

Subject: Re: Qualities / Criteria For New DNV Municipal Manager

Date: Thu, 26 Jun 2003 14:26:42 -0700

From: Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>

To: Don Bell <don_bell@dnv.org>, Alan Nixon <alan_nixon@dnv.org>, Ernie Crist <ernie_crist@dnv.org>, Janice Harris <janice_harris@dnv.org>, Lisa Muri <lisa_muri@dnv.org>, Maureen McKeon Holmes <maureen_mckeeonholmes@dnv.org>, Richard Walton <rwalton@dnv.org>, NVD Council <dnvcouncil@dnv.org>

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As a result of FONVCA's meeting of 19 June/2003 the response to Council on this issue has been somewhat modified. [Changes from the email sent on 8 June/2003 are shown in blue.](#) FONVCA realizes the cutoff date for input has elapsed, however, we would like to submit these modifications for the record.

In response to a request from Mayor Bell, the *Federation of NV Community Associations* submits the following suggested qualities and criteria for the position of the new DNV Municipal Manager.

1) The Position:

The search for the vacant Manager's position should be broad and encompass candidates from outside the District or even outside the province.

Rationale: [In consideration of a fresh approach as well as allow for the best possible candidate.](#)

The new Manager should be competent enough to make him- or herself thoroughly familiar with all aspects of both the Local Government Act and the evolving Community Charter.

Rationale: In particular, this individual should be able to evaluate and interpret to Council - and Staff, where appropriate - legal opinions being given to the District. Where concerns about such advice might exist, s/he should suggest clarification or a second opinion.

The new Manager should be thoroughly conversant with the fundamentals of public-private-partnerships.

Rationale: In today's climate of 'downloading' of costs and responsibilities by senior governments and with the scarcity of tax dollars, the District cannot afford to have a new Manager who has a need to 'learn on the job.' The P.3 concept has been around long enough by now that the new Manager should be able to recognize (a) when a P. 3 is appropriate; and, (b) the difference between a good P.3 proposal and a bad one. In any P3 proposal, however, the Manager's overriding obligation is to provide better service to the public.

The Candidate should be able to provide verifiable evidence of an ability to manage and manage well.

Rationale: S/he should be able to (a) command respect from all members of staff; (b) engender 'loyalty and a desire to do one's best' on the job; and, (c) to achieve that without being a 'pocket dictator', and without stifling individual initiative, or creating 'an atmosphere of fear.'

The Candidate should inspire the confidence not only of Council, but also of Senior management.

Rationale: The Manager should 'oversee and initiate' rather than 'micro-manage and dominate'. The new Manager will treat senior staff as colleagues, not 'underlings' but, at the same time, strike a balance which requires no less than the highest quality of professional work from those members of staff. Lax departmental supervision which enabled "theft of time and materials", incomplete/inaccurate reports to Council, or contravention of District policies should all be cause for a serious review by the new Manager.

The new Manager should subscribe to, and agree with the concept that, in the final analysis, every person at the Hall, elected or otherwise, is there to serve the citizens of the District - the 'shareholders' of the Corporation - who pay the second highest taxes in the Region for that service.

Rationale: The current Local Government Act requires that Council and Staff provide [ethical and competent] "Stewardship of Public Assets" and that they "foster the current and future economic, social and environmental well-being of the community." This can only happen if the CEO of the Corporation - the Mayor - and the most senior member of Staff - the District Manager - establish the tone and the climate in which this standard can be achieved.

2) **The Job:**

- Gather, tabulate and analyze data on a variety of administrative and policy matters; confer with department management staff; develop recommendations and prepare and present reports; develop policies and procedures.
- Evaluate existing programs and activities to determine efficiency and effectiveness of same.
- Oversee and manage certain contracts and franchise agreements for the City; negotiate and/or support the negotiation of contracts and conditions; ensure compliance with provisions of contracts; assist in developing long-term focus and funding for programs.
- Identify and secure grant funding.
- Assist in the compiling and review of agenda material.
- Respond to questions and inquiries from the public and/or other agencies.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

3) **Qualifications:**

(a) Ability To:

- Do team building, and handle conflict resolution.
- [Provide strong leadership in operations.](#)
- Oversee the operations of the District's departments and activities. Initiates studies and [measures to monitor](#) operations to ensure quality services are provided in an efficient and timely manner.
- Recommend policies and programs to Council. Provides information to the Council to aid in its deliberations. Implements policies set forth by the Council.
- Supervise the development of budget forecasts. Assists the Finance Officer with preparation of the annual budget. Ensures the proper administration of the budget.
- Represent the District at meetings and conferences. Negotiates contracts and agreements on behalf of the Municipality. Presents the official District position on issues related to finances and operations.
- Respond to complaints related to District policies and services. Recommends remedial action as required.
- Supervise all District employees, either directly or through department heads. Participates in employee selection, evaluation, recognition, discipline and discharge. Recommends organization of Municipal departments and personnel.
- Advises and assists administrative staff and department heads in resolving difficult operational problems.
- Assists with the development of capital improvement programs. Monitors capital needs and determines appropriate financing mechanisms for larger purchases and projects.
- Serves as the District's legislative coordinator. Stays current of proposed changes in legislation that may impact the municipality.
- Performs related work as required by City Council or operational needs.
- Ability to establish effective working relationships and use good judgment, initiative and resourcefulness when dealing with citizens, elected officials, employees, other governmental agencies and municipal professionals.
- Ability to maintain records and prepare comprehensive reports.
- Ability to effectively communicate and present ideas and concepts orally and in writing.
- Ability to work effectively under stress and changes in work priorities.
- Ability to attend meetings scheduled at night or at times other than regular business hours.
- Ability to train, supervise and evaluate the work of others.

(b) Experience & Training:

- BA (preferably MA) in public administration, economics, etc.
- Minimum [10 years](#) of relevant experience [and demonstrated executive leadership.](#)
- Have appropriate level of computer skills.
- Thorough knowledge of the laws, ordinances and related legislation pertaining to municipal operations and authority, budgeting, labour relations and public information.
- Considerable knowledge of the professional principles and procedures of city management.
- Knowledge of municipal financial and personnel management, contract negotiation and economic development.
- Knowledge of public relations practices and marketing.
- Skill in compiling and evaluating complex data and formulating policy and service recommendations.
- Skill in managing diverse programs and services.
- [Demonstrated track record of high standards and ethics \(demonstrated ethical leadership\).](#)

4) Contract of Employment:

- Applicants must agree to be hired on a 'contract of employment' which would stipulate exact details of the job -- including the type of clean-up required -- and require that certain goals be met.
- Applicants must agree to a contract that will contain performance bonuses based on measurable set criteria such as lowering operating costs without affecting services.
- Applicants must agree to a contract that stipulates a performance review by Council after 6 months, 1 year, and 2 year marks with termination without severance for the first two years if the job is not being done. This should be subject only to the advice of the manager as to valid reasons why the job is taking longer than expected. In any event, if District Hall is not seen to be running efficiently at the end of five years, the contract should allow for termination with only 3-months notice with pay.

Brian Platts wrote:

In response to a request from Mayor Bell, the *Federation of NV Community Associations* submits the following suggested qualities and criteria for the position of the new DNV Municipal Manager.

1) The Position:

The vacant Manager's position should be filled by someone from outside the District or even outside the province.

Rationale: When KPMG submitted its Phase One report, two very important recommendations were made; both were ignored. The first was that a replacement for Mr. Bob West-Sells should be sought "from outside the District."

The new Manager should be competent enough to make him- or herself thoroughly familiar with all aspects of both the Local Government Act and the evolving Community Charter.

Rationale: In particular, this individual should be able to evaluate and interpret to Council - and Staff, where appropriate - legal opinions being given to the District. Where concerns about such advice might exist, s/he should suggest clarification or a second opinion.

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- Ability to work effectively under stress and changes in work priorities.
- Ability to attend meetings scheduled at night or at times other than regular business hours.
- Ability to train, supervise and evaluate the work of others.

(b) Experience & Training:

- BA (preferably MA) in public administration, economics, etc.
- Minimum 5 years of relevant experience.
- Have appropriate level of computer skills.
- Thorough knowledge of the laws, ordinances and related legislation pertaining to municipal operations and authority, budgeting, labour relations and public information.
- Considerable knowledge of the professional principles and procedures of city management.
- Knowledge of municipal financial and personnel management, contract negotiation and economic development.
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