



**A GUIDE
TO THE
RECRUITMENT
AND
SELECTION
OF A
CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER**

*Published by the
Illinois City/County
Management Association*



A GUIDE TO THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF A CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER*

***PUBLISHED BY THE ILLINOIS CITY/
COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION***

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*For purposes of this document, the word “administrator” is utilized throughout. “Administrator” means “chief administrative officer”, “city manager”, “city administrator”, “village manager”, “village administrator”, “town manager”, “town administrator”, “county manager” or “county administrator”.

STEPS IN THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

The process of a search can be undertaken by two methods: internally or with the help/guidance of a municipal executive search firm. Municipal executive search firms are professional organizations dedicated to the placement of executives in the private and public sector. There is a fee that may or may not be paid by a prospective employer. Look in the yellow pages under “executive search consultants” for a list of firms in your area. Also check the classified section of the ICMA’s Public Management magazine for firms that specialize in public sector searches.

As the list of firms is ever evolving, consult PM Magazine, ILCMA, or ICMA for additional information.

The following identifies and explains each step in the selection process. Estimates of the time each step should take are also indicated.

I. PREPARATION:

2-3 weeks

DEFINE THE POSITION

Review any local ordinances or State statutes that created the position to make sure they accurately reflect the administrators duties and responsibilities. Please note that there could be differences between the duties of the city manager position under the council/manager form of government and the duties of the city administrator position under the mayor/council form of government. For the purposes of this document, “city” means “city”, “village”, “incorporated town” or “county” and “city council” or “council” means “city council”, “village board”, “town board” or “county board.”

If the city is about to recruit its first administrator, the Illinois City/County Management Association (ILCMA) Secretariat has included copies of a model ordinance on the duties and responsibilities of a city manager under the council/manager form and a model ordinance on the duties and responsibilities of an administrator under the mayor/council/administrator form of government on pages **16-22** of this document.

2-3 weeks

DEVELOP A PROFILE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

A profile of the skills, experience, training and qualities of the position should be developed by the governing body. This can be done with the assistance of the material provided by the ILCMA Secretariat, municipal executive search firm or other sources.

If the city is about to recruit its first administrator, it is possible that the duties and responsibilities of the new administrator position may be contained within the job descriptions or local ordinances of existing positions like the city clerk, collector or controller. Some of these duties and responsibilities may not have been carried out due to lack of expertise or lack of time. If those responsibilities are important to the council, they should be included in the administrator job description. **It is extremely important that the applicant and the mayor/council clearly understand what the duties and responsibilities of the manager or administrator are to be. The duties should be in writing and specifically discussed in the interview.**

The council should prepare a packet of information which includes the budget, financial plan, comprehensive plan, demographics, strategic plan, mission, and any other pertinent information.

The city council needs to consider the terms of an employment agreement to be offered.

It is extremely important that the manager/administrator and the mayor/council work as a team under a climate of trust, openness, and mutual respect. A team which knows what each player is to do and relies on each member doing their part.

II. RECRUITMENT

*Can be done
during the first
two weeks*

PREPARE AN ADVERTISEMENT AND ESTABLISH THE SALARY RANGE

Draft a job announcement. If the applicants' résumés are ever to be made available for public review, the candidates should be so informed in the advertisement. (Attached please find a sample ad on page 23)

WHERE TO ADVERTISE

4-6 weeks

The three most common publications for placing position announcements are the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) newsletter and job center, ILCMA newsletter and the *Illinois Municipal Review*. Other places to advertise are the local and regional newspapers, but they normally do not prove to be of much value due to the specialized nature of the work. Contact names and addresses for the municipal publications may be found on the back cover.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT LETTER.

A letter thanking a candidate for his or her interest should be sent on city stationery as soon as an application has been received. It is acceptable to send an acknowledgment letter via e-mail if the application is received via e-mail. Applications received by postal service should be acknowledged the same way, by postal service.

RESIDENCY

If residency is required, clearly state this in the advertisement..

III. SELECTION

2 weeks

SCREENING OF APPLICANTS

Screening can begin after the closing date for applications. This screening can be done by the full council or an appointed sub-committee. Frequently, an appointed sub-committee can screen the initial number of applications to weed out those without the basic qualifications for the position. A telephone interview may be helpful to further reduce the number candidates to 7 or 8. Depending on the number and the process you have approved, all applications received may or may not be forwarded to the entire council. **It is recommended that the applicants be notified of their status once they have been eliminated from any further consideration.**

1-2 weeks

BACKGROUND & REFERENCE CHECKS

The finalists selected by the council should have a background check. It is recommended that this should be done by a private firm. Private firms can perform this service for a modest fee. This should include a check of criminal, credit, civil and other records along with verification of educational degree achievement. A written report should be obtained.

Please see the attached Sample Authorization and Disclosure Form on Page 24, which each candidate should sign.

In addition to performing a background check, it is highly recommended that a personal reference check be completed with at least one of the references. Reference checks are usually made with work-related contacts. The reference check should be done by the mayor, trustee, or screening committee. *See an example of a reference check form on page 25.*

INTERVIEWS

1-2 weeks

Prior to the interview process, the council should provide the final candidates the packet of information that was prepared in the preparation phase.

It is important the entire council interview finalists. Interviews should be scheduled as close together as possible, preferably on the same day, to assure equal treatment of all candidates. Job-related questions should be prepared in advance and asked of all candidates. Sample questions and an interview evaluation sheet begin on page 9. Normally, a city pays transportation costs, meals and lodging for candidates being interviewed and their spouses and/or families that will be moving with them if they are chosen for the position. It is also recommended that a tour of the community be provided by staff or elected officials. *A summary on interviewing techniques is included on page 12.*

In some cities, councils have also involved other members of the community in the interviewing process with the final candidates. Members of the council may want to consider a panel interview of the finalists by members of the chamber of commerce, local civic or charitable institutions, other local governments or city staff.

The city council is urged to identify its preferred candidate and at the end of the interviews, if possible, discuss with the candidate the terms and conditions of employment.

IV. APPOINTMENT

1-2 weeks

When the city has selected its preferred candidate, there are still several decisions that need to be made. Someone from the council may wish to visit the candidate's present city in order to speak personally with people there about the administrator's performance. Mechanical details also need to be decided. A contract should be prepared reflecting the terms and conditions agreed upon with the finalist and the contract should be sent to the finalist for execution immediately after the interview.

Other finalists should not be rejected until the city has reached agreement with its top candidate. Negotiations between the city and its top candidate can occasionally break down, requiring the city to turn to its second choice.

The council must refrain from any announcement that the position has been filled until all details and/or an agreement are finalized and the candidate is agreeable as to the timing of the announcement.

4 weeks

Most administrators will require a minimum of thirty (30) days to give notice to the present employers and relocate to a new city.

Total time required: 17-22 weeks

FORMAT FOR AN ADMINISTRATOR PROFILE

(For Council Use)

Describe the background, skills and qualities you feel your city needs in an administrator.

GENERAL

Importance
(High, Med., Low)

1. Relevant Education _____
2. Relevant Experience _____

SKILLS AND PAST PERFORMANCE

1. Council Relations _____
2. Administrative Ability _____
3. Written and Oral Communication Skills _____
4. Budget / Finance _____
5. Human Resources _____
6. Labor Relations / Collective Bargaining _____
7. Community Relations _____
8. Intergovernmental Relations _____
9. Economic Development / Revitalization _____
10. Innovation and Major Achievements _____
11. Infrastructure and Facilities _____
12. Specialized expertise which might pertain to your city, e.g. parks and recreation, utility management, solid waste and landfill management (be specific) _____
13. Emergency and Disaster Planning _____
14. Information Technology _____

A SAMPLE ADMINISTRATOR PROFILE

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

A Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in municipal government should be required, a Masters degree preferred. A minimum of three (3) years of experience as an administrator or assistant is required, with five (5) years preferred. Past experience of individual must show performance in areas including supervision, municipal budgeting and finance, human resource management, information technology, risk management, grants procurement and administration, economic development strategies, understanding of state laws, and other related matters including land use planning, zoning regulations, engineering and public works. Prior Illinois experience preferred. Experience and knowledge in municipal accounting is desirable.

SKILLS AND PAST PERFORMANCE:

1. Administrative Ability

Must have demonstrated performance in providing sustained administrative leadership and coordination of staff and board activities in carrying out the acts and directives of the council through overall supervision and coordination. Good communication skills are a must, including the ability to listen and communicate with various segments of the community. The person must be willing to devote whatever time is necessary to achieve the goals and guidelines established by the council. Knowledge of how to organize municipal departments, and demonstrated leadership qualities are desirable.

2. Council Relations

Ability to take time and interest in working with council members to keep them informed and explain technical processes. Should be able to adequately inform the council on a regular basis so there are no surprises. Both written and oral communications with the council are essential. The person must be able to accept constructive criticism and to implement the needed changes. Candidate must be open and honest with the council and able to present all sides of an issue which affect the city. The individual must be able to carry out the intentions and directions of the council.

3. Budget and Finance

Should have demonstrated prior experience in preparing, recommending and implementing a city budget. Experience and expertise in grant procurement is desirable, as well as dealing with city owned utility finances.

4. Human Resource Management/Collective Bargaining

Must have demonstrated performance in human resources and/or collective bargaining for a community having not less than 10 employees. Must have some knowledge of Illinois labor relations law. Must demonstrate a personality which can communicate city goals and needs to employees.

5. Community Relations

Candidate must have demonstrated involvement in community activities. Experience working with and understanding the needs of the business community is highly desirable. Candidate should be able to present a confident image of the city to the community at large. Must be able to demonstrate a positive, productive attitude to citizens of the community.

6. Intergovernmental Relations

Must be able to relate to and develop a good working relationship with other communities, county governments, schools, other local governments, and state and federal agencies.

7. Innovations and Major Achievements

Must have demonstrated the ability to set personal and employee goals, and be creative and aggressive in seeking solutions to city problems. Individuals must be able to seek and receive support and involvement from the council, employees and the community on various topics.

8. Infrastructure and Facilities

Prior knowledge in the operation of water and wastewater utilities and street drainage would be desirable. Ability to deal with maintenance and project funding is desirable, including the ability to deal with engineering firms and other types of consultants. Experience in contracting for services like solid waste hauling and recycling, along with working knowledge of information technology, is desirable.

9. Public Safety

Experience in overseeing emergency preparedness, police, and fire operations.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

It is suggested that the Mayor and Council each ask a question(s) and that they each ask the same question(s) to each candidate.

1. Provide a brief summary of your education and work experience.
2. How would you describe your leadership and management styles?
3. What do you perceive to be the Administrator's role in working with
 - a. the Mayor? Council?, Village Attorney, Village Clerk?
 - b. What are your expectations of the Mayor and Council in relation to:
 - (1.) you?
 - (2.) other village staff?
 - c. How and when do you communicate with the Mayor and Council?
4. How and when do you delegate responsibility and authority?
5. In your opinion, what role should the Administrator have in the community?
 - a. Do you believe the Administrator should be an active member of a service or fraternal organization?
 - b. How do you deal with the news media?
 - c. How do you deal with special interest or single interest groups?
 - d. What is the best way for an Administrator to deal with an angry constituent;
 - 1.) on the phone?
 - 2.) at the front counter?
 - 3.) on the street?
6. Let's discuss personnel issues:
 - a. Have you been at the bargaining table and been actively engaged in negotiating an agreement?
 - b. Have you experienced mediation, fact finding or arbitration? Which ones?
 - c. Have you ever had to discipline, demote or fire an employee? Please elaborate.
 - d. How do you educate, encourage and motivate your staff?
 - e. Are you familiar with state and federal laws relating to non-discrimination, sexual harassment, ADA and equal opportunity?
 - f.. Have you had charges of violation of state or federal employment laws or a grievance filed against you or your city?

- g. Describe your experience in the preparation and implementation of personnel rules, regulations, procedures and compensation plans.
 - h. What is your experience with employee benefits administration, group health insurance and risk management?
 - i. What in your opinion is the most serious issue today in local government personnel management?
 - j. How and when should private sector resources (e.g. contractors) be utilized to provide village services?
7. Now let's talk about municipal finance:
- a. Is there a difference between a financial plan and a budget?
 - b. Are/were you the designated budget officer for your city? Did you prepare and present the budget to the Council and upon adoption were you responsible for implementation?; what is/was the form of the budget-line item, program?
 - c. Have you experience with Debt Financing? Please give an example.
 - d. Have you secured and administered any type of loans or grants? Please give an example.
 - e. Describe the most successful capital improvement project you were responsible for and what made it successful?
 - f. Have you reviewed the City of _____ annual budget and/or annual report? If yes, what is your impression of the city's financial condition?
 - g. What is your opinion of "pay as you go" financing of maintenance and capital projects? special assessments?; special taxing districts?
 - h. What type of financial reports do you provide the elected body and with what frequency?
8. The City of _____ is _____ and will continue to experience both residential and non-residential growth. Please briefly describe your experience with:
- a. Land use planning
 - b. Economic development/redevelopment
 - 1. Tax increment financing
 - 2. Business attraction and retention programs
 - 3. Beautification programs
 - 4. Business assistance programs; e.g. façade improvement; code compliance, etc.
 - c. Annexation

- d. Subdivision policies and regulation particularly as they relate to stormwater management
 - e. Zoning
 - f. Building code administration
 - g. Municipal facilities expansion, in particular water and wastewater utility expansions
9. Have you read the city's comprehensive plan? What is your opinion?
 10. Have you toured the city. What is your opinion of what you have seen?
 - a. Village facilities
 - b. Residential areas
 - c. The downtown
 11. In the field of intergovernmental relations, what experience have you had in dealing with:
 - a. Councils of government/intergovernmental agencies?
 - b. County government?
 - c. Other local governments (schools, parks, etc)?
 - d. State agencies?
 - e. Federal agencies?
 - f. State Legislature?
 - g. Congress?

Do you feel comfortable "lobbying"?

12. Have you been an active participant in the activities of a statewide municipal league, a statewide city or county management association, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) or other professional organizations devoted to local government? Please give an example.
13. Please describe what applications of computer technology you have implemented in your city; e.g. office practices, communications, recordkeeping, billing and process controls.
14. What direct experience have you had with NIMS and emergency and disaster preparedness plan development and implementation?
15. Where do you expect be in your career in five years, ten years?
16. Is there anything embarrassing in your background, personal and professional life that would give us pause to consider offering you the village administrator position?
17. If offered the position what would you expect in the way of an employment offer/agreement and when would you be able to start?
18. What questions do you have of us?

SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

Following are some recommended “do’s” and “don’ts” when interviewing candidates. Remember that the law does not prohibit employers from obtaining all the information about a candidate they deem important, so long as the questions are job-related and do not elicit information which could be used for discriminatory purposes.

DO:

1. Question objectively. Relate questions to the requirements of the job and be consistent from one applicant to the next.
2. Ask questions that require more than a yes or no answer. Use general or open-ended questions.
3. Avoid unduly sympathetic or unsympathetic words, gestures or facial expressions which would make the candidate think you agree or disagree with his / her answer.
4. Avoid posing a problem or situational question combined with possible solutions. Let the candidate generate his / her own solution.
5. Develop questions based on earlier statements made by the candidate.
6. Ask questions designed to encourage the candidate to reveal what knowledge and expertise he / she possesses.
7. Avoid “trick” questions.
8. Avoid displaying your personal opinions or viewpoints through the questions you ask.
9. Listen attentively to every question asked and every answer given. Make the candidate aware that you are listening by looking at him / her while speaking.

DON'T

1. Don't let early biases form.
2. Don't ask unnecessarily long questions.
3. Don't let the candidate digress beyond the point of answering the questions satisfactorily or showing that he / she is unable to answer the question.
4. Don't ask confrontational or intimidating questions.

INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM

Applicant: _____

1. Experience and Expertise

- (a) Applicability of experience to your city and its challenges
- (b) Knowledge and involvement in all aspects of municipal government
- (c) Depth of experience
- (d) Degree of current/past responsibility
- (e) Application of technology to city operations

0	1	2	3
Not	Qualified	Well	Superior
Recommended		Qualified	

Comments: _____

2. Education

- (a) Relevant degrees
- (b) Specialized training; career development
- (c) Keeps current with new technology and advancements

0	1	2	3
Not	Qualified	Well	Superior
Recommended		Qualified	

Comments: _____

3. Communication and Public Relations Skills

- (a) Ability to transmit ideas clearly, directly and succinctly
- (b) Ability to organize ideas, summarize and express them with confidence- verbal and written
- (c) Manner in which the applicant comes across- e.g. openness
- (d) Approach to the news media, citizens, etc.
- (e) Use of information types-electronic, print, etc.
- (f) Is customer oriented
- (g) Non-verbal communication skills (physical, eye contact)

0	1	2	3
Not	Qualified	Well	Superior
Recommended		Qualified	

Comments: _____

4. Leadership Traits and Management Style
- (a) Ability to work with others-team leader and player
 - (b) Ability to make decisions, recommendations and execute
 - (c) Openness to alternative approaches
 - (d) Is your idea of the type of individual for the position
 - (e) Personality traits in relation to personality of city
 - (f) Will move the organization and village forward

0	1	2	3
Not	Qualified	Well	Superior
Recommended		Qualified	

Comments: _____

5. Budget and Finance
- (a) Understanding of financial planning and budgeting
 - (b) Knowledge of capital improvement programming
 - (c) Grasp of overall financial administration and reporting
 - (d) Knowledge of formation of operation and capital financing mechanisms
 - (e) Ability to work with lean resources
 - (f) Familiarity with loan and grant programs

0	1	2	3
Not	Qualified	Well	Superior
Recommended		Qualified	

Comments: _____

6. Personnel Management
- (a) Experience in human resource management
 - (b) Ability to deal with personnel problems and problem employees
 - (c) Experience in training and motivation of employees
 - (d) Experience in collective bargaining and contract administration
 - (e) Familiarity with state and federal employment laws

0	1	2	3
Not	Qualified	Well	Superior
Recommended		Qualified	

Comments: _____

ORDINANCE NO.
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE POSITION OF CITY/VILLAGE
ADMINISTRATOR*

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council/President and Board of Trustees have determined that it is in the best interests of the City/Village to have the position of City Administrator/Village Administrator to more ably continue in the provision of services to the citizens of the City/Village of (Insert Name) and to accomplish the objectives of orderly and proper administration of the policies and ordinances as expressed by the Corporate Authorities of the City/Village of (Insert Name).

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council/President and Board of Trustees of the City of /Village of (Insert name), Illinois, as follows:

SECTION I: That the above and foregoing recitals be and are hereby incorporated herein by reference as findings of fact by the Corporate Authorities.

SECTION II: That the Municipal Code of the City/Village of (Insert name) at Title be and is hereby amended by adding the following new Sections to read to wit as follows:

AUTHORIZATION TO EMPLOY ADMINISTRATOR; APPOINTMENT. The Mayor and City Council/Village President and Board of Trustees are hereby authorized to employ a City Administrator/Village Administrator. Such Administrator shall be appointed by the Mayor/Village President, by and with the advice and consent of the City Council/Board of Trustees.

BOND. The City/Village Administrator shall furnish a bond in such amount and with such surety as may be approved by the corporate authorities, such bond to be conditioned upon the faithful performance of his or her duties. The cost of the bond shall be paid by the city/village. The bond of the City/Village Administrator may be part of a blanket bond.

COMPENSATION. The City/Village Administrator shall receive such compensation as the Corporate Authorities shall, from time to time, establish. The City Council/Board of Trustees may enter into an employment agreement which specifies in writing provisions, including but not limited to, establishing the level of compensation of the City/Village Administrator, specifying benefits including levels of support for the City/Village Administrator's continuing professional education and association activities, determining separation pay upon termination of the City/Village Administrator's employment and defining other conditions of employment.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR. The City/Village Administrator, under and subject to the direction of the Corporate Authorities, shall be the chief administrator of the City/Village, and shall be responsible to the Corporate Authorities for the proper administration of the affairs of the city and policies adopted by the City Council/Board of Trustees.

ACTING ADMINISTRATOR. Whenever the City/Village Administrator is absent from the city for personal reasons, or on account of City/Village business, or is otherwise unable to perform the duties and responsibilities of City/Village Administrator due to short term illness or disability, the City/Village Administrator may designate in writing a member of the City's/Village's senior administrative staff to serve as acting administrator and to carry out the duties of the administrator during the administrator's absence.

In the event of a prolonged absence, as determined by either the City/Village Administrator himself or the Mayor/Village President and City Council/Board of Trustees, then the Mayor/Village President by and with the advice and consent of the City Council/Board of Trustees, shall appoint an acting administrator, whose office shall be temporary and who shall serve only until such time as the City/Village Administrator is able to resume the duties of his office.

*One can be called a manager even if not council/manager form of government by referendum.

APPOINTMENT POWER. The City/Village Administrator may appoint such assistants, department heads, or employees as are necessary to the proper functioning of the city/village, except that the City/Village Administrator may not appoint those city officers which are by state statute required to be appointed by the Mayor/Village President.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF ADMINISTRATOR. The City/Village Administrator shall have the following powers and duties:

- (A) Provide for the enforcement of all laws and ordinances within the city.
- (B) Create the agenda for and attend all meetings of the City Council/Board of Trustees and other official City/Village Boards and Commissions as directed by the City Council/Board of Trustees. Attend all meetings of the City/Village Council/Board except those from which the City Council/Board determined that attendance is not required because of a conflict or other reason. The City/Village Administrator shall have the right to take part in the discussion of all matters coming before the City Council/Board of trustees or other official City/Village Boards and Commissions, but shall have no right to vote. The City/Village Administrator shall be entitled to notice of all special and regular meetings of the City Council/Board of Trustees.
- (C) Recommend to the City Council/Board of Trustees such measures as, in his or her judgment, he or she deems to be in the best interest of the City/Village.
- (D) Employ, discipline, suspend and terminate any and all city employees, except when otherwise provided by law or contract and to the extent permitted by law and subject to the City/Village Administrator's discretion and direct supervision, to delegate to any employee any of these powers with respect to any subordinates of that employee.
- (E) Propose to the Mayor and City Council/Village President and Board of Trustees such personnel rules and regulations as the Administrator deems necessary to manage the personnel of the city; These rules may cover procedures and policies to govern the following:
 - (1) The administration of the position description, classification and pay plans;
 - (2) Recruitment, selection, promotion, evaluation, transfer, discipline and separation of city/village personnel;
 - (3) Establishment of hours of work, attendance, leave regulations and working conditions;
 - (4) Rules covering the outside employment, nepotism and political activity of City/Village personnel;
 - (5) Maintenance and use of necessary records and forms;
 - (6) System of handling all grievances.
- (F) Supervise and administer the conduct of all collective bargaining processes of the City/Village and recommend to the City Council/Board of Trustees collective bargaining agreements for consideration and approval by the City Council/Board of Trustees, and administer all employee organization contracts reached through the collective bargaining process.
- (G) Direct, supervise and coordinate the activities of all departments, offices, and agencies of the City/Village, except as otherwise provided by law, and to administer the affairs of the City/Village to ensure that all City/Village business is accomplished efficiently and economically.
- (H) Recommend to the City Council/Board of Trustees the creating, consolidating, and combining of offices, positions, departments or units of the administrative and executive departments of the City/Village.
- (I) Investigate all complaints in relation to matters concerning the administration of the

government of the City/Village and services maintained by the public utilities in the City/Village, and see that all franchises, permits and privileges granted by the City/Village are faithfully observed.

- (J) Sign on behalf of the City/Village any contract authorized by City Council/Board of Trustees, except where the City Council/Board of Trustees or state statutes direct that some other officer shall do so. It shall be the duty of the City/Village Administrator to ensure that all franchises granted by, and all contracts with, the city are faithfully kept and performed; by all parties hereto.
- (K) Keep a current inventory of all real and personal property of the City/Village and location of such property. The City/Village Administrator shall be responsible for the care and custody of all City/Village property which is not assigned to some other officer or body for care and control.
- (L) Prepare and submit to the Mayor and City Council/Village President and Board of Trustees by the date set by the Council/Board a recommended annual budget for city operations and recommended capital programs; and administer the approved budget after adoption.
- (M) Supervise and administer the procurement of commodities and services for all city departments, offices and agencies, and promulgate purchasing rules implementing city ordinances which are consistent with state law, which shall be followed by employees in the procurement of goods and services.
- (N) Report to the City Council/Board of Trustees periodically the financial condition of the City/Village.
- (O) Submit to the Mayor and City Council/Village President and Board of Trustees and make available to the public a complete report on the finances and administrative activities of the City/Village as of the end of each fiscal year.
- (P) Represent the City/Village in its dealings with other governmental agencies and officials, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, residents, and the general public as necessary.
- (Q) Cause to be prepared grant and/or loan applications on behalf of the City/Village; administer grant and/or loan funds and shall have caused the preparation of relevant reports to the Corporate Authorities and all appropriate agencies.
- (R) Evaluate City/Village projects, programs, agreements and services and make recommendations on modifications and improvements thereto.
- (S) Devote his or her entire time to the discharge of his or her official duties.
- (T) The City/Village Administrator shall perform such other duties as may be required by the City Council/Board of Trustees consistent with state statutes and the ordinances of the City/Village.
- (U) Hold such other appointive offices as may be consistent with law, as the Mayor and City Council/Village President and Board of Trustees may determine, and to faithfully and honestly discharge the duties and powers associated with such office;

The powers assigned to the City/Village Administrator are not intended to diminish those powers otherwise assigned to other officers by statute or ordinance, including, but not limited to the Mayor/Village President.

MATTERS DIRECTED TO ADMINISTRATOR'S ATTENTION. All offices and departments shall submit all matters requiring City Council/Board of Trustees action or attention to the City/Village Administrator, who shall submit them to the City Council/Board of Trustees with recommendations as may be deemed necessary. All departmental or employee requests shall be submitted to the City/Village Administrator who shall provide instruction as to policy and action. Except as otherwise provided by state law or city ordinance, elected and appointed City/Village officers shall deal with the administrative services of the City/Village through the City/

Village Administrator and shall not give orders to subordinates of the City/Village Administrator, either publicly or privately.

REMOVAL. The City/Village Administrator may be removed in accordance with law.

SECTION III. Repealer. All ordinances or resolutions or parts of ordinances or resolutions in conflict herewith, to the extent of such conflict, are hereby changed and amended to be in compliance with this Ordinance; and to the extent the same cannot be so amended, are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION IV. Effective date. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval, as provided by law.

APPROVED THIS _____ day of _____, 20__.

MAYOR/VILLAGE PRESIDENT

**AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR AND CREATING THE
OFFICE OF CITY (VILLAGE) MANAGER
UNDER COUNCIL/MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT**

SECTION 1: Office Created -The office of City (Village) Manager is hereby created subject to the provisions of this Ordinance.

SECTION 2: Qualifications of City (Village) Manager-The City (Village) Manager shall be chosen by the Mayor and City Council (Village President and Board of Trustees) solely on the basis of executive and administrative qualifications with special reference to specific professional education for, actual experience in, and knowledge of accepted practice in respect to the administration of local government and to the duties of the office as specified below. The appointment shall be made without consideration of the candidates' race, sex, politics, or religious beliefs. The person appointed to this office need not be a resident of the city (village) of the state at the time of appointment. Neither the Mayor nor any member of the City Council (the Village President nor any member of the Village Board) shall receive such appointment during their terms of office or within two years after the expiration of that term.

SECTION 3: Appointment and Relationship to Elected Officials-The City (Village) manager shall be appointed to an indefinite term of office by a majority vote of the City Council (Village Board). The manager shall, in all cases, be subject to the authority and direction of the Mayor and City Council (Village President and Board of Trustees).

SECTION 4: Compensation and Terms of Appointment-The rate of compensation of the City (Village) Manager shall be set by the City Council and may be adjusted from time to time as the Council (Board) deems appropriate. Subject to the terms and conditions of state law and this ordinance, the City Council (Village Board) and the Manager shall enter into an employment agreement which specifies in writing the level of compensation of the Manager, fringe benefits including levels of support for the Manager's continuing professional education, agreements for separation pay upon termination of the Manager's employment, other appropriate agreements describing the working relationship between the Manager and elected officials, and Council's (Board's) performance expectations for the Manager. This agreement should be reviewed and revised by mutual agreement of the parties at periodic intervals of no more than one year's duration.

SECTION 5: Removal of the Manager from Office-The City (Village) Manager shall be subject at all times to removal from office by a majority vote of 3/5ths of the total membership of the City Council (Village Board).

Optional Section 5

SECTION 5: Removal of the Manager from Office-The City (Village) Manager may be suspended by a resolution approved by the majority of the total membership of the City Council (Village Board) which shall set forth the reasons for suspension and proposed removal. A copy of such resolution shall be served immediately upon the City (Village) Manager. The Manager shall have fifteen days in which to reply thereto in writing and, upon request, shall be afforded a public hearing, which shall occur not earlier than ten days nor later than fifteen days after such hearing is requested. After the public hearing, if one be requested, and after full consideration, the City Council (Village Board) by a majority vote of its total membership may adopt a final resolution of removal. The City (Village) Manager shall continue to receive full salary until the effective date of a final resolution of removal. (This provision is taken verbatim from the Model City Charter.)

SECTION 6: Powers and Duties-The City (Village) Manager shall be responsible to the Mayor and City Council (President and Board of Trustees) for the proper administration of all affairs of the City (Village). In discharging this responsibility, the City (Village) Manager shall:

1. Direct, supervise, and coordinate the administration of all departments, offices, and agencies of the City (Village), except as otherwise provided by law;
2. Appoint and, when necessary for the good of the service, suspend or remove all city (village) employees and appointive administrative officers except when otherwise provided for by law. All appointments and removals shall be based solely upon merit and on the qualifications or disqualifications of the individuals involved, without regard to race, sex, religious convictions, or political belief or affiliation. The City (Village) Manager may authorize any administrative officer, subject to the Manager's direction and supervision, to exercise these powers with respect to subordinates in that officer's department, office or agency;
3. Attend all City Council (Village Board) meetings. The City (Village) Manager shall have the right to take part in all discussions, but shall not vote;
4. Provide for the enforcement of all laws and ordinances within the City (Village);
5. Serve as City (Village) Budget Officer and prepare and submit to the City Council (Village Board), by the date set by the Council (Board), a recommended annual budget for City (Village) operations and a recommended capital program. When the annual budget or capital program have been approved by the City Council (Village Board), the City (Village) Manager shall be responsible for the administration of said budget or capital program;
6. Submit to the City Council (Village Board) and make available to the public a complete report on the finances and administrative activities of the City (Village) as of the end of each fiscal year;
7. Make such other reports as the City Council (Village Board) may require concerning the operations of city (village) departments, offices, and agencies;
8. Keep the City Council (Village Board) fully advised as to the present financial condition and future needs of the City (Village);
9. Advise the City Council (Village Board) on pending decisions of public policy and recommend to the Council (Board) the adoption of such measures as the Manager may deem necessary or expedient for the health, safety, or welfare of the community or for the improvement of administrative services;
10. Be responsible for procurement of commodities and services for all City (Village) departments, offices, and agencies, and promulgate purchasing rules which shall be followed by employees in the procurement of goods and services;
11. Propose to the City Council (Village Board) such personnel rules and regulations as the Manager deems necessary to manage the personnel policies of the City (Village);
12. Be responsible for the conduct of all collective bargaining processes of the City (Village), and recommend to the City Council (Village Board) collective bargaining agreements for consideration and possible final approval by the Council (Board). The City (Village) Manager shall be responsible for administering all employee organization contracts reached through the collective bargaining process;
13. Provide staff support services for the Mayor and members of the City Council (Village President and members of the Board of Trustees);
14. Perform such other duties as may be specified by law or City (Village) ordinance or as may from time to time be requested by the City Council (Village Board).

SECTION 7: Bond-The City (Village) Manager shall furnish a surety bond in the amount of \$10,000 to be approved by the City Council (Village Board). The bond shall be conditioned on the faithful performance of the duties of the office. The premium for the bond shall be paid by the City (Village).

SECTION 8: Acting Manager-If, because of a temporary absence, disability, or illness,

the City (Village) Manager is unable to carry out the functions of this office, the Mayor and City Council (Village President and Board of Trustees) may appoint a member of the City's (Village's) senior administrative staff to serve as acting manager and carry out the duties of the Manager during the Manager's absence.

SECTION 9: Matters Directed to Manager's Attention-No citizen or elected officer of the City (Village) shall dictate the appointment of any person to, or their removal from, office by the City (Village) Manager or by any of the Manager's subordinates. Except for the purpose of inquiry, elected City (Village) officers shall deal with the administrative service through the City (Village) Manager. Elected City (Village) officers shall not give orders to any subordinates of the City (Village) Manager, either publicly or privately.

SECTION 10: Authority of Other Officers-Nothing in this Ordinance shall be deemed to diminish or detract from the statutory powers and authority of the City's (Village's) elected officials.

SECTION 11: Repealer -All ordinances, resolutions, and parts of such ordinances and resolutions in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 12: Effective Date-This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its passage and approval as provided by law.

APPROVED THIS _____ day of _____, 20__.

MAYOR/VILLAGE PRESIDENT

SAMPLE AD FOR A TYPICAL CITY/VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR POSITION

City Name, IL(Pop: xxxxx)

Village Administrator: Salary \$xx,xxx to x\$xx,xxxK + Excellent benefits DOQ&E. Exciting and challenging opportunity in a growing community with a good quality of life and excellent schools located The Village President and Board of Trustees are seeking a proven visionary leader to team with them as they plan for a dynamic future. \$xx Million budget; xx full-time and xx part-time employees. Appointed by the Village President and approved by a six member Village Board of Trustees who are elected at large to four year, staggered terms.

BA in public administration/ related field; MPA preferred. 3 years of progressively responsible municipal management experience as a village administrator or 5 years as an assistant village administrator in a full service community. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Proven ability to analyze issues and recommend actions; able to build positive relationships with the community and other governing bodies; experience in budget/financial management, economic and residential development, and labor relations.

Residency required (if applicable).

Cover letter and resume to Village President , Address; by (date); e-mail address . EOE/AA/ADA.

AUTHORIZATION & DISCLOSURE FORM

I, _____, voluntarily and knowingly authorize permission to the Village/City, IL, Name of firm. & its agents to conduct education verification, criminal, civil, credit and driving record investigations, also to contact individuals for personal and work experience reference checks about me now or at any time during my employment. I agree to provide references if not previously included with resume. I understand that preliminary background investigations will require that I provide my full legal name, common address, date of birth, and SSN.

A Consumer Report, also known as a Consumer Credit Report, as defined by the Fair Credit Reporting Act ("FCRA") and applicable state law, is a written or oral report or other communication that may include a summary of my credit standing, credit capacity, credit worthiness, debts or check writing experience; insurability; character; general reputation; personal characteristics or mode of living. An Investigative Consumer Report is a report prepared that may contain information regarding my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living obtained through any means, including personal interviews with my friends, neighbors, or associates or with others with whom I am acquainted or who may have knowledge concerning any such items of information.

I voluntarily and knowingly release from all liability the Village/City, Name of Firm and its agents who request and/or conduct such investigations supplying information for such investigation, except that such release shall not be implied to waive any rights I may have to correct errors or misstatements contained in the consumer report or investigative report obtained pursuant to this agreement.

Signed

Dated

Full Name	Driver's License #
Address	State of Issue
City, State, Zip	Date of Birth
Social Security #	

As an alternative, this information can be emailed directly to <e-mail address>

**** Any photocopy of this release is deemed valid as original. ****

CITY/VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR CANDIDATE REFERENCE CALL

CANDIDATE'S NAME:

NAME OF REFERENCE:

NAME OF PERSON MAKING CALL:

DATE OF CALL:

QUESTIONS

How long have you known (Name)?

In what capacity?

How long has he/she been in that capacity?

What are/were his/her chief responsibilities?

What were his/her most significant achievements?

In your opinion, in what area(s) did (Name) not perform as expected.

<If applicable> Why did (Name) leave?

What would you say are (Name) strengths?

What would you say are (Name) weaknesses?

On a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (excellent) how would you rate (Name) as a:

Communicator:

Manager:

Leader:

Participant in community activities:

Team Player:

Professional:

YES/NO: In your opinion:

Is (Name) honest and have integrity and a reputation for following and requiring the highest ethical standards?

Is (Name) a forward thinking leader and administrator able to encourage elected officials and staff to develop new ways of looking at problems and opportunities and arriving at effective solutions?

Does (Name) display an attitude of teamwork and creativity in municipal problem solving, while ultimately accepting responsibility for the quality and effectiveness of Village operations and work?

Does (Name) have a personal professional style, which will establish early credibility with

elected village elected and appointed officials, employees and community?

Does (Name) have the ability to develop positive relationships with elected officials individually and collectively and to treat them equally?

Is (Name) able to accept the policy direction of the Mayor and Council when it differs with his/her recommendation?

Is there anything embarrassing in (Name) background, personal and/or professional life that would give us pause to consider appointing him/her village administrator? (***Might ask village attorney to look at this one and to give you alternate language to get at the same thing***).

Finally, is there anything you would like to add? (If so, record it here).

BETTER RECRUITING

The Members in Transition (MIT) subcommittee of the Illinois City/County Management Association (ILCMA) exists to provide tools to assist those in the profession hoping to be re-employed. Its efforts complement and continue those of previous MIT Subcommittee members, the ILCMA Secretariat, ILCMA Board, ICMA/ILCMA Range Riders, and many others. The question explored by current MIT members was, “**How can improvements be made to the municipal recruiting process for the applicant, search team (in-house or recruiter), and hiring body?**”

The impetus behind this project began with the difficulty MITs often report in knowing what was most important to the hiring body and receiving feedback when not selected for an interview or a job offer. Narrowing future searches and improving performance are difficult for the MIT without this information. This led to a review of the recruiting process in general to provide context. Discussions with recruiters and personnel directors revealed additional issues. The resulting observations and suggestions will hopefully lead to an improved and better understood process.

Initially, position profiles should **identify what's most important to the hiring body** - not *every* positive attribute considered. Applicants are then better able to determine if they are a good fit for the job and focus their preparation. This is the job of the search team and consists of two phases. First, generating a comprehensive list of position duties, major issues, professional skills required, and personal characteristics desired through one-on-one and then group discussions with the elected officials, key staff, and community leaders. Second, resolving differences and uncertainties and boiling these down to the primary and secondary duties, issues, skills, and personality traits sought -- which are then approved by the hiring body and included in the application material. Both take quite a bit of research time and facilitation skill to perfect.

An often overlooked, but important next step is the initial winnowing or “**recruiter's cut**”. How is the ample list of applicants narrowed down by the search team to the few to be presented to the hiring body? The basic review looks at some combination of the following: cover letter, resume, references, requested supplemental material, internet search, criminal background check, psychological screening, phone interview, DVD of applicant answering preliminary interview questions, etc. The search team's personal knowledge of the applicant can also influence decision-making. Perhaps, they and the applicant have been involved in the profession and have talked at conferences, worked together on a committee, or know each other from past searches. All this is tied together by the experience and intuition of the search team.

Formal **evaluation checklists** to rank all the candidates are very useful tools. Search teams generally use them simply to manage all the applications. It would be extraordinarily helpful if decision-making bodies used them, too. Providing elected officials with a checklist of potential criteria based on earlier discussions would help speed and formalize the process. Including borderline or semi-legitimate draft criteria is an effective way to start the discussion about what to include. Additionally, summary information from these checklists should be shared with any requesting applicants by the search team at the end of the process.

Keep in mind, even with checklists, participants are very human and some of the following will likely influence the selection process:

1. Governing bodies may not agree among themselves, creating an oversized laundry list of everything each of them is looking for in a candidate. Without a strong consensus, each member of the governing body will have a different vision of the “perfect” candidate.
2. Elected officials often place too much emphasis on experience in communities similar in size and demographics to their community rather than on skill sets.
3. Elected officials are volunteers. Few have the experience or training needed for effective recruiting and it can be difficult for some personalities to stay focused on the process.
4. It is part art and science. With multiple qualified candidates, it often comes down to subjective but often legitimate “Fit & Feel” -- gut assessments.
5. Many interviewers, often mask their true intentions or feelings, are simply uncomfortable having to explain their reasoning, or get nervous if they feel their comments might make it back to applicants.
6. Municipalities and recruiters have to be wary of the time and cost of being sued. Municipal attorneys often counsel their employer not to provide written feedback about their decisions for fear of litigation -- evaluation documents could become discoverable. Signed waivers by applicants could reduce, but would not eliminate, lawsuits. Be aware that employers are not career coaches and legally owe applicants nothing other than fair consideration. Recruiting firms are the employee of the hiring entity.
7. Some candidates will misuse the opportunity for feedback by trying to debate the decision or by getting irritated rather than look for what they can learn from the constructive criticism.

This process will not be easy to improve. What then are some **key tips for successful applicants**? Remember the Boy Scout Motto -- Be Prepared.

1. Ask a recruiter or range rider to review your resume and cover letter or provide a mock interview.
2. Follow the application instructions provided, key in on the desired skills specified in the job ad in your cover letter, and double check grammar, spelling, etc. They are often “part of the test” of the applicant’s skill level and eye for detail.
3. It is prudent to be aware of and address any potential shortcomings. To shorten their list of qualified candidates, search teams and governing bodies will tend to look for information to disqualify a candidate from further consideration. Check whatever information is available electronically about you. Explain anything negative in the cover letter and discuss it with the search team. In addition, a record of short tenures, especially if due to terminations, can be hard to overcome. Some personal “soul searching” about the profession or a separate explanation, either in the cover letter or as a separate document in the resume materials, is advised.
4. Be comfortable and relaxed. You may have been without full-time work for some time and do not want to come across as intense or desperate. Speak slowly, clearly, and concisely.
5. Show genuine interest and excitement about the position and community. Be able to say why you want the job.

6. Know the community. Do your research. Review the community's website, meeting minutes, news articles and if possible visit the community prior to your interview. Talk with neighboring managers or consultants you know who are familiar with the organization. Ask a couple of questions at the end to demonstrate your knowledge.
7. Focus on the key criteria listed in the recruitment brochure and how your skills address specific issues facing the community.
8. Remember all of the finalists will usually be qualified. You need to stand out from the others. "Senior" candidates should: dress in current business fashion, wear up-to-date glasses, avoid old hair styles, get up-to-speed on technology, and point out their advantages in perspective and range of experience.
9. Be aware that you are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you. The recruiting process could be indicative of the way an organization addresses issues. You may or may not be comfortable with their style or see it as opportunity to introduce a more effective approach.
10. Have questions ready for the recruiter and employer that will lead to a dialog which can help reveal whether a "best fit" is truly present.
11. There are organizations and decision-makers who value improvement more than they fear mistakes and are already conducting methodical, high quality recruiting.
12. Get to know the recruiters and your potential future employers. If they know you and feel comfortable with you, they will be more likely to share feedback with you.
13. Be yourself. Nobody is perfect and a lot depends upon the current circumstances in that municipality.
14. The process can be very subjective, feedback is hard to generate, and **"Best Fit" is not 100% definable.**
15. If you don't get a job offer, just accept that this wasn't the right fit for you and that **your time will come!**
16. Be aware that some people simply do not have the personality and demeanor to be a long-term success in this profession. They should recognize it and move on to a profession that is a better fit for them.
17. Finally, don't forget to view the wealth of MIT tips and resources provided by the ICMA and various state associations.

Regardless of the limitations, **recruiting, like any other process, can be improved.** Making it more methodical and providing constructive feedback to all applicants will lead to a better decision-making process. More informed decisions will generate longer, more successful tenures.

We hope this information helps lead to Better Recruiting! Greater awareness can generate a more satisfying experience and more effective result for applicants, recruiting teams, and elected officials.

A special thank you to the 2012-2013 ILCMA MIT Subcommittee for their work on this article:

Art Osten, Jr. (MIT) -- author

Dave Niemeyer, Village Manager, Oak Brook, IL -- editor

Marian Gibson, (MIT) – editor

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APPLICANT'S INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

It is important to generate a two-way dialog during the interview process to increase the odds of attaining a "best fit" for both parties. Here are some great questions we've heard applicants ask either the recruiting team or the interview panel.

Candidates always should ask a question that reflects their research into the community. Governing bodies like it very much when candidates do their homework. For example, "I noticed in your budget that your TIF is scheduled to expire in a few years. Have you had any recent discussions about how you want to close it out and use the remaining funds?" Make sure you're prepared with helpful options...

"What were some of the characteristics you liked and didn't like about your previous managers?"

"If I were appointed to be your next Manager, what should I know about your organization that maybe has not been discussed so far?"

"If I were fortunate enough to be your next Administrator, would it be possible to have a goals setting session with all of you so I can understand the priorities you would like me to focus on?"

A good question to ask of the Mayor or Chair, "What is the number one need or goal in the community that you think the new Manager should address?"

If you are being interviewed by staff, addressing those present in the interview by name and asking each of them a question about their area based on your research of the organization leaves a very good impression.

One of the best questions in a second interview is also a tricky one. "What most impressed you about my credentials and are there any items you are uncertain about?" or "How do I stack up against or compare to the other applicants you are considering for this role?" or "What is going to separate the winning candidate from the other qualified candidates?" You can then address any perceived shortcomings or highlight an attribute you feel outweighs an actual shortcoming. Remember, there are not always weakness, just other combinations of skills that would be a better fit.

Another tricky but very useful one to understanding how the elected body operates is "What do you see the key differences to be between the roles of: a) the Mayor vs Trustees and b) Elected Officials vs Administrator and Staff?"

6 months from now, what would an excellent performance review for this position look like and how would it be conducted?"

If the Board does not give you an opportunity to ask questions, ask them if it would be OK for you to ask a "quick one." And then also include a closing statement indicating your desire to serve as their next Village Manager -- but be succinct and respectful of their schedule.

Do not ask questions that require an answer from every board or council member or take a lot

of time to answer.

Finally, individualized thank you letters or e-mails following the interview also tend to set a candidate apart from others, especially if the competition is tight.

Explore the ICMA and recruiters' websites for many more tips on landing your "best fit" job!

QUESTIONS APPLICANTS MIGHT ASK IF NOT SELECTED

If they haven't already offered, a personal phone call to the recruiter or in-house search team leader is a quick, informal, non-threatening method of soliciting constructive feedback. Phone conversations make it possible to better understand and respond to inquiries for constructive feedback and avoid the potential of written comments being used against the municipality. When calling, indicate your appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the selection process. State that while not selected, you would greatly appreciate any insights that might make you a more attractive candidate for other municipalities in the future. Finally, ask if this is a good time or they prefer another day and time to gather their thoughts. Here are some questions to help elicit useful comments:

1. Did my application materials adequately address the desired skills and experience for the position? Are there any possible improvements to my cover letter, resume, references, and letters of recommendation would you suggest?
2. Did the interview team believe I had researched the community sufficiently to provide the impression that I was familiar with the community and current events there? What, if anything, was lacking?
3. During the interview, did I provide concise, knowledgeable responses to the questions? Did I have any experience, skill sets, or personal characteristics that might benefit from further development?
4. Was there anything I could have improved to better engage the selection team or to make myself a better fit for future organizations and governing bodies?
5. What were the key attributes of those interviewed (or the individual selected) which led to their being chosen over the other candidates?

Be respectful of their time and the fact that they might not have, or be able to articulate, a large amount of definitive information to share with you. It is appropriate to ask clarifying questions but never debate responses. You are only seeking information to help you understand the decision made and make you a better candidate for other local governments. It is too late to change their mind.

End positively with a statement such as: "Thank you for your assistance. It was a pleasure meeting all of you and I wish you and the selected candidate much success in the coming years."

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