

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL



DATE: December 3, 2013

TITLE: City Manager Recruitment

PREPARED BY: Bob Adams, Interim City Manager

RECOMMENDATION

Provide staff direction on how to proceed with the City Manager recruitment

DISCUSSION

The City Council has 3 options in selecting the next regular City Manager:

1. Promote an existing employee; or
2. Recruit, screen, interview and background check applicants in-house; or
3. Hire an Executive Management recruiting firm to recruit, screen, and background applicants.

Hiring a City Manager is a thoughtful, coordinated effort to find the most qualified candidate who is also the best fit for the community and working with the City Council and City Staff. In any of these 3 scenarios, the City Council will describe the attributes (job knowledge, experience, education, etc) that the ideal candidate should possess. The City Council will conduct the final interviews and follow-up interviews, and should also do a fair amount of due diligence to ensure that candidates truly are as they present themselves to be.

In addition, the City Council will need to determine skills, attributes, aptitudes and experiences that they would desire in an ideal candidate. The Council will also need to discuss what it wants to offer as a compensation package, as that appears to be a subject that needs resolution.

Option 1 is the quickest way to fill the position and possibly the least expensive. The candidate is known to the City Council, and therefore, the person's strengths and weaknesses would already be known. An internal candidate would also be aware of the City's financial situation and would be more likely to be reasonable in salary and benefit demands. The City position that the person would be promoted from could be left vacant for a period of time and would provide additional compensation savings. However, this City has not done effective "succession" planning and the skills and attributes of individual staffers is not readily known to the City Council.

Option 2 is the next most economical consideration, as the work to recruit, screen and conduct background checks would be done in-house. However, that would also mean that the City Council would be required to do more of the work themselves and the Interim City Manager and City Attorney would be required to devote a greater amount of time to the process, and that would take them away from other tasks. The advantage is that no additional costs would be incurred, and the disadvantage is that some tasks may be postponed until a final selection is made.

Option 3 is the recommended method, as a professional recruiter has better access and knowledge of available candidates. A recruiter may know of qualified individuals who might not apply under normal circumstances but could be enticed to apply by actively recruiting them. The Executive Recruiter can be expected to maintain confidentiality and give a limited guarantee of the work product. Many candidates are reluctant to apply if they are not really

looking (but may actually be interested and a good fit) because they could be adversely affected if that information got out in their communities and they didn't get the job. The downside is that recruiters often have a "stable" of individuals who interview well, but may not necessarily be a good fit for the community. This is done because the recruiters' reputation and credibility is on the line and they many times do not want to recommend up and coming professional stars because they haven't been "proven" yet. This option is also the most expensive in that it will add \$15-30K in costs to conduct the recruitment.

Under the City's current financial situation, the more appropriate method might be **Option 2**. However, it would require the City Council to work as a team in order to obtain the best outcome for the City Council, the community, City staff and the candidate. There should not be a sub-committee for such an important decision; the whole City Council should be the committee. The committee would give direction to the Interim City Manager (who would be the lead on the recruitment) and City Attorney, who would then schedule periodic reviews in Closed Session with the entire City Council as the process moved along. For example, all resumes should be reviewed by the entire membership of the City Council. The final interviews would be with the entire City Council. After that point, the City Council could appoint sub-committees to conduct background checks on the top 3 finalists and report back at a closed session. Negotiations with the selected candidate could be done by the Interim City Manager and City Attorney, or two Council Members (one should be the Mayor, as the Mayor is generally the spokesperson for the City). The City Council should take a formal action to appoint those in authority to negotiate and the City Council should give those appointed parameters on any job offers they might make to candidates.

The whole process should take 3-4 months. It is estimated that I will reach my 960 hour limit in mid-March, so it is time to move the process along; as directed, I have waited until the new City Council is seated. A fourth option would be to hire another Interim City Manager, but I don't believe it is wise to have constant turnover in the City Manager position. According to research by the City Clerk, I am the 33rd person to be in the City Manager position in the 50 year history of the City of Desert Hot Springs.

FISCAL IMPACT

An Executive Recruiter (Option 3) will cost approximately \$15,000 - \$30,000.

EXHIBIT(S)

1. Recruitment Brochure for a Local City
2. Sample Clause on the Type of Guarantee Offered by Some Firms