


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 18, 2004

TO: THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: WILLIAM D. EUILLE, MAYOR 

SUBJECT: PROCESS FOR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF A NEW CITY MANAGER

ISSUE: Process for the recruitment and selection of a new City Manager.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the process for the recruitment and selection of the new City Manager as discussed below.

DISCUSSION: Since City Manager Philip Sunderland advised us at our June 9 legislative meeting of his pending resignation, I have initiated the process to recruit and select his successor. I know that each of you joins me in expressing appreciation to our City Manager for his outstanding service to the City and his willingness to continue as City Manager until we complete the process to select his successor.

On June 10, I met with staff to begin the recruitment process. I have asked Councilman Smedberg to work with me as we go through this process. DMG Maximus, the City's recruitment consultant, will assist us by developing the job profile with input from Council members and the community, and conducting a nationwide search for City Manager candidates. As Council has discussed, we also intend to seek applications from qualified and interested City employees.

DMG Maximus is one of the nation's leading providers of executive search services with over 30 years of experience in the recruitment field. DMG Maximus has assisted in the past with the recruitment of City department heads and has extensive experience working with local elected officials in the recruitment of city managers.

While the development of the job profile is underway, in order to expedite the process, Personnel Services will post the job announcement next week within the City government. DMG Maximus will send it to organizations such as the International City/County Management Association, the United States Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the American Society of Public Administration, the National Association of Black Public Administrators, the National Association of Hispanic Public Administrators, the Virginia Municipal League, other local government and minority recruitment publications and will

publish an ad in the Washington Post.

In 1985 and 1999 when it selected City Managers, Council sought community input and established a citizens group appointed by the Mayor to assist in developing the profile for the City Manager job. I recommend that we take a similar approach and ask for citizen input on updating the job profile developed in 1999.

The citizens group would include representatives of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Urban League, the Alexandria League of Women Voters, the Alexandria Federation of Citizens Associations, and two citizens at large appointed by the Mayor.

In order to expedite the appointment of the two citizens at-large, I ask each of you to forward two names of potential at-large citizens to me by Monday, June 21. I would like to convene the citizens group to meet with the consultant to discuss the job profile on the evening of Tuesday, June 29.

Beginning next week the consultant will be contacting each Council member to arrange either to meet with you in person or to discuss via telephone your comments on the job profile. Attachment 2 is a copy of the job profile that was developed in 1999 and that will be updated.

I would like to schedule a special meeting of Council to discuss and concur on the job profile at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, July 13. Once Council agrees on the job profile, DMG Maximus will begin its national recruitment work. The job will be advertised through early September with a closing date of September 8, the Wednesday after Labor Day. Following review of the applications by the consultant, we will meet and determine which applicants we wish to interview. We expect to schedule Council interviews between September 27 and October 15, enabling us to select a new City Manager in October.

I look forward to receiving Council's comments on the process and the schedule at our Tuesday, June 22 legislative meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: City Manager Recruitment and Selection Process and Timeline

Attachment 2: 1999 City Manager Profile

Attachment 1

CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS 2004 TIME LINE

Wednesday, June 9	City Manager announces his resignation.
Tuesday, June 22	Council considers and approves recruitment and selection process including Mayor's proposal to form a citizen group to provide input on job profile and to post job announcement.
Tuesday, June 29	DMG Maximus meets with citizen group members to obtain input on the job profile.
Tuesday, June 29, Wednesday, June 30, or Tuesday, July 13	DMG Maximus meets one on one with Council members to obtain input on the job profile.
Tuesday, July 13,	Council meets to consider and approve job profile.
Monday, July 26- Wednesday, September 8	Consultant does final national advertisement and recruits applicants.
Thursday, September 9- Friday, September 24	Consultant screens candidates and conducts preliminary reference checks on proposed finalists.
Monday, September 27- October 16	Council meets with consultant, determines which candidates it wishes to interview and schedules and conducts interviews.
Week of October 18	Job offer extended by Council.

Alexandria, Virginia

City Manager



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The Community

The City of Alexandria is located in northern Virginia and is bordered by the District of Columbia (Potomac River) and Arlington and Fairfax counties. With a population of 119,500 and a land area of 15.75 square miles, Alexandria is the seventh largest city in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Alexandria is unique—an historic place which keeps pace with the modern world. The City is part of a large metropolitan area and the nation's Capital, yet it has retained its historic character. About one-quarter of the town's 15 square miles has been designated as a national or local historic district. Thousands of buildings in these districts are monuments to the past, while being actively used by citizens for homes, businesses and museums.

Alexandria's first recorded beginnings were in 1669, when the site was included in a patent granted by colonial Governor William Berkeley of Virginia. The patent was purchased by John Alexander, the pioneer for whom the town was later named. In 1749, the House of Burgesses authorized a town of 60 acres, and George Washington helped lay out the town lots (Alexandria is currently celebrating its 250th anniversary). With its incorporation in 1779, Alexandria was made a Port of Entry to the United States and a Customs House was established. Prospering, it became a city of fine houses and shops, a center of culture and trade, with George Washington and George Mason prominent in the community. In 1852, Alexandria acquired city status and its first charter.

Alexandria was founded almost 50 years before the District of Columbia. Its "Old and Historic District" is carefully preserved by a strict architectural review board which monitors all changes. Historic landmarks include Robert E. Lee's boyhood home; Christ Church, where famous Virginia statesmen worshipped; and Gadsby's Tavern, a favorite meeting place of Lafayette and President Washington.

In addition to its historical sites, Alexandria boasts a variety of attractions. One of the metropolitan area's largest concentrations of international restaurants can be found in Old Town. The Torpedo Factory Art Center, located on the City's waterfront, provides an opportunity for the public to meet more than 200 professional artists and craftsmen. Sailing marinas and a surfaced biking trail allow visitors to enjoy the beautiful Alexandrian shore of the Potomac River.

The last decade has seen the City's economy become one of the strongest in the nation, driven by steady growth in its service-oriented employment base and income base. Follow-

ing national trends, the City has seen the greatest employment growth over the last decade in its service sector.

Alexandria continues to grow as a center for national association headquarters, a center for high technology and related headquarters operations, and a center for national, regional and divisional headquarters for corporations representing a broad range of fields. Alexandria is a primary business center in the Washington metropolitan area. Lower operational costs, unsurpassed access, diverse office opportunities, unique ambience, and safe work and living environments are just several of the advantages enjoyed by business operations located there.

There are approximately 63,000 housing units (including apartments) in the City of Alexandria. The average assessed value of a single family home is about \$236,000, and the average assessed value of a residential condominium is about \$99,000.



The City Government

The City adopted the Council-Manager form of government in 1922. The governing body of the City is the City Council, which formulates policies for the administration of the City. The City Council is composed of a Mayor and six

Council Members elected at-large, on a partisan basis, for a three-year term (not staggered). Currently, one Council Member is a Republican and the rest are Democrats. The Mayor is chosen on a separate ballot and presides over sessions of the Council, but is not vested with the power of veto or authority over other Members of the Council. The Vice Mayor, by practice, is the member of the Council who received the largest number of votes at the regular City election. The City Council appoints the City Manager.

Legislative sessions of the City Council are held on Tuesday evenings twice per month. Public hearings are held on one Saturday per month, allowing citizens an opportunity to speak forth on matters that concern them. In addition, there are over 100 City Boards and Commissions with Council-appointed citizen representation.

The Alexandria Council conscientiously operates under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act which prohibits closed sessions of the Council except for specific matters regarding personnel, pending litigation and land acquisition. Accordingly, nearly all sessions of the City Council are open to the public, where citizens actively participate in discussion.

Alexandria has had a strong tradition of self-government since its founding in 1749. It is an independent city (Virginia cities

have no county affiliation) and derives its governing authority from a Charter granted by the Virginia General Assembly.

The City provides a comprehensive range of municipal services including: education, health, welfare, housing and human services programs; public safety and administration of justice; community development, recreation, library, consumer assistance, cultural and historic activities; and transportation, environmental services and planning.

Strong fiscal management remains a hallmark of Alexandria's City government and has enabled the City to respond to priority needs, including public safety, public education, and modernization of heavily used recreation and library facilities, despite relatively flat revenues. Alexandria is among an elite group of only 23 cities in America to hold triple-A bond ratings from both of Wall Streets major credit rating agencies.

The City budget provides for approximately 2,100 full-time employees, excluding school employees. The City of Alexandria's FY2000 approved Total City and Schools Operating Budget is \$361.4 million. The FY2000-FY2005 approved Capital Improvement Program (CIP) recommends a six-year, \$118 million program of public improvements. Funding is included for: an increase of \$4 million in the City's capital contribution to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA), construction of a new animal shelter, a one-time grant for capital renovations to the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, bulkhead repair at Waterfront Park, a City visitor center, and the City's Information Technology Plan.

The City also has a historic dedication to excellence in public education. The changing nature of the City's school system, including the implementation of an elected School Board in 1994 and the declining role played by the City Manager in school policy and budget decisions, requires a high degree of cooperation between the City Manager's Office and the School Board and school officials.

The City's public school system is governed by an elected nonpartisan School Board consisting of nine members elected from three voting districts for three-year terms. All School Board members, as well as the Mayor and City Council members, are elected in May every third year with the next election scheduled for May 2000. The School Board submits its financial requirements for review and approval in the City's annual budget process. The City funds approximately 83% of the schools' operating budget, with the remainder coming from State aid and the federal government. The schools' capital improvement budget is incorporated into the City's six-year capital improvement budget, and currently constitutes about \$54 million of the City's six-year Capital Improvement Program. The Fiscal Year 2000 appropriation for the schools operating budget is \$92 million.

The City has 12 elementary schools, two middle schools, one ninth-grade center, one high school and the Secondary Training and Education Program, which provides special

programs for students who are unable to function within the traditional classroom setting. In August 2000, schools will open the first new elementary school in the City in 30 years. Over the next five years, facilities expansion at the middle schools (in 2002) and in the secondary schools (2003-2005) will be critical issues. There is currently a gap of some \$20 million between the schools' projected capital needs for FY2000 through FY2006 and the City's funding for the same period.

Issues/Challenges

Issues/Challenges facing the City of Alexandria (not in priority order) include:

- Maintain a strong financial condition and bond rating (important for capital project financing).
- Cost containment.
- Expand the real property tax base.
- Revitalization/redevelopment in both commercial and residential areas.
- Development of Potomac Yard and Eisenhower Valley areas.
- Economic development.
- Provide regional leadership and strengthen intergovernmental relations, particularly with the school district.
- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Enhance quality of life in the City by preserving its historic character and ecological systems.
- Foster citizen sensitivity and support for the changing demographics of the community.
- Neighborhood empowerment.

The Position

The City Manager is the chief executive officer of the city government. He/She is responsible to the Council for the proper administration of all affairs of the City, except those responsibilities vested by law in the school board.

The City Manager may appoint and remove the heads of all departments and all other officers and employees of the City, except employees of the school board and advisory board/ commission members and their staff, when given the authority by the City Council.

Responsibilities of the position, as outlined in the City's Charter, include:

- Attend all meetings of the Council with the right to introduce ordinances and to speak but not to vote;
- Keep the Council advised of the financial condition and future needs of the City and of all matters pertaining to its proper administration, and make such recommendations as may seem desirable;
- Prepare and submit the annual budget to the Council and be responsible for its administration after its adoption;

- Prepare in suitable form for publication and submit to the Council each year at its first meeting in the fifth month following the end of the preceding fiscal year a concise, comprehensive report on the financial transactions and administrative activities and all other operations of the City government during the fiscal year ending on the last day of the preceding fiscal year; -
- Present adequate monthly financial and activity reports at a regular meeting of the Council;
- Prepare and submit to the Council, whenever required by the Council, a program of capital improvement projects and a budget therefor, covering such years as the Council may designate; and
- Perform such other duties as may be required.

The position is open due to the forthcoming retirement of the incumbent after 28 years of service with the City, including 14 years as City Manager.

The Candidate

Education and Experience

Prefer a degree, but emphasis will be placed on experience and personal attributes.

The ideal candidate will have several years of senior level executive responsibility in a general purpose local government. Most Council Members believe it is important for the selected candidate to have worked in a similar urban environment (e.g., one having an ethnically diverse population and substantial citizen involvement). Individuals from all areas of the country will be considered. A stable employment history is important.

Specifically, candidates must have a proven ability in finance and budgeting, intergovernmental relations, development/redevelopment, economic development, and the selection and supervision of outstanding personnel.

Management Style and Abilities

The selected candidate should:

- Encourage creativity and reasonable risk taking;
- Balance a directive/participatory style, as appropriate;
- Embrace citizen involvement;
- Promote diversity;
- Treat all Council Members evenhandedly;
- Keep the Mayor and Council informed in a timely and accurate manner (no surprises);
- Make his/her best professional recommendations yet, when the Council makes a decision, implement it promptly as if his/her own;
- Have excellent presentation and writing skills; and
- Maintain objectivity in dealing with staff.

In addition, he/she should be:

- Able to identify, select and motivate staff;
- Willing to make tough personnel decisions and hold staff accountable for results/actions;
- Able to delegate, yet monitor and keep aware of the details of departmental operations, without micro-managing;
- Proactive;
- Positive, taking a "how to" approach;
- Approachable;
- Able to adopt useful and cost-effective technologies;
- Experienced in measuring results of city government through benchmarking and outcome measures;
- Fiscally responsible;
- Skilled in conflict resolution; and
- Visible in the community without getting "out in front" of the Mayor and Council.

Personal Traits

The ideal candidate will be a mature leader with vision, who is creative, innovative and a strategic thinker. He/She should be intelligent, hardworking, honest and ethical, and have good personal values. The City is seeking someone who is outgoing and self-confident, enthusiastic, and firm, but fair. It is important that this person be diplomatic (e.g., able to say "no" while not being abrasive), politically astute and a good listener.

Compensation and Benefits

The salary for this position is competitive and will be dependent upon the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. In addition, benefits will be provided, including: annual leave, holidays and sick leave; a contributory retirement plan; health insurance, dental plan, life insurance, and long-term disability insurance; optional deferred compensation (ICMA); savings bonds; credit union membership; catastrophic illness leave bank; and an employee assistance program.

The chosen candidate will be required to reside within the City limits.

How to Apply

Send resumes or nominations by **December 17, 1999** to:

Norman C. Roberts, *Vice President* or
 Nicole R. Seagle, *Manager, Executive Recruitment Services*
DMG-MAXIMUS INC.
 1800 Century Park East, Suite 430
 Los Angeles, CA 90067-1507
 Telephone: (310) 552-1112
 Facsimile (310) 552-1113
 E-mail: searchla@dmg.maxinc.com

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Female, Minority and Disabled Candidates are Encouraged to Apply