

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT SERVICES PROPOSAL

for

Town of Waterbury, Vermont



CONTACT:

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VLCT RECRUITMENT SERVICES EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thank you for the opportunity to present the VLCT Municipal Assistance Center’s recruitment services for your municipal executive search. For more than 30-years we have helped towns hire municipal managers and administrators. Our role is to provide comprehensive support and guidance to the legislative body throughout its hiring process.

SERVICES PROVIDED - Deliverables Include:

The services we provide will utilize best practices in municipal human resources and employment law. We will endeavor to maintain confidentiality throughout the search and keep the Selectboard informed along each step of the process. The Board will work in tandem with us by providing necessary information and making key decisions. Our services include:

- Development of desired characteristics for Town Manager ○ Review, revise, or create job description and pay range. ○ Draft and design recruitment brochure ○ Prepare and implement an advertising plan. ○ Facilitate selection process of applications for first round interviews. ○ Schedule interviews and draft proposed list of interview questions ○ Facilitate development of final interview process; assist with question selection, evaluation, and assist with final interviews.
- Conduct reference and background checks.
- Represent Town in negotiation of offer; work with Town Attorney to finalize.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES: The cost estimate and timetables below are based on services as outlined in this proposal. Any changes to the deliverables may be requested by the Selectboard, such as citizen participation in the process, on-line surveys, and other add-on services.

Timetable

Weeks	Step	Activity – in consultation with the Selectboard as needed
1 - 2	1	Prepare recruitment and advertising plans covering search process and timeline. Prepare draft job description and pay range; prepare position profile
2 – 4	2	Prepare and post advertisement; begin to receive applications
5 – 6	3	Screen applications as received; identify individuals for further consideration; Plan first round interview process with Selectboard/search committee
6 – 8	4	Schedule and conduct first round of interviews; Plan and finalize final round interview process

9 – 11	5	Schedule and conduct final round of interview process;
12 – 16	6	Check references; background check on finalist(s). Report to Selectboard; offer advice on employment agreement negotiations;

Cost Estimate

VLCT does its best to minimize costs and bring affordability and professionalism to the search process. A sample cost breakdown is below. Actual costs may vary depending on the number of candidates and unique aspects of each search. VLCT and the Selectboard will sign an agreement including consultant time and direct expense outlined below. Any changes must be approved in advance by VLCT and the Selectboard.

Consultant time and miscellaneous VLCT administrative work will be billed as a flat-fee of \$12,000, billed after a candidate has been selected by the Selectboard.

Direct expenses, including advertising, interview costs and background check service vary by search, so estimates are provided in wide ranges.

Estimate

General Pricing Structure and Cost Estimates	Consultant Time	Direct Costs
VLCT flat fee	\$12,000	
Advertising and Design Expenses – Town selects advertising outlets		\$3,000
Candidate Interview Travel Expenses (candidate flight, lodging, car, and/or mileage)		\$100 - \$1,500
Background Checks (including criminal, civil and credit, media review),and Other Expenses. Town chooses which checks to conduct		\$500 - \$2,000
DiSC candidate assessment. Optional		\$200-\$400
SUBTOTALS	\$12,000	\$3,100 – \$6,900
Estimated Total		\$15,100 - \$18,900

Agreement and Invoicing

An agreement between VLCT and the Selectboard will outline terms and a not-to-exceed contract amount. VLCT will keep Selectboard apprised of costs and arrange for invoicing monthly or upon completion of the recruitment.

Scope of Services – Work Plan and Methodology

It is our understanding that the Town of Waterbury wishes to identify outstanding, professional candidates for a Town Manager. We recommend a six-step process with the services described below.

Step 1: Develop recruitment plan, define job qualifications and requirements for position.

Before embarking on the process of selecting a new Town Manager, it is important to discuss the desired characteristics for the position and develop a plan on how the recruitment process will be undertaken and who will be participating. This involves developing a recruitment and an advertising plan. In addition, the existing job description and/or sample descriptions for other municipalities will be reviewed. The goal is to establish a framework and criteria for evaluation of applicants.

Job Description

The job description for the position will need to be updated as one of the first steps in the process. Job descriptions are a foundational element in making personnel decisions, setting salaries, determining scope of duties, evaluating essential duties, and so on. Once the document has been updated, it is helpful to have the Selectboard formally vote to approve the updated description.

Pay Range

Before finalizing the job description and advertisement, the Selectboard should set a salary range for the position. We highly recommend including the salary range in the job advertisement.

Take into consideration the total compensation for the position, including all benefits (e.g., insurances, retirement, leave). Some Managers may need compensation packages that differ from other municipal employees because of the hours of work required, scope of duties, or relocation needs.

Position Profile (Recommended/Optional)

Before embarking on the process of recruiting a new Manager, it is important to step back and talk about the desired characteristics for the position along with other important factors that should be considered. This work can be done on your own or with assistance from the VLCT. The key is to present a clear picture of the type of person you are looking for, the key issues the individual will be required to address and basic information about the community and organization. The Position Profile can then be

used by candidates to gain a better understanding of what expectations they will be held to and can be used by interviewers as a guide of what to look for in candidates. It would be posted on the town website with the job description and advertisement.

Elements of a good Position Profile include the following:

- General information about the community,
- Information about the organization and position,
- Recruitment schedule,
- Fringe benefits,
- Specific requirements or characteristics or personal qualities desired,
- Future challenges and opportunities,
- Pay range; and
- Recruitment timetable

Sample of some recent position profiles are enclosed.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is especially important to some applicants, particularly those who are currently employed. The Selectboard must decide at the beginning how open you wish to make the hiring process. If the application process is fully open, applicants should be informed as soon as possible, either in the advertisement, before they submit their resumes, or prior to scheduling an interview.

That said, we highly recommend adopting a confidential application process up to the final interview, to the extent that is practicable. This will increase the number of applicants working as professional administrators and managers.

Step 2 Identify and recruit qualified candidates.

Once you have a good idea on the type of person you would like as the next Town Manager, it's time to advertise the position opening and begin to receive applications from interested candidates. To develop a strong pool of candidates, it is a good practice to get the word out about the community and position to a wide range of professionals in the field of local government.

Advertisement

Targeted advertising is very important in securing a healthy pool of well-qualified candidates. VLCT has experience with a wide variety of regional and national print and web advertising publications. We recommend placing an advertisement in a mix of digital and print ad sources. We also use several low cost or free ad sources such as, neighboring state leagues websites, and college and university alumni portals.

Receive and Acknowledge resumes received.

As resumes are received, we will send an acknowledgement along with additional information including the position profile. Copies of each resume will be made available in electronic form for review by town designated officials or search committee.

Step 3 Screen/Evaluate applicants.

The Town's involvement in this step of the process may involve a search committee charged with the responsibility of reviewing the resumes received, selecting a limited number for first round interviews, conducting the actual interviews, and then recommending final candidates for further consideration by the Selectboard. The Selectboard can be responsible for the entire process or, it may enlist assistance for the initial work by a search committee consisting of Selectboard members, employees, and/or citizens. Remember: the board is ultimately responsible for hiring the new manager.

Review Resumes

As the deadline for receipt of resumes approaches, we will review each resume to make sure they meet the minimum qualifications set. Once review has been completed, we will then notify the town designated officials (search committee) which candidates have been selected for further consideration.

Evaluate, Screen and "Winnow" Down Applicants to Interview

We will work with the town search committee in the screening process to further narrow the number of candidates under consideration. As part of this process, we may conduct up to 5, 30-minute screening interviews by telephone to assess candidate qualifications. We will also develop a ranking system for use by the search committee and meet with the committee to finalize its selections. The goal is to narrow the number of candidates under consideration to between 5 and 10 candidates.

Notify Candidates

Once the search committee has completed its work, all candidates will be notified of the status of their application.

Step 4 Conduct First Round of Interviews

The goal of this step is to take a large group of candidates (normally 5 to 10) and through interviews reduce the number to 2 to 4 finalists as determined by the Select Board. These interviews can be via video conference or in person depending on the distance candidates must travel and any travel or health restrictions that may be in place at the time of the scheduled interview.

Schedule Interviews

We will work with the search committee to schedule the selected candidates for a first round of interviews. This involves coordinating the schedules of the search committee members and picking one or two dates for the interviews.

Prepare Questions and Interview Evaluation Forms

Given the legal exposure when asking inappropriate questions and the need to ask questions that provide the search committee with sufficient feedback to evaluate each candidate, we will work with the committee to develop a list of questions system to track information. Each candidate should be asked the same base set of questions, with options to ask about individual experience.

Conduct Interviews

We will assist the search committee during the actual interviews by facilitating introductions, enforce time limits, monitor questions and wrap-up each interview.

Debrief Interviewers

We will assist committee members debriefing their interview impressions with one or more members of the Selectboard. The debriefing process for each committee member does not necessarily involve much time but it is important to listen to the opinions and recommendation of each member. This information will help the Selectboard select candidates for second round interviews.

Step 5 Conduct Second Round of Interviews

The final step in the recruitment process might involve a number of activities including a tour of the Town, town facilities, group interviews with department heads, town citizens and finally a formal interview with the Selectboard. The final interview may include a written assignment or presentation. The goal is to narrow the field of candidates to one or two finalists.

Schedule Interviews and Help Plan Itineraries

We will work with the Selectboard to pick dates for the final interview process. This involves coordinating the schedules of the Selectboard members and then developing an itinerary for each candidate.

Prepare Questions and Evaluation Forms

We will compile a set of questions for each group involved in the final interview process by consulting with each participant and then developing a list for each participant to ask. Follow-up questions are encouraged but as in the first round of interviews, each candidate should be asked the same base set of questions.

Conduct Interviews

We will assist each group involved in this part of the process by facilitating introductions, coordinating implementation of the itinerary, enforcing time limits, and wrap-up.

Debrief Interviewers

We will assist the Selectboard debriefing each participant in the final interview process. Our assistance will include working with the Selectboard on the set of questions to ask as well as attending the meetings and supporting the board if it would like us to do so.

Select Finalist

After the Board has listened to each participant, it should then take some time to deliberate and decide which candidate should be offered the position.

Step 6 Complete Reference and Background Check

During this phase, references will be checked, a background investigation will be conducted, and we will be available to provide advice on employment agreement negotiations.

Check references and conduct background investigation.

Before the finalist is offered the position, we will conduct a reference check and initiate a civil, a criminal background check, and if desired a social media review. Results will be reported to the Board. We recommend that a VLCT vetted private investigator conduct both civil and criminal background checks on finalist(s). The cost for a basic check is \$350-450, this cost may vary depending on the geographical location or number of records on an individual applicant.

See the list of national and statewide checks conducted as part of a basic check. Burgess Loss Prevention conducts the criminal and civil background checks, while VLCT staffers conduct reference checks.

Credit Check Review

Under state law, credit checks are allowed only if the position of employment involves access to confidential financial. Since the position of Town Manager does involve such access, the Town is permitted to conduct a credit check through VLCT. However, the Town may not use an employee's or applicant's credit report or history as the sole factor in decisions regarding employment, compensation, or a term, condition, or privilege of employment.

Employment Agreement Negotiations

Once the reference checks are completed along with the background investigation and credit check verbal report will be given to the Selectboard. Following this report, should the Selectboard decide to offer the position to a candidate, a formal, public vote should be taken to offer the position subject to successful negotiation of the terms and conditions of employment.

To settle on the terms and conditions of employment we recommend that an employment agreement be drafted. The draft should be prepared by the Town's legal

counsel and reviewed by the Board before offering it to the finalist. Examples from other communities are available and can be used as a model.

Once the terms and conditions of employment have been agreed upon by both parties, a formal public vote by the Board is required on the employment agreement.

Team Experience and Qualifications

William Fraser – Waterbury Team Recruitment Leader

Bill Fraser is a municipal executive with 42 years of leadership service in local government across New England; most notably and recently serving as City Manager of Montpelier, Vermont for 30 years. Bill brings his decades of deep knowledge and experience to the VLCT team, providing a broad range of management consulting services, including recruitment, to Vermont municipalities. He served on the VLCT board for three full 6-year terms, most recently as President. He represented the northeast region as a Vice President on the executive board of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) from 2020-23. Bill holds a MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, a BS in Public Management from the University of Maine, a certificate from the Harvard Kennedy School for the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program, and a certificate from the University of Virginia Darden School for the Senior Executives Institute program.

Dominic Cloud

Dominic Cloud has served as City Manager in St. Albans, Vermont since 2008. He assists VLCT with Executive Search functions when his schedule allows. Dominic has recently completed searches for the Town and Village of Woodstock, Town of Hartford, the Town of Morristown, and the Town of Highgate. Prior to working in St. Albans, Dominic served as the Director of the VLCT Municipal Assistance Center and as a lobbyist on the VLCT legislative team. Dominic received an MPA from the Maxwell School in Syracuse.

Katie Buckley

Katie Buckley is the Director of Municipal Operations Support for VLCT. She and her team provide expertise, technical support and management consulting services to local officials as they navigate the daily administrative, financial and operational complexities of making towns, cities and villages run smoothly and successfully. Prior to joining the League, Katie was a Principal with M&S Development, served as the Commissioner for the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development in the Agency of Commerce & Community Development, was the Director of Real Estate Development for Windham & Windsor Housing Trust and served as the Town of Guilford's first Town Administrator for almost a decade. She is a board member of the Vermont Community Development Association and has served as Chair of Board of Commissioners for the Vermont Housing Finance Agency since 2019. Katie is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, B.A., magna cum laude, Economics.