates to the new Master Plan are the creation of several new tools to use for the development/redevelopment of the downtown and commercial areas,' said **Ladner**. The Master Plan was created by the city's Planning Commission to guide the further growth and development of the city.

Highlights of Master Plan

Land Use and Policy

- maintain and improve existing community assets
- preserve and enhance open space and natural features

Transportation and Access

- promote safe travel through the city

Neighborhoods

- provide housing to match the varied need and income levels of the present and future populations

Commercial Areas

- improve the existing commercial development
- streetscape improvements that encourage private reinvestment

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

- promote renovation and redevelopment through design guidelines, ordinance requirements and facade improvements

Downtown

- endorse proper mix of uses to create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment

- encourage increased activity

- identify alternative routes for truck traffic

Downtown development and redevelopment plans, included in the Master Plan, features the redevelopment of three parcels north of Lake Street that 'could complete the rhythm of the existing downtown historic buildings.'

A town square, outdoor restaurant seating, and storefronts that match the rest of the downtown core are proposed if the post office vacates its current location at 111 S. Lafayette Street.

The five-year plan also lays out a yearly action plan checklist that extends into the year 2030.

by 2018, acquire and redevelop property at the corner of Lafayette and 10 Mile, work with developers and property owners to redevelop downtown buildings into multi-story, mixed use developments, identify key parcels in downtown to redevelop

by 2023, relocate post office from prime street frontage in downtown, create new entryway into MacHattie Park, complete downtown streetscape improvements along Lafayette Street

by 2030, create smaller park areas in downtown, redevelop sites in downtown so parking lots are no longer fronting Lafayette Street

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Hometown Life
June 14, 2016

Ladner withdraws from Kansas admin job search
Sue Buck

A few days after attending a meet and greet in Valley Center, Kan., where she was one of three finalists for city administrator, South Lyon City Manager **Lynne Ladner** said that she is no longer interested in the position. **Ladner**, who plans to take the next two weeks off to tend to a medical condition after she was hospitalized in Kansas. She arrived back home in Michigan at about 6 p.m. Monday. Prior to her decision to withdraw, **Ladner** was in the running for the position with Mark Kutney, former town manager from Loxahatchee Groves, Fla., and Scott Hildebrand, a professional standards manager in Rochester, Minn.. “I am withdrawing from the process,” **Ladner** said Tuesday morning. “It was a community that I thought that I was interested in.” **Ladner** said that she accepted the finalist position because she was already going to be in Kansas taking care of her father following major surgery. “I agreed to go ahead and interview,” she said. “I have since decided that I am not interested in the position and I am not leaving South Lyon.”

Valley Center Mayor Laurie Dove said in an email Tuesday that she received word **Ladner** declined to be considered further. She ran into personal medical issues while she was in Kansas which extended her trip. **Ladner** said that she was released from the hospital in Wichita late Sunday evening and caught a plane home Monday. She said she planned to notify the recruiter and the South Lyon mayor Tuesday afternoon that she wasn’t interested in the Kansas position. **Ladner** explained why she decided to apply: “I find in my position, it is always good to keep up with your interviewing skills and learn what other communities are doing, beyond what you learn in training,” **Ladner** said. “It’s a great way to find out what other communities are doing. It’s a great way to improve my skills in working with the governing body.” **Ladner** said she is happy with South Lyon and her son is thrilled with South Lyon. “We don’t have any intentions of leaving here,” she said.

A friend of hers suggested that she apply for the Valley Center job because of its similarities with South Lyon. “I thought it would be an interesting community to look into.” Her intention to go to Kansas was mainly to be there for her father’s surgery, she continued, but when they offered her an interview, she decided to accept. She thought that while he was under sedation she could be there for her dad and also go through the interview. She let the South Lyon City council know that she would be gone for her father’s surgery about 10 days in advance. “I was notified that I was a finalist less than a week before the interview process,” **Ladner** said. **Ladner** said she is excited to stay in south Lyon and looks forward to working with newly hired Economic Development Director/DDA Director Bob Donohue. “The council has a great strategic vision,” **Ladner** said. “We have a great council with great ideas. I’m looking to move council’s ideas forward. I’m not looking to go anywhere at this point.” **Ladner** has worked as South Lyon city manager for about two years.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

South Lyon
June 7, 2016

City manager seeks new ideas at national conference

Author: Sue Buck

South Lyon City Council gave City Manager **Lynne Ladner** its blessing to attend the International City/County Manager's Conference Sept. 25-28 in Kansas City, Mo. Costs for the national conference fall within approved budget numbers earmarked for the administrator's professional development. "The cost of the conference is in the 2016-2017 training budget," **Ladner** said. The council is looking to broaden its focus in tackling a variety of local issues, like economic development, a strategic plan and developing a strong downtown.

Ladner was asked what is the advantage of attending a national conference over a Michigan-based conference. She responded that she is interested in technology, community engagement, strategic planning and other things which aren't offered at the Michigan level. "This is a much broader training," **Ladner** said.

Councilwoman Maggie Kurtzweil voiced her support for **Ladner**'s attendance. "I think that we are moving the city forward," Kurtzweil said. "We are looking at issues which are a little more regional." She added that it was a way to look at the models for problem solving used throughout the country. "My personal opinion is as long as it is under \$5,000, I really don't care if you go once a year," Kurtzweil said. She pointed out a session on strategic planning, "We are changing our culture in some aspects." Kurtzweil said. "You are only going to get those innovative ideas from people in Oregon, Washington, etc. This provides you with greater depth." Other council members are looking for different ways to "do more with less." Councilman Joe Rzyzi was also interested in learning about more ways to prevent "blight." In South Lyon, it can mean having a less than attractive or cared for storefront appearance downtown, he said.

Once **Ladner** returns, the council wants feedback on what she learned. "If you are going to go, you definitely have my vote," Councilwoman Mary Dedakis said. She, like others, is looking for a short report from **Ladner** about what takes place. Kurtzweil said it is important to keep South Lyon's issues "on the radar" as it looks for solutions. "My expectation level is extremely high," she said.

The conference falls within the \$5,000 limit the city allows **Ladner** for professional development. And just as the city tries to conserve its resources, **Ladner** said that she will try to find a roommate to share the cost of lodging, another way to keep costs down. The final cost for attendance is yet to be determined, which is why **Ladner** made the request to council months in advance.

Registration for the conference began June 2. This includes the discounted early bird conference rate, the ability to purchase flights far enough in advance to significantly decrease the cost as well as to register for conference hotels as soon as they become available with the ability to seek

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

out a cost share in the hotel by sharing the room, **Ladner** said. “The estimated flight costs for me to book round trip when I have looked recently are approximately \$275, including fees.” **Ladner** said. “The hotel is approximately \$650 with all taxes and fees if not split with another attendee, and the conference registration will be approximately \$655, a savings of \$125 from the regular registration rate.” There may be some incidental expenses such as transportation from the airport to the conference and back to the airport and a few meals although most are included with the conference so **Ladner** estimates the entire business trip will run a little less than \$1,600.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.hometownlife.com/story/news/local/south-lyon/2016/03/29/south-lyon-city-manager-city-attorney-cleared-wrongdoing/82371354/>
March 29, 2016

Ladner, Wilhelm cleared on alleged offenses

Author: Diane Gale Andreassi

Oakland County Sheriff's Office investigators found no fraud during an investigation requested by South Lyon City Councilwoman Maggie Kurtzweil regarding possible perjury by the city manager and city attorney. Kurtzweil filed the complaint earlier this year alleging that city officials failed to report a possible perjury of City Manager **Lynne Ladner** and City Attorney Tim Wilhelm during a tax exempt case before the Board of Review.

"The case is closed," Oakland County Undersheriff Mike McCabe said last week. "Two detective sergeants interviewed numerous people. The Oakland County Prosecutor's Office reviewed it and they determined no crime was committed and no criminal warrants would be issued. It was a criminal investigation, but it turns out no crime was committed."

Kurtzweil said she was prompted to file the complaint after the city council received a confidential letter from Wilhelm that pointed to possible perjury of an applicant appearing before the city's Board of Review, a body that hears appeals of tax assessments on properties in the city, including poverty exemptions. Kurtzweil said her responsibilities as an attorney and an elected official required her to report any alleged criminal activity and she was compelled to divulge the possibility of suspected perjury. "Although no criminal activity was uncovered beyond a reasonable doubt, the investigation yielded reform of the Board of Review," Kurtzweil said on the investigation results.

The city recently adopted a new form for tax-exempt applicants "that eliminates all the prior problems such as incompleteness and ambiguity," board of review members are now getting training and city council has committed to begin appointing board of review members on a three year term staggered basis. "I am extremely proud to be part of the process that resulted in long due reform of board of review," Kurtzweil said. "The taxpayers are the winner."

Councilman Mike Kramer recently asked **Ladner** and Wilhelm at a council meeting to submit attorney costs regarding the investigation. "I want to know how much it cost these individuals when the Oakland County Sheriff found nothing wrong with their actions," Kramer said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.oakgov.com/boc/PublishingImages/Pages/2013-BOC-News/022316%20South%20Lyon%20Takes%20More%20Steps%20to%20Help%20Improve%20February%2023%202016>

South Lyon takes more steps to help improve downtown

Author: Diane Gale Andreassi

South Lyon City Council took a couple more steps in its effort to improve downtown Monday by embracing a Main Street Oakland County program and creating an economic development director position. Council members embraced a presentation by Bret Rasegan who outlined Main Street Oakland County, a program that uses county resources to help bring businesses and people to communities. Oakland County Commissioner Phil Weipert invited the Oakland County planning supervisor of economic development and community affairs to the council meeting to explain how the Main Street program works.

It allows communities to tap into county resources by joining one of three levels: affiliate, executive and select levels. The higher the level of commitment, the more services the county provides. The support includes offering information about a national Main Street program, special project help, promotional opportunities and networking services.

The free program lets communities get involved in increments, and tracks and supports progress, Rasegan said. “The approach is management based on organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring.” Now is a good time to make the commitment to Main Street Oakland County, because “the economy is coming back and property values are coming back,” Weipert said. “We have lots of growth after seven years of down time. There’s a whole bunch of dynamics coming together.” For instance, council recently passed a dangerous building ordinance targeting buildings that pose a public threat, like having dangerous electrical wiring or past structure modifications that don’t meet city codes.

Human resource

In another move toward revitalizing the city, council members unanimously approved creating a full-time economic development director during Monday meeting. The pay scale hasn’t been determined and will depend on the chosen candidate’s qualifications, however the pay range suggested by City Manager **Lynne Ladner** runs \$50,000-\$69,564. Advertisements for the job are expected to begin this week. “The city is making significant strides for redevelopment of downtown, as well as the industrial and commercial districts throughout the community,” **Ladner** said. “I think we’re moving forward.”

Hiring an economic development director dove tails with the select level of the Main Street program, which requires a full-time person working in that capacity. **Ladner** said the city could begin the Main Street program at the affiliate level and once the new person is hired, the city might consider going to a higher commitment. “There’s a whole bunch of dynamics coming together,” Weipert said. “People will invest if they see there’s a vision and a sense of, ‘Hey, I want to be part of this.’” Councilwoman Maggie Kurtzweil said that South Lyon residents and

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

businesses are paying county taxes and “you would be crazy not to take advantage of the” Main Street Oakland County program. “It would be nice to get back some of those tax dollars to Oakland County.” “The council is excited about downtown, and they’re moving forward,” Weipert said. “You can’t just say ‘I want the best downtown ever.’ You have to do things in little steps.” The Main Street program is “one of many good ideas, and is another tool in the tool box,” he added.

The city is in the process of applying to join the Main Street Oakland County program.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.hometownlife.com/story/news/local/south-lyon/2016/01/26/councilwoman-files-police-complaint-city-attorney-city-manager/79368968/>
January 26, 2016

County investigates alleged Board of Review perjury

Author: Diane Gale Andreassi

South Lyon city council erupted in arguments Monday evening after councilwoman Maggie Kurtzweil announced she filed a complaint with the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, alleging city officials failed to report a possible perjury during a tax exempt case before the Board of Review. The complaint included allegations of obstruction of justice and a cover-up involving City Manager **Lynne Ladner** and City Attorney Tim Wilhelm.

With the complaint involving the city manager and city attorney, South Lyon Police Chief Lloyd Collins said he decided it was "most appropriate for an independent law enforcement agency to investigate the complaint. "In order to avoid any appearance of bias or favoritism on the part of the South Lyon Police Department, it was agreed that the investigation would be conducted by the Special Investigations Unit of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office," Collins said.

'Hands tied'

Kurtzweil said she was prompted to file the complaint after the city council received a letter from Wilhelm earlier this year about an attorney-client privileged letter that pointed to possible perjury of an applicant appearing before the city's Board of Review, a body that hears appeals of tax assessments on properties in the city, including poverty exemptions.

Wilhelm, **Ladner** and City Clerk Lisa Deaton will give statements to the sheriff's investigators about their knowledge of the case, Wilhem said after the meeting. He declined further comment.

Kurtzweil said her responsibilities as an attorney and an elected official forced her to report any alleged criminal activity and she was compelled to divulge the possibility of suspected perjury.

"This created problems because the city attorney was divulging the possibility of suspected criminal activity," Kurtzweil said.

The identity of the person alleged to have given false income statements during a board of review hearing for the tax exemption is not being released, because the investigation is underway. Kurtzweil raised ire among council members when she said every attorney on council had the same responsibility to report the activity.

Council divided

Councilman Mike Kramer, an attorney, said he was embarrassed and ashamed to be on council this point, because Kurtzweil filed the criminal complaint without consulting the other city council members first. "She's all about transparency then there should have been discussion with council first rather than taking unilateral action and filing a criminal complaint as an individual," Kramer said. "She's not an attorney representing the city. "These are serious allegations," said Kramer. "This takes us back to the Stone Age. So much for (council) moving forward."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Councilman Joe Rzyzi supported Kurtzweil’s action, adding that “today is the day I’m most proud of” council. “We now have a transparent council who is willing to stand up and speak up about what’s right,” Rzyzi said. “I call on my fellow council members to be transparent going forward for the sake of doing what’s right.”

Councilman Glenn Kivell addressed the divisiveness among council members. “It would be nice if everyone finds some common ground,” Kivell said. “The environment is so toxic right now it is hard to imagine us being particularly productive. We’re right at the brink of accomplishing things long in coming, and people are focusing on their positives of what they bring to the party and they blame others.”

Mayor John Galeas said he was surprised Kurtzweil raised the issue up in a council meeting, adding that he didn’t believe the issue was handled properly. “It’s all about the facts and not about opinions and I think the process will work itself out now,” he said. “Unfortunately, it is being handled like this, because I don’t agree with the process.”

Kurtzweil said that given her “grave concerns” regarding the possible perjury that she contacted a criminal defense attorney, Carl Christoph of Farmington Hills, to determine if she had a responsibility to report the possibility of a known perjury. She said she was advised against attending closed sessions about the case. Wilhelm asked to go into closed session, citing attorney-client privileges to talk about the case, during council’s Jan. 11 meeting. Kurtzweil argued at the time that the discussion had to be conducted in open session. The closed session request was denied. “If the city attorney had divulged additional details, including the documents themselves, in the closed meeting I could have been charged with as an accessory after the fact,” Kurtzweil said.

Chain of action

Kurtzweil said at the meeting that she didn’t “have a stake in the outcome. I don’t care how this matter gets resolved. What I care about is that suspected criminal activity should have immediately gone to the chief of police and it did not. “The investigation will go to where the facts and evidence lead it,” she continued. “Oakland County will assess who may or may not have culpability in this matter, but you can’t paper over suspected criminal activity with attorney-client privilege in closed meetings. You have to let law enforcement in on the issues. I needed to get out of the daisy chain of knowledge and move this into the appropriate forum for investigation.” Kurtzweil said the case points to a possible need for more training for future Board of Review candidates.

Christoph said it isn’t up to Kurtzweil “to decide if there was wrongdoing.” “She had an obligation as an attorney and as an elected member of city council to report any improprieties or the appearances of improprieties,” he said. “There’s certainly enough there to say something isn’t right. It would have been dangerous to bring this to a closed-door meeting. That’s a cover up. We need open government.” Councilwoman Mary Dedakis applauded Kurtzweil for taking a “gutsy” action in filing the complaint.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.hometownlife.com/story/news/local/south-lyon/2015/04/17/south-lyon-city-manager-lynne-ladner-employee-firing/25955383/>
April 17, 2015

Manager retracts claim councilman involved in firing

Author: Diane Gale Andreassi

South Lyon Councilman Joe Ryzyi said he hopes a lesson was learned following an apparently clumsy firing at city hall. City Manager **Lynne Ladner** wrote a letter to a former employee this week stating she "mistakenly" referred to Ryzyi as having problems with her performance during the termination interview. "He did not complain or provide any information regarding your performance," **Ladner** wrote, also stating "Nothing in this letter changes or alters the reasons for your termination from employment with the City of South Lyon."

That letter came following a heated discussion at Monday's city council meeting, Ryzyi demanded a retraction from the city manager for the original remarks made late last month. Ryzyi said he was appalled to learn that **Ladner** told the employee that Ryzyi expressed concerns about the employee's job performance. The problem is two-fold, he said. An elected official was wrongly implicated in an employee's job performance, and the dismissed employee was given inaccurate reasons for being terminated. "That lends itself to a lawsuit by having false reasons for termination," he said.

Bizarre exchange

When discussed Monday night, there was no clear direction in the council discussion. Several on the council made mention of **Ladner** admitting to a mistake, but the action was barely addressed at the meeting. Councilman Glenn Kivell said the issue raises "concerns" about the way employees are being fired. Councilman Mike Kramer turned the issue back toward Ryzyi, asking "are you trying to get another city manager fired?" He was referencing the firing of **Ladner's** predecessor, David Murphy who was booted out of office last fall by a split council vote. Ryzyi was among those favoring the dismissal. Kramer opposed it.

Ladner referred to her own employment contract saying she should have had a council performance review in February. Kivell seemed dumbfounded by this response and noted that council couldn't conduct the job review at that time, because she was on sick leave. "It's troubling that you would even go there," Kivell said to **Ladner** in response. "This is getting weirder as time goes on." Kramer repeatedly asked Ryzyi what he wanted council to do? "Do you want us to fire or suspend her?" "This isn't about firing anyone," Ryzyi said. No action was taken by council regarding Ryzyi's comments.

Human resources

Ryzyi said he was satisfied with **Ladner's** follow up letter, but he never wants to see a similar situation occur with city staff. "This really isn't about me. It's about employees and our firing practices and reasons for termination," he said. "I want to make sure proper procedures are followed and no other employees will have false accusations attributed to them. There are other

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

people fearing for their jobs and I'm fearing for them. Who's next?" Prior to Monday's meeting, Rzyzi sent the city manager a letter questioning her motives and abilities. Rzyzi said references to him regarding the employee "are not only false but indicate that maybe you were looking for reasons (that you did not have) to railroad (the employee) out of her job." He went on to say, "Your lack of professionalism on this matter is not complementary to you or the city and your handling of this matter reveals a serious lack of experience and knowledge in employment matters. I am hopeful that your performance improves and that you adopt an honest and ethical approach to documenting employees' files."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.hometownlife.com/story/news/local/south-lyon/2014/08/06/financial-impact-of-south-lyon-city-manager-firing-tallied-at-168k/13615407/>

Hometown Life
August 6, 2014

Financial impact of South Lyon city manager firing tallied at \$168K

Diane Gale Andreassi

It cost South Lyon \$168,224.81 to fire former South Lyon City Manager David Murphy and hire his replacement, **Lynne Ladner**. The numbers were tallied after Councilman Harvey Wedell requested the cost breakdown from **Ladner**, who presented the findings last week. Wedell made the inquiry after he noticed the last budget, which ended July 1 was short \$93,000. The bulk of that cost includes firing and hiring a new manager, as well as overtime costs and worker compensation claims in the Department of Public Works. The \$93,000 will be covered by the city's savings account, said **Ladner** who began work in June

Murphy was voted out of his job by Mayor Tedd Wallace and council members Erin Kopkowski, Joe Rzyzi and Bev Dixson in late October. Council members Mike Kramer, Glenn Kivell and Wedell voted against the firing. "They were decisions made prior to me coming on board," **Ladner** said of the budget overrun.

Pretty package

The payments, in accordance with Murphy's employment package, included six months severance pay at \$45,197, \$3,129 for regular pay and \$23,000 for vacation and holiday time. Murphy was paid \$90,395 annually. Murphy also received a \$2,100 six-month car allowance; \$13,872 for his retirement fund; \$8,000 for insurance benefits; dental care costs at \$791; standard insurance of \$547 and \$45 for vision insurance, as well as \$1,314 for prescription and other medical costs. The city also hired former city supervisor Rod Cook to fill in while council searched for Murphy's replacement. Cook was paid \$80 an hour and received \$50,260. His mileage reimbursement was \$582.

The city paid **Ladner** \$750 for mileage to the interview and \$3,500 for relocation fees from her home in Kansas. The cost to use the Michigan Municipal League, which conducted the nationwide search for a new manager, was \$10,772. Other miscellaneous costs to hire **Ladner** were about \$4,000.

Still fuming

"It's \$168,000 that we wouldn't have had to spend had David not been terminated," Wedell said. "And the four folks involved in terminating him still haven't told us the reason why." Residents and business people packed the council chambers the night council fired Murphy with those speaking at the meeting opposed to his termination. During that October meeting, the three council members opposing the dismissal repeatedly asked for reasons for Murphy's firing. At the time, none were offered. The Michigan Municipal League has said the average tenure for a

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

manager is about five years. Murphy served five years. Murphy's contract was set up to continue employment indefinitely without council intervention.

Last week, Wallace said, **Ladner's** experience in grant acquisitions are promising and would offset costs incurred in Murphy's firing. "We will gain more out of grants and so forth that weren't even attempted for before," Wallace said.

Said Kramer: "It was an awful lot of money to fire someone without any justification." "It is what it is," said Kivell. "We had an agreement with Murphy in the event that he was shown the door and it would cost us such and such and we would have to pay for a new manager to come in." Rzyzi, Dixson and Kopkowski didn't return calls for comment.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Tribune, The (Royal Oak, MI)
June 19, 2014

New city manager on the job in South Lyon

Author: Carol Hopkins

Lynne Ladner steers the operations as the new city manager at South Lyon City Hall. She comes to the city as the former city administrator for Hiawatha, Kan. where for seven years where she oversaw day-to-day operations, researched and administered grant applications, managed human resources, and managed budget operations. South Lyon, 3.5 square miles in size in southwest Oakland County, is home to approximately 11,500 people.

A Syracuse, Kansas native, she lived in Kansas until she married in 1993 and moved with her husband to the Rockford, Michigan area. **Ladner** spent a dozen years living in Michigan before returning to Hiawatha. She received her B.S. in political science from Grand Valley State University and a master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University.

Ladner served as a management intern for the City of Belding and Ottawa County, and previously worked for Steelcase in the Grand Rapids area. 'I have obtained credentialed manager designation am a member of the 2014 class of Leadership ICMA through the International City/County Managers Association,' she said.

Her goals, she said, include working with the city council 'to develop a long-term funding strategy for the city's streets, work with local business owners to continue to grow and develop our downtown and other commercial districts to ensure the stability of the community. 'I am looking forward to becoming an active member of the community and already enjoy living in South Lyon very much,' said **Ladner**.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

St. Joseph News-Press (MO)
July 29, 2013

Hiawatha loses city administrator

Author: Craig Miller

Following a closed-door executive session Monday night at City Hall, the Hiawatha City Commission voted to terminate the contract of city administrator **Lynne Ladner**. When the votes were rendered, Bill Collins, Toni Hull, Steffen Shamburg and Irv Schwalm voted in favor of the termination. Mayor Crosby Gernon was absent for the meeting.

According to Steffenn Shamburg, Commissioner of Police, **Ladner**'s termination was a personnel issue.

Following the meeting, **Ladner** issued a press release stating, "I have enjoyed my time and experiences in Hiawatha, I find that it is a friendly and progressive city and it has been an honor and joy to serve the residents and governing body of this community. "As a public servant, I know first and foremost that I serve at the pleasure of the governing body and sometimes that they feel it is necessary to move in a new direction. "I love this community and look forward to continuing to be a part of it." City commissioners offered no further information at this time for the termination.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://krwa.net/portals/krwa/lifeline/1303/94.pdf>
March 2013

Hiawatha Gets Good Rates

Author: Carl Brown

Hiawatha is a lovely town in the northeast corner of Kansas. Hiawatha had a big user rate problem brewing. But they solved it, laying down a clear path that you can follow, too. When it comes to preparing to adjust user rates, Hiawatha is fast, real fast. as a result, Hiawatha is on target to get its user charge system approved by UsDa Rural Development (RD) for a sewer system upgrade the agency will fund. The city can then finalize its bid documents and stay on track to start construction in the spring of 2013.

Now, the back story

In recent years Hiawatha's wastewater collection and treatment system has slipped out of compliance from time to time. following a string of events, procedures and communications with the Kansas Department of health and environment (KDhe) determined that Hiawatha must upgrade the system. Hiawatha went through the process of acquiring grants and loans to pay for this project. One of the final steps in that process was to prove to RD that Hiawatha's sewer rates will be adequate to repay their loan. Rate analysis does this nicely.

Over on the water side, in recent years Hiawatha has been troubled by nitrates showing up above limits in its wells. The city has tried several measures to solve this problem, including taking some wells off line and blending. it looks like the final solution will be expensive. Rate analysis quantifies revenue and rate needs for different alternatives nicely, too.

The city responds

The city council had assumed city administrator **Lynne Ladner** would handle the task of calculating new water and sewer rates. Ms. **Ladner** is quite capable in many disciplines. That includes deciding when it makes better sense to get outside help to handle a complex situation with serious pitfalls to negotiate. analysis also needed to be finished within one month, a tall order. Ms. **Ladner** contacted the Kansas Rural Water association, a smart move. They determined that the best course would be to get rate analyses done by a specialist. as a member of the association, Hiawatha qualified for the 25 percent fee discount through the Kansas RaTes Program, a nice perk of membership.

The analysis work started on December 3, 2012 and concluded on December 19. This fast turn-around was due to the excellent work of Ms. **Ladner** and her staff. The analyses determined the following:

- sewer rates need to be increased markedly but they only need slight restructuring.
- The city has been subsidizing the sewer system by making most of its debt payments. The recommended rates will enable the system to make its own payments, saving city funds for other uses.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

■ Water rates overall do not need to increase. however, rates need serious restructuring to make them fair. The rate analyses spell out and quantify all of the changes that are needed right now. and they project what will be needed over the next five to ten years, too. The analyses will serve as financial maps that Hiawatha can use to set a course into the future.

The Kansas Rural Water association was instrumental in this upbeat outlook for Hiawatha. Among the many things it does, the association provides basic in-house rate setting assistance, and at no charge. in situations where specialized rate analysis is needed, like this one, they roll out the Kansas RaTes Program. All rate setting problems are solvable. it just takes the right tools. The association has the right tools. Perhaps your city or district should contact the association about your rate setting needs, too.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.mscnews.net/news/?nk=19293>
December 4, 2012

Hiawatha Water & Sewer Rate Studies Approved

Author: Greg Bebermeyer

(KNZA)-The Hiawatha City Commission has accepted a proposal from a consulting firm to conduct a water and sewer rate analyses.



The commission Monday evening approved a proposal

from Carl Brown Consulting LLC of Jefferson City, Missouri to conduct the studies at a cost of \$9,362.

The studies will determine the level of funding needed to adequately cover current operation of the utilities, build and maintain reserves, fund capital improvements and related debt service.

City Administrator **Lynne Ladner** says she thinks its a good proposal.

Ladner says a loan the city has received from USDA Rural Development for improvement of the city's sanitary sewer system requires that the city raise sewer rates. **Ladner** says the last water rate study was conducted in 2007.

Ladner says the studies could be completed by the end of the year.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Msc news
August 17, 2012

Ladner won't accept Colby position
By Brian Hagen

Following the release of our story yesterday, regarding Hiawatha City Administrator **Lynne Ladner** seeking the City Manager's position in Colby, Kansas, she decides to address the issue. Telling us in an email Thursday morning that she had no comment, **Ladner** has reversed her decision, now stating, in an email to this radio station, that she will not accept the job, if offered.

In the running for the vacant Colby City Manager's position, **Ladner** was interviewed by that city's governing body early last month. She had made the Hiawatha City Commission aware of her job search, with Mayor Crosby Gernon telling us yesterday that Colby is a larger community, and **Ladner** informed the commission that she was applying for the job. Gernon added that it certainly is her right to apply for a higher paying job if she chooses. He said many of the recent positive developments in Hiawatha have come from **Ladner's** efforts including the new hotel, the walking trail, and the new daycare center.

The Hiawatha City Commission recently voted to amend **Ladner's** contract with the city, increasing her base salary by more than 15-hundred to \$70,000. **Ladner** has served as Hiawatha City Administrator for six years.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Hutchinson News, The (KS)
July 5, 2009

For biofuels, immigration pays - Program giving visas for investment funnels money to Kansas ethanol plants.

Author: John Green

A little known U.S. immigration program has helped quietly infuse millions of Asian dollars into development of the ethanol industry in western Kansas over the past five years. The industry's recent struggles, however, coupled with the economic crisis, has dozens of those investors now facing both the potential loss of their substantial investments and the reason they invested in the first place - a chance to become permanent U.S. residents.

An attorney for the California law firm directing the investments into southwest Kansas says several proposed plants - including ones in Ulysses, Dodge City and now Hiawatha - will be built. But the clock for investors is ticking.

That became clear late last year when the law firm forced foreclosure of the delayed Dodge City plant in an effort to recover its money or to take over the development. And though the federal government approved the development of biofuels in Kansas as a specific allowable program, an official with a company that conducts "due diligence" for investors warns it's particularly risky.

The program

Under the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, some 10,000 immigrant visas a year are available to people seeking permanent U.S. resident status or "green cards" on the basis of helping create new U.S. jobs through investment. In 2002, the program also called EB-5 was restructured to encourage more participation. Now, 3,000 of the annual visas require only a \$500,000 investment, rather than the previous minimum of \$1 million; they count indirect jobs created in the region; and they don't require the investor be engaged in the business. A crucial stipulation, however, is that a minimum 10 jobs - whether direct or indirect - must be created for each \$500,000 invested within two years.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service has designated a number of "regional centers" that qualify for such investments. The centers, now numbering 40, have purposes as diverse as building schools to supporting cruise lines. They range from wineries and shopping centers in California to spa developments in Arkansas and performing arts in Florida.

The Los Angeles law firm of Lee & Kent was approved in 2007 for two regional investment centers: the Kansas Bio-Fuel Regional Center, covering 21 counties in southwest Kansas, and Southwest Biofuels Regional Center, encompassing 40 counties in Texas and nine in Oklahoma. Both target construction of fuel-grade ethanol plants.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

A good start

For two Kansas ethanol projects that have been successful - the Bonanza Bioenergy ethanol plant in Garden City, which began operating in September 2007, and the Arkalon Energy plant near Liberal, which came on line in January 2008 - nine EB-5 investors contributed \$4.5 million, said law firm partner Thomas Kent. Conestoga Energy Partners built and manages both. Justin Lee, the other partner of Lee & Kent, is a Conestoga board member.

Both projects, Kent said, predated creation and approval of the regional center program. The firm first began working with Kansas developers in 2005. "Originally, it was one company, but it ultimately had to be split into two plants because of the small producer tax credit," Kent said. "To preserve the credit, the plant had to be under 60-million-gallon production. Investors shared the same number of units per plant."

After its early success, the firm continued to invest in other projects and began to develop its own through a separate "alternative energy" company the partners created. All those, however, now appear to be stalled. "There are EB-5 investors in multiple projects in southwest Kansas," Kent said. "All are in different stages of development. The recession has impacted credit markets and made it very difficult for projects to get funding. As the credit markets open or alternative sources of capital are found, those projects will be completed. "From an equity standpoint, those projects are ready to be completed," he said. "From the debt side, the credit markets aren't there... Even if we have the equity, we can't get loans unless we use other sources, private sources of money."

In the works?

After getting regional center approval, the partners formed Nexsun Corp. Lee is chairman, and Kent is vice president and general counsel. Nexsun Corp., in turn, formed Nexsun Energy, which created the subsidiary Nexsun Ethanol, a limited liability company registered in Kansas. Nexsun Ethanol announced in early 2007 it was developing separate ethanol and biodiesel plants on neighboring parcels 2 miles west of Ulysses in Grant County. The size of the ethanol plant has ranged in various reports from 40 million to 48 million gallons per year. Officials targeted the biodiesel plant for production of 30 million gallons per year. Lee stated in May 2008 that the ethanol plant should create 54 direct permanent jobs and up to 942 indirect jobs, and generate an estimated \$180 million in annual revenues. Ground was broken for the \$100 million project in September 2007. Since then, contractors have installed temporary underground utilities, a fire suppression system with at least 20 fire hydrants and a rail line, and a substantial amount of grading and site work are done. So far, Kent said, more than \$7 million has been spent on the site. Because of the credit crunch, however, work has been halted for months.

In March of this year, Nexsun officials gave Grant County a \$50,000 check to purchase the land for the plant. Ulysses City Administrator Daron cq Hall said Nexsun indicated at that time it was putting the ethanol plant on hold, but it would complete a smaller biodiesel plant by the end of the year, capable of producing 3 to 5 million gallons annually. "They've set up a side business on Main Street, which they said will do several things," Hall said. "They have an herbal supply company that will fill orders on site." It was unclear how many will be employed there. In April,

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Industrial Info Resources of Sugar Land, Texas, also reported on its Web site that Nexsun had put the ethanol plant on hold. Kent, however, said Wednesday that plans are to go forward with construction on the ethanol and biodiesel plants this year. "The business plan includes both," he said. "They are being built by different companies. One has nothing to do with the other except that they'll be situated next to each other. Both are proceeding, but they've been temporarily delayed because we had to make arrangements for alternate sources of financing. We're still working on it. Our hope is to have the biodiesel project up and running before the end of the year. The only thing we need to do (on the ethanol plant) is start pouring concrete and to finish the plant."

Meanwhile...

Nexsun Corp. announced June 4 that it wants to build a 3-million- to 5-million-gallon biodiesel plant in Hiawatha, in the far northeast corner of Kansas and outside the Kansas Bio-Fuel Regional Center area. The city is providing six acres for the project, said City Administrator **Lynne Ladner**, with an option for more land. It also extended tax abatements to the company based on the number of people it eventually employs. The city's agreement requires construction to start within 12 months.

Local officials were advised the plant would employ at least eight people at a beginning wage of \$10 per hour, and that local contractors would be used to build the plant. "Nexsun is the developer of that project and there is EB-5 money involved in it," Kent confirmed last week.

Dodge City plan

EB-5 investments were also tied up in the proposed Boot Hill Biofuels plant in Dodge City, being developed by Dodge City resident Gary Harshberger. Conestoga Energy Partners is identified as the development's management company and its office in Liberal was listed as Boot Hill's mailing address. With the right to appoint two board members, Conestoga had a majority vote on the board. For its investment in the Dodge project under its regional center designation, the California firm created Biofuel Venture I LLC, or BVI.

Last December, BVI filed suit against Boot Hill and Harshberger for failing to progress on the plant, forcing the company into bankruptcy court. According to documents filed in the suit, Nexsun Energy, through BVI, raised \$2.5 million for the Boot Hill project, of which it lent Boot Hill \$750,000. When Boot Hill failed to progress on the plant, Kent, on behalf of BVI, sent a demand letter in June 2008 seeking its money back to invest in another project.

By August 2008, Nexsun officials, aware of a November 2008 deadline under EB-5 to create at least 10 jobs, approached the Boot Hill board about BVI taking ownership of the Boot Hill name and its federal tax ID number. Records show Harshberger registered Boot Hill Biofuels No. 2 in September, with Marc Kliewer, the registered agent for Nexsun Ethanol, as its registered agent also.

On Nov. 13, according to bankruptcy case records and filings with the Kansas Secretary of State's office, Kent formed a company called BH Reddwerks LLC, with a resident agent listed in

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Ulysses. Ten jobs at Boot Hill 2 were then created and the employees leased to BH Reddwerks "to provide employment services," according to court documents. BVI then loaned \$1.25 million to BH Reddwerks. The Boot Hill board, however, balked at a proposed settlement plan that would give BVI majority ownership of the proposed plant. That resulted in BVI seeking the bankruptcy filing Dec. 1. The suit was filed as Chapter 7 liquidation, but Boot Hill officials were able to convert it to Chapter 11 reorganization.

Under a settlement agreement that was approved by U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Robert Nugent on April 30, BVI did obtain sole ownership of the Boot Hill name, tax number and its limited equity, and Boot Hill's share in BH Reddwerks, in exchange for paying \$110,000 in legal fees. Boot Hill 2 was dissolved, but Boot Hill and BH Reddwerks remain registered Kansas companies.

Still in the plans

The majority of investors in the original Boot Hill, meanwhile - called "Slot Note Holders" because their investments were used to "slot" construction of the Dodge ethanol plant on contractor ICM's construction schedule - had their more than \$4 million in investments and debt shifted to a new company called Prairie Land Renewable Resources LLC, said attorney David Jones of Amarillo, Texas.

Under the agreement, the 11 slot note holders received pro-rated shares of 75 percent of membership interests and 100 percent of voting rights of the new company. Equity shareholders in Boot Hill received the remaining 25 percent membership interest, but no voting rights. BVI remains a slot note holder for its \$750,000 investment. Attempts by The News last week to reach Harshberger and officials with Conestoga Energy were unsuccessful and their attorney referred questions back to them.

Though the Southwest Biofuels Regional Center was formed in June 2007, only one proposed ethanol plant has been announced within that region. Borger BioFuels LLP, a proposed 100-million-gallon plant in Dalhart, Texas, was scheduled for a December 2006 groundbreaking. An air permit was issued for the plant last November, state records show, but other details on its progress were unavailable and officials at the company did not return calls to The News.

Kent said his firm has raised \$10 million to \$15 million for projects in Texas and Oklahoma, but he declined to identify what other projects are in the works. He said investments in Kansas "are somewhere close to \$30 million," most from investors in South Korea and China. He didn't have an exact number of investors.

Other concerns

"If the project fails? It's always a gamble," said Karen Caco of International Immigration Services, which helps investors through the process. "It's unfortunate for businesses everywhere around the world. But that's why it's important to research the different regional centers. You hope they manage it, so you get your money back and you get to stay."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Which is one reason Michael Gibson, managing director for USAAdvisors, a company in Florida that conducts "due diligence investigations" for prospective foreign investors and is affiliated with International Immigration Services, advises against going with the biofuel projects. "We try to answer two questions," Gibson said. "Will it create the required jobs in two years and will it be viable in five years' time? With biofuels, I don't think you can say it would. There are so many problems to deal with, in construction and permitting. There are a lot of problems with that. And then there's the commercial question. Do you think there's a market for ethanol when gas is at \$2 per gallon? I don't."

Gibson also raised concerns about the company itself.

Two years ago, his company visited every approved regional center to "do due diligence" and create a portfolio for investors. Lee & Kent was the only company unwilling to meet with him, Gibson said, even after he showed up outside their LA offices. "We've been trying for two years to engage them," he said. "The message I want your readers to take away is that this is a good program in 22 states. It has brought in billions of dollars in investments to projects that would never have obtained investment in the first place. But there are bad operations out there."

Kent said he'd never heard of Gibson or USAAdvisors and didn't know what Gibson was talking about. He suggested the firm may have been unwilling to speak with someone because they wouldn't sign a nondisclosure agreement. "Our programs are under regular review by Immigration Services," Kent said. "We have to submit regular reports regarding our progress. "We are looking for private-source funding, hedge funds overseas, until credit reopens," Kent said. "But when the economy turns around, things will change."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

St. Joseph News-Press (MO)
March 25, 2009

Hiawatha issues notice on nitrate presence in water

Author: Ike Larson

Hiawatha officials are warning residents about high levels of nitrates in the city's water system. City commissioners held a special meeting Monday night to discuss the problem. Much of the meeting was held in a closed-door session with the city attorney and Water Superintendent Rick Koenig, but commissioners decided to issue a notice to protect the public.

A water sample collected on March 16 showed nitrate concentrations of 10.8 milligrams per liter, meaning the city exceeded the state and federal maximum containment level for drinking water. Nitrates above 10 milligrams per liter is considered to be "an acute MCL violation," the notice stated. High levels of nitrates pose health risks to infants under 6 months, and the city is instructing residents not to give tap water to the infants — including in juice and formula — until further notice. Adults and children older than 6 months can drink the water. Pregnant women or those with certain health concerns may wish to consult their doctors.

It's difficult to pinpoint the cause of the elevated nitrates, because levels vary in drinking water throughout the year. It could come from natural, industrial or agricultural sources, including septic systems and runoff.

City Administrator **Lynne Ladner** said residents will be notified when the city is back in compliance and residents need to understand that "this is not a boil order."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

St. Joseph News-Press (MO)
September 26, 2007

Fired Hiawatha officer to appeal

Author: Hiawatha World

One of two police officers recently fired by the Hiawatha City Commission is appealing the decision to end his employment. Mike Williams released a written statement Monday announcing his plans. On his attorney's advice, he declined to answer specific questions. "I do not agree with the city's decision," Mr. Williams said. "I am appealing their decision and will exercise all rights available to me under local, state and federal laws."

City Administrator **Lynne Ladner** announced the termination of Mr. Williams and fellow Hiawatha police officer Jessica Merz Thursday in a brief statement. Ms. **Ladner** didn't name the officers and didn't address the circumstances, citing personnel reasons as the basis for withholding the information. The firings followed an independent investigation conducted by the office of Kansas Attorney General Paul Morrison.

Ms. Merz was unavailable for comment. Chief Evans Woehlecke has declined to speak about the matter. Both officers had been members of the Hiawatha Police Department since 2005. Mr. Williams was named the city's 2006 Officer of the Year in February.

Rumors had circulated throughout the community in recent weeks, with both the World and News-Press receiving phone and e-mail messages. Various charges have been leveled against several Hiawatha police officers over the past seven years. For instance, in 2001 a jury found a former Hiawatha officer guilty of felony official misconduct involving the destruction of evidence in a criminal drug case from the year before.

The Hiawatha Police Department had six full-time officers, one part-time officer and three reserves prior to the firings. The St. Joseph News-Press contributed to this story.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI)
June 22, 2006

Belding retooling city logo

Author: Susie Fair

Belding wants to be branded, but not in the traditional way. The city is spending up to \$20,000 on a new logo and tagline to be unveiled in January to coincide with the kickoff of Belding's yearlong sesquicentennial celebration.

"The city's current logo does not fully represent the image of what Belding has become," Assistant City Manager **Lynne Ladner** said of the linear drawing of the city's skyline conceived 30 years ago. "We want our new logo and tagline to invite investment, by appealing to prospective residents, developers and businesses. We want people know that Belding is a great place to live, work and play."

The new logo will be developed by a marketing firm, expected to be chosen next month.

"We've had many people tell us what a great community this is, but we need to get the word out," Mayor Pro-Tem Robert Thompson said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI)
June 15, 2006

Top aide heads back to job in native state

Author: Susie Fair

Belding's assistant city manager is heading west to run a city of her own. **Lynne Ladner** was hired as Belding's assistant city manager in January, six months after working with the city as an intern. **Ladner**, 36, plans to leave next week to become city administrator for Hiawatha, a municipality of about 3,500 in northeast Kansas.

As the county seat of Brown County, Hiawatha is the center of commerce and industry for its region of Kansas. **Ladner** said she hopes to encourage economic diversity, which also was a part of her Belding job. "Hiawatha is a progressive community that's working hard on economic development," she said. "I'm going to jump right in and continue the good work they've started."

Ladner, who has a master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University, will oversee a \$4.8 million annual budget and five department heads. She said the move will put her 400 miles from her hometown of Syracuse, Kan.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI)
May 25, 2006

Belding seeks grant to buy 2 properties - City hopes to create new gateway to downtown
Author: Susie Fair

The city of Belding is looking to acquire two properties to make way for future development to serve as a new gateway to downtown. The city is seeking a federally funded \$200,000 Community Development Block Grant from Michigan State Housing Development Authority to buy the former Breimayer building at 201 S. Bridge St., and a former hair salon and residential building at 210 Pleasant St.

"The city had no intention of acquiring these properties until this grant opportunity came along," Assistant City Manager **Lynne Ladner** said. The city's only plan for the properties is to demolish the existing structures.

The city has a buy-sell agreement with John Rytlewski, owner of the Bridge Street property, and Sharon Webb, owner of the Pleasant Street property.

Both sales are contingent on Belding getting the grant. If awarded, the \$200,000 will be combined with \$91,400 in city funds to cover the project cost, **Ladner** said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Elizabeth Lynne Ladner** is listed below.]

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI)
April 20, 2006

Grand Valley State releases names of graduates

Author: The Grand Rapids Press

Editor's note: Well Done recognizes West Michigan residents who have earned awards.

Graduates of Grand Valley State University,
Elizabeth Ladner

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI)
January 26, 2006

Hearing set on taxing plan

Author: Susie Fair

City officials want to use a property tax financing tool to improve downtown Belding. A tax-increment financing plan crafted by Assistant City Manager **Lynne Ladner** would "capture" funds for projects to enhance the downtown development district. Tax-increment financing, or TIF, uses increased property taxes generated from new projects to repay certain expenses associated with the investment.

The philosophy of TIFs is more investment generates more tax revenue to make more improvements.

The district is composed mostly of the central portion of the city bordered by Ellis, Center and Hall streets. Plans are for improvements over the next 30 years, including utility upgrades, expanded parking and park upgrades, park/trail development and signs.

Belding Downtown Development Authority has authored a "Vision for Downtown Belding." "Belding lost its sense of being a special place due to the demolition of historic structures, a severed street network and building heights that were reduced to a single story," according to the document, "thereby losing a sense of scale, significance and contrast." The DDA wants to revive Belding's charm similar to what it had before the 1960s.

Ladner said the 30-year plan will have no financial impact on taxpayers since no new taxes will be levied. Instead, the plan will recapture revenue the city normally would receive from increases in the taxable value of properties in the district, which includes 26 commercial/industrial properties and 20 residences. In 2006, a little less than \$12,000 will be captured, **Ladner** said.

With property values expected to rise 3 percent annually, that funding would increase to nearly \$36,000 by 2010 and to slightly less than \$286,000 in 2036.

The City Council will review the TIF plan at its Feb. 7 meeting, with a public hearing Feb. 21, when it could consider final approval.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Elizabeth Lynne Ladner
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Grand Rapids Press, The (MI)
December 29, 2005

New hire expected to save city \$50,000 - Lynn Ladner tapped for assistant city manager
Author: Susie Fair

Belding's city manager will have a new assistant starting Monday. **Lynn Ladner** was hired as full-time assistant city manager after serving as a part-time intern since July.

Ladner, who recently received a master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University, will oversee Belding's economic development, planning and zoning.

Her hiring will save the city money, City Manager Randy DeBruine said. **Ladner** will be paid \$47,000 a year, saving the city up to \$50,000 annually in fees paid to LSL Planning, of Grand Rapids, for consulting services, DeBruine said. "**Lynn** has a good handle on what needs to be done and has already proven herself to be an asset to the city," DeBruine said.

Although far from her hometown of Syracuse, Kan., **Ladner**, 35, a mother of two, feels at ease. "The people of Belding have been very welcoming and friendly and make this an enjoyable place to work," she said. "I chose to take this position because it's a great opportunity to help shape the character of the city."

Research Compiled by: Liliana Oberg & Amanda Dillabough
 Colin Baenziger & Associates