



Solano Local Agency Formation Commission

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Date: Commission Meeting of April 10, 2017
To: Commissioners and Alternates
From: Roseanne Chamberlain, Executive Officer
Subject: Status of the Executive Officer Recruitment

RECOMMENDATION

Evaluate options for proceeding and give direction to staff and/or the Personnel Committee.

DISCUSSION

The candidate interviewed by the Commission at the March 21, 2017 meeting has withdrawn from the selection process. The Personnel Committee recommends the following:

- Initiate a new recruitment process in-house
- Prepare and circulate a revised job description
- Revise the recruitment materials

The prior recruitment effort lasted about 4 months. It is likely a new recruitment could take about 3 months. Additional considerations for the in-house recruitment are described below.

The Interim Executive Officer's contract for services anticipated that a new Executive Officer would be hired by March 31, 2017. That contract also provided for follow-on services by the hour to assist the new Executive Officer in coming up to speed. Once the decision of the candidate was known, I advised the Personnel Committee that I would prepare and staff this LAFCO meeting, working beyond the contract ending date with the expectation that the hourly contract rate would apply to that work.

Commissioners

Harry Price, Vice-Chair • Pete Sanchez • Jim Spering • John Vasquez

Alternate Commissioners

Len Augustine • Nancy Shopay, Chair • Skip Thomson

Staff

Roseanne Chamberlain, Interim Executive Officer • Michelle McIntyre, Analyst • P. Scott Browne, Legal Counsel

CURRENT EO STAFFING

The original contract specified a fixed monthly payment for the scope of work, “with the expectation that it (the work) will average 24hours/week.” The contract further states it “may be extended beyond March on a limited hourly basis if it is determined by LAFCo that it would be helpful to have Contractor assist the new Executive Officer in the transition”, however there is no new Executive Officer to assist.

My availability during the next 3 months is constrained due to commitments at my permanent job as Executive Officer of Amador LAFCO. I disclosed these obligations clearly to the Personnel Committee prior to negotiating the original contract. If acceptable to this LAFCo, I am willing to continue to support Solano LAFCo within the limits of my availability.

OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

The Commission has several options for staffing until the new Executive Officer is hired. Some are listed below and Commissioners may have additional ideas.

1. Identify an alternate Interim Executive Officer and negotiate a new contract with that person for full time or part time work as needed. It is not known if an alternate Interim Executive Officer would be easily identified. The new Interim EO could manage the recruitment, or a professional recruitment service could be engaged.
2. Accept a reduced workflow and rely on Michelle McIntyre alone to temporarily manage the operations and functions of LAFCo until the new Executive Officer is hired. It is not clear if she would be willing to manage a recruitment effort in addition to the other duties she would need to assume, thus a professional recruitment service would likely be necessary.
3. Negotiate an amendment to the current contract for Interim EO which could extend the contract period beyond March 31, 2017 and set the hourly rate for continued work under the original scope. The hourly billing rate is necessary because my work availability will vary and I am not able to guarantee an average of 24 hours/week in the office as I did under the original contract. The scope of work could include the new recruitment for a permanent Executive Officer.

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There are advantages and disadvantages to each option and the commission should evaluate the best course of action.

IN HOUSE RECRUITMENT

The previous recruitment highlighted possibilities for improvements to the process for an upcoming search. Conversations with County HR, applicants, candidates, interviewers, and other participants in the first process can inform the Commission. I offer the following ideas:

1. The Commission and/or the Personnel Committee should identify the most important characteristics desired in an Executive Officer. There may have been a less-than-clear consensus on the most important personal attributes of an effective EO. I suggest a working session of the commission and/or the personnel committee to brainstorm ideas and establish an original clear definition of the personal traits, skills, and abilities that are most important to the Commission.
2. The Job Description should be updated to more clearly articulate the actual duties and responsibilities that the Commission expects the EO to perform. The current position description is rather general, similar to a “classification description” rather than a description for a specific position. The recruitment flyer could reflect these concepts.
3. The position should be advertised to a specific candidate pool. Depending on the desirable characteristics (section 1 above) the search could be directed to California Association of LAFCOs (CALAFCO), individual LAFCOs, individual executive officers and their staff members; city, county and district administrators, individual deputy or assistant city, county and district administrators; city and county planning departments, graduate and extension education programs in the Bay Area and Sacramento region. A successful recruitment will require the active networking by every LAFCo Commissioner.
4. An optional writing sample could be requested with the application, limited to 20 pages. The sample could demonstrate the analytical skills of the applicant and directly inform the commission of the applicant’s writing skills. It could be any example or excerpt of polished written analysis, chosen by the applicant.
5. The primary application period should have a submittal deadline and an additional statement that the position would remain open until filled.

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