

Benefits of a Village Administrator:

Local governments are complex organizations that require expertise in personnel, planning, finance, and intergovernmental relations and an administrative structure that provides coordination of municipal services. Communities throughout Illinois are increasingly facing global economic competition. Their abilities to compete depend not only on private sector initiatives, but on sophisticated and aggressive public efforts as well.

The need for professional municipal administration is not a matter of the failure of local government, but rather of adapting to changing conditions by increasing the capacity of municipalities to provide effective and efficient services.

Mayors/Village Presidents are elected for their political leadership, not their experience and education in administering the day-to-day business of the municipality. Some mayors may have administrative skills; other mayors may not. The President of the Village of Poplar Grove is not a full-time position and as such, is not designed to serve as administrator of the Village.

The Village flourished under the term of former Village Administrator, Diana Dykstra, who served the Village until September of 2018 and helped to implement internal control measures from an internal controls audit, to ensure ethical and cost-effective village operations. In 2017, the Village received a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association, which was credited to Diana Dykstra's budget presentation and preparation.

Through efficient management, Village Administrators are likely to pay for themselves within a short period of time. For small communities, it is common for the administrator position to be combined with the clerk or clerk/treasurer position or other positions.

A Village Administrator strengthens the position of the governing body to make key decisions. Due to not having a manager handling the day-to-day operation and budgeting for the Village, we have seen politics seep into what should be non-partisan functions of local government which has caused disorganization, delaying vital decisions the Village must make.

Another benefit of having a Village Administrator is that administrators are trained to operate cities, villages, and towns. They are professionals in the same way that company executives, school superintendents, doctors, and attorneys are professionals.

Most of them have master's degrees in public administration, with training in budgeting, finance, personnel, labor relations, intergovernmental affairs, public works, community and economic development, and public safety. They gain administrative experience in other communities before they are ready to assume the position of municipal administrator. They are part of a network of expertise, and they know where to go to get the correct answers. They are committed to municipal administration as a career.

The community's success is their success and, consequently, they have a very strong interest in doing the best job possible.

This creates a responsive organizational structure. Administrators are responsible for the day-to-day operations of their municipalities. It is their responsibility to bring coordination to the provision of municipal services. They work to build a municipal team of department heads and other employees. They establish and enforce policies in the areas of personnel, purchasing, cash management, risk management, planning, and employee development to provide more efficient and effective government. Administrators attract business and community development and work to secure grants for municipalities.

Having an administrator provides more direct accountability to the board or council for the proper operation of municipal services. Elected officials know who is responsible. A dissatisfied board or council can easily dismiss the administrator.

The Village Board will further benefit in several ways from an administrator, creating a stronger board. With an Administrator, the board can spend more of their valuable time focusing on policy issues, community goals, and major projects rather than on administrative details. They get better and more comprehensive information and analysis from the administrator in a staff role to enable them to make more informed decisions. The changing role of the board or council may encourage more people to run for elected office, and the administrator can provide continuity when new persons are elected as officials.