



City Attorney's Office

City of Sweet Home
3225 Main Street
Sweet Home, OR 97386
541-393-7409
www.sweethomeor.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sweet Home City Council
FROM: W. Blair Larsen, City Attorney
DATE: September 19, 2025
RE: City Manager and City Attorney Performance Evaluation Workshop

After receiving my findings on City Manager and City Attorney evaluations, the City Council expressed interest in creating a 360-degree evaluation process of each of those positions. A workshop for this purpose has been scheduled for September 23rd, 2025.

Attached to this memo are some example documents from other Oregon cities:

- 360-degree City Manager evaluation template documents used by the City of Silverton
- 360-degree City Manager evaluation documents used by the City of Stayton
- City Attorney evaluation documents from the City of Klamath Falls
- City Attorney staff input form used by the City of Lebanon

I believe these documents provide a good picture of how other cities conduct evaluations, and their basic framework can be adapted for use in the City of Sweet Home.

The main questions for each position that need to be ironed out in the workshop are:

- What topics should be the basis for the evaluation?
- Besides the Council, what persons or groups should provide an evaluation?

I. City Manager Evaluations

A. Evaluation Topics

Typical City Manager evaluation topics in other cities include:

- Leadership
- Community Organization/Business Relations
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Public Relations
- Communication
- Integrity
- Progress toward City Goals and Strategic Plans
- Operational and Fiscal Management
- City Council Relations
- Staff and Management Relations



B. Evaluators

It's important to be careful when selecting evaluators and ensure that the selected persons have regular and meaningful contact with the City Manager, while guarding against a 'mob' mentality. This can be done both by being selective about who serves as an evaluator and assigning a different weight to certain evaluators.

For example, while it may be dangerous to base the City Manager's evaluation on a survey filled out by all employees, a general survey with limited questions sent to an anonymous selection of employees that is assigned a lower weight than other evaluations may be appropriate to gauge general employee satisfaction with management. Likewise, a survey to all City residents would lead to the City Manager catering to the whims of social media and uninformed perceptions, but a carefully worded survey to selected board members, community groups, and local businesses might give a better idea of the City Manager's performance in working with those groups.

In addition to the City Council, some evaluators that are commonly used in other cities are:

- Self-evaluation by the City Manager
- Department Heads
- Staff from other local government agencies that coordinate with the City Manager (County officials, School District, Fire District, etc.)
- Local businesses
- Other officials or citizens with whom the City Manager has regular and meaningful contact in the course of his duties

II. City Attorney Evaluations

A. Evaluation Topics

Typical City Attorney evaluation topics in other cities include:

- Knowledge and Helpfulness
- Timeliness
- Accuracy and Completeness
- Clarity and Communication Skills
- Options and Alternatives to Resolve Issues
- Community Relations
- Intergovernmental/Interagency Relations
- Consultative Legal Services
- Legal Preparation
- Overall Satisfaction

B. Evaluators

The same concerns for selecting evaluators for the City Manager apply to City Attorney evaluations. In addition, the City Attorney works directly with far fewer people than the City Manager, so the potential pool of evaluators is much smaller. It's important to refrain from surveying people a significant bias (such as citizens who may have been charged with or the victim of a crime).



In addition to the City Council, some potential evaluators are:

- Self-evaluation by the City Attorney
- City Manager
- Municipal Court Judge
- Municipal Court Staff
- Department Heads and other City staff who need or seek legal advice in the course of their duties

III. Conclusion

Once you have determined what topics you would like to use as the basis of the evaluations, staff can draft some evaluation forms for you to review.

Keep in mind, before implementation, it will be important to review the overall process to make sure that it is compatible with existing employment contracts. Any future contracts should also reference the new evaluation process.

As always, I am happy to assist with any questions or concerns.