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Town of Chapel Hill + POLIHIRE: A Proposal for Executive Search Services

We at POLIHIRE have a deep appreciation for the critical work of the Town of Chapel Hill and the landscape in which it operates. We are pleased to offer information on our search engagement process and demonstrate why POLIHIRE is the right firm to partner with Chapel Hill on executive search services for Town Manager.

Introduction

POLIHIRE is a retained executive search firm founded in 2005 and headquartered in Washington, DC. In our 17 years, we have partnered with dozens of organizations and identified hundreds of leaders for our clients. We are also a North Carolina Department of Administration HUB-certified organization with a regional office in Durham, NC.

POLIHIRE has an unparalleled record of success in supporting organizations with clear missions of sustaining, strengthening, and serving their local communities. From CBOs and philanthropic organizations to government agencies and private-public partnerships, we understand the complexities of the multi-stakeholder environments in which organizations in these categories seek to make an impact.

Relevant engagements

Our current and past engagements with similar jurisdictions include the City Manager for Rocky Mount, NC, the City Manager for Eau Claire, WI, the City Manager for Alexandria, VA, and Deputy City Manager for Durham, NC, to name a few. Other past municipal leadership positions we have recruited for include the City Manager for Cincinnati, OH, Deputy City Manager for Tallahassee, FL, the County Executive for Prince William County, VA, multiple Deputy Mayors for the District of Columbia and Deputy County Managers/General Managers for Prince George's County, MD and Durham County, NC.

Our Commitment to Equity

Leadership in public-serving organizations requires more than technical or functional expertise. It requires an understanding of equity in the areas of both service and access. Not only will we identify leaders who bring the technical skills that this leadership role requires, we will conduct the search through a lens of inclusion and equity – ensuring that the next Town Manager of Chapel Hill has a deep understanding of these critical issues and a demonstrated competence in and commitment to leading an organization with this as a priority.

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Just as it is important to conduct searches through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion, it is equally important to conduct the pre-search activities and the post-search negotiations through this lens as well. We have observed the ways in which well-intentioned organizations unknowingly replicate disparities – whether through historically-biased processes for evaluation or biased metrics for compensation. Our clients have the benefit of working with a partner who knows that supporting them in identifying internal stumbling blocks is essential to helping them live up to their stated values and deliver the most successful search.

Finally, we believe that the diversity of our firm – unparalleled in our field – helps make POLIHIRE a most valuable asset in your search for leadership. Our consultants and advisors possess deep experience across a range of industries and functions.

Scope and Sequence

Our end-to-end process begins by developing an understanding of the organization and its needs and continues through a successful negotiation, hiring, and onboarding of the selected candidate. Our extensive process includes:

1. Initial Conversations with Town Council

The engagement starts with aligning on who/which entities will be entrusted with certain decision-making authority along which stages of the process. This includes whether a search subcommittee will be established and at what point the entire Council may be invited to weigh in and how. A clear and agreed upon understanding from the beginning makes for a smooth process.

We then engage various stakeholder groups as we build our own understanding of the organization and what it faces. This information informs our subsequent activities, right up through candidate interviews. Among the stakeholders we may propose to engage are the Council and staff, as well as other Chapel Hill stakeholder groups (i.e., neighborhood organizations, Town commissions, etc.). We are experienced in deploying a variety of engagement modes – one-on-one conversations, focus groups, and surveys – in ways that are most appropriate, accessible, and efficient given the particular stakeholder group targeted.

2. Preparation of the Recruitment Profile and Sourcing for a Diverse Pool of Applicants

After engaging stakeholders to gain a full understanding of the position, organizational culture, reporting structure, compensation package, and profile of the desired candidate, we finalize the position profile. We will post the profile on our website and make use of key social media platforms to amplify it.

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Importantly, two decades of experience have shown us that the very best candidates are not actively seeking employment. Our goal as executive search experts is to identify strong talent and make them aware of and excited about this opportunity through proactive, unsolicited outreach.

As a minority-owned and operated business, we have a particular sensitivity to the challenges of recruiting a diverse slate of candidates. One of these challenges is the high degree to which traditional, long-standing professional associations and the networks they generate tend to replicate an ecosystem that is not inclusive. Our one-of-a-kind network of professionals – along with our memberships in several diverse professional associations and organizations – and our use of competitive intelligence will unearth candidates that other firms are sure to miss.

3. Processing Applications

All applicants receive written acknowledgement of their applications. Applications that come via the designated POLIHIRE e-mail account form a confidential database. While the goal is, of course, to make a select group of applicants known to the client, many applicants (including internal applicants) may not wish to have their desires made known until it has been determined that they are indeed a viable candidate and may be added to the slate of candidates presented to the client. At the end of the process, all non-selected applicants will be informed of their status. Our goal is always to follow a process that respects applicants, values their time, and maintains goodwill all around.

4. Screening of Candidates

All applications are first screened against the most basic criteria laid out in the position profile. Next, we conduct an initial conversation (via telephone/video conference or, when possible, in-person) with all candidates who meet the minimum position criteria. Our recruiters are trained and highly experienced in screening candidates by phone and ensuring that only the most qualified and suitable candidates are advanced.

5. Candidate Interviewing, Assessment, and Background Investigation

During this step, the POLIHIRE team will:

- **Conduct full interviews with the top candidates**. Our understanding of the stated values of Chapel Hill will shape interview questions that ensure not only will the top candidates have the necessary technical skills and professional experience but also possess a track record of organizational leadership necessary to be successful in the role.
- **Prepare candidate profiles for presentation.** We will prepare written candidate profiles – summarizing their experience, motivation for their application, and their approach to the work.

- **Review profiles and narrow the list of candidates in collaboration with clients**.

OPTIONAL: Prior to the final interviews, our Director of Search Assessment administers an Emotional Intelligence Assessment (EQi 2.0). Those results will be shared with leadership to assist in the design of questions to be used during the interview.

6. Additional Recruitment Support – Community Engagement

We implement our tried-and-true recruitment process for each engagement. However, with highly visible and sensitive searches, at the request of our clients, we can add additional steps to ensure transparency and to ensure community residents and other stakeholder groups have the opportunity to engage in the process. Having led many highly sensitive searches over the years in various jurisdictions, we know the importance of transparency and community engagement. The following activities can help ensure an inclusive and transparent process:

1) **Survey.** We will develop a survey of approximately eight (8) questions. While these surveys are anonymous, we will ask (not require) demographic information from the participants. This information will include zip code, and any information of their identification (race or ethnicity, gender and age range). We will NOT ask citizenship-status questions. The survey may be attached to the Town's webpage and a link will be provided where citizens may respond. The survey should be open for approximately 30 days.

2) **Stakeholder meetings.** We will meet with leaders/select representatives of various civic organizations (faith-based leaders, special-interest, education, business, etc.) We will offer suggestions but will rely on Town leadership to identify which to engage. These intimate meetings build alliances and trust and also provide an opportunity for effective dialogue. We have found this to be highly effective.

3) **Public forums.** These are probably among the more transparent and participatory activities. Public forums can be extremely illuminating, and they also come with significant trade-offs. We would defer to our client to determine whether this approach makes sense for their particular community. (During the COVID-19 pandemic, these would be held via Zoom or another platform).

Project Team

This project would be staffed by the following POLIHIRE team members:

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Kenyatta Uzzell, CEO & President – Kenyatta is the Founder and CEO of POLIHIRE. Prior to founding POLIHIRE, Kenyatta served as the Executive Recruitment Manager for the Government of the District of Columbia. During his tenure with the Anthony A. Williams Administration, Kenyatta was responsible for the successful recruitment of multiple executives and senior managers, including the City Administrator, Deputy Mayors, Inspector General, and numerous agency Directors and Deputy Directors. Kenyatta received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and he holds an MBA from Howard University's School of Business. Kenyatta is an active member of several civic and professional organizations, to include the National Forum for Black Public Administrators where he served on the National Corporate Advisory Council. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association, and served on the Board of Directors for the African American Nonprofit Network. Kenyatta resides in Loudoun County, VA with his spouse and two children.
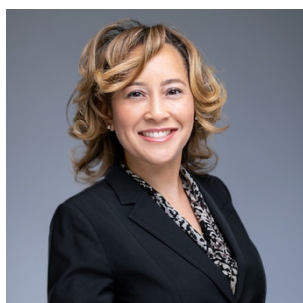
Melanie Bell, COO & Senior Client Partner – Melanie has more than 20 years of experience in public sector organizations, including public health, education, housing, public works and law. Prior to joining the senior leadership team at POLIHIRE, Melanie served as an executive with the Government of the District of Columbia where she led in the areas of Health and Human Services, Education and Public Safety. Melanie holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Business Administration from Howard University. Melanie resides in Dallas, TX.

De'Shawn Wright, Senior Client Partner – De'Shawn has served in senior leadership roles in the public and private sector for the past two decades. His past roles include leading public policy and communications in the northeast region for Uber, serving as Deputy Mayor for Education in Washington, DC for Mayor Vincent Gray, Chief Policy Advisor to former Mayor Cory A. Booker of Newark, New Jersey, and as a Policy Analyst for former New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. De'Shawn holds a bachelor's degree from James Madison University and a Master of Public Administration degree from New York University's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Policy. De'Shawn resides in Newark, NJ.

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Dr. Kamala Uzzell Jones, Director of Search Assessment – Dr. Kamala is a Director of Search Assessment for POLIHIRE. She is a national board-certified counselor and licensed professional counselor supervisor with more than 20 years of clinical and higher education experience. She has conducted several professional leadership development and diversity workshops and is certified in administering the EQ-i 2.0 / EQ 360. Dr. Kamala often appears as a mental health subject matter expert on WRAL and WTVD. Dr. Kamala attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies. She earned a Master of Arts degree in Agency Counseling from Campbell University and a Doctorate of Philosophy degree in Counselor Education from North Carolina State University. Dr. Kamala and her spouse, Coach Adrian Jones, reside in Durham, NC.

Angie Viar, Senior Consultant – Angie has been a key contributor to POLIHIRE since 2011. Before joining POLIHIRE, Angie served in several recruiting roles, including HR Manager and Senior Recruiter. She is a leader with valuable organizational and analytical skills and possesses a strong ability to authoritatively identify the strongest candidates based on experience, skill sets, qualifications, and interests. Angie is a graduate of Radford University. Angie and her spouse reside in Fairfax County, VA. She has two daughters- one is a current undergraduate and Penn State and the other is a high school sophomore.

The work of this core project team will be supported (e.g., administration, research, assessment) by other members of the POLIHIRE staff as required.

Cost

Consistent with the standards of the executive search profession, our retainer fee is non-contingent and non-refundable. The professional retained fee for POLIHIRE to conduct a national search for the Town of Chapel Hill's next City Manager will be $25,000. In the event candidate travel is required, such expenses will be billed separately.

If the Town would like to include the optional community outreach services along with our recruitment services, this will come at a flat rate fee of $8,000, for a total fee of $33,000.

The fee will be billed in four installments. The first installment ($7,200) will be billed at the initiation of the search. The second installment ($7,200) will be billed 30 days into the engagement. The third installment ($7,200) will be billed 60 days into the engagement. The final installment (remaining balance

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minus the previously paid $21,600) will be billed at the conclusion of the search. All other reasonable expenses are included in the quoted fee. Invoices are due and payable at 30 days.

Should you hire candidates presented by POLIHIRE from this search process for other positions within the organization within one year of the close of this search, a fee of $20,000 for each candidate hired is due to POLIHIRE.

Guarantee

If within one year of appointment, the selected candidate is either terminated for cause or chooses to terminate his or her own employment – outside of a negotiated resignation in which dismissal is the alternative to resignation – POLIHIRE will, if requested, conduct another search at no cost other than direct preapproved expenses (i.e., no additional professional services fee but expenses such as advertising will be passed through). POLIHIRE must be notified in writing within 30 days of termination or resignation, and all invoices must have been paid within the agreed upon terms to fulfill this guarantee. Candidates appointed from within your organization do not qualify for this guarantee.

POLIHIRE Contact

Kenyatta Uzzell
Founder & CEO
POLIHIRE
655 15th St NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
www.polihire.com
kenyatta@polihire.com
202-821-2073

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Attachment – Similar Searches

The following is a list of similar searches we have successfully completed that are relevant to the Town Manager position.

Table 1: Relevant Filled Positions

City of Alexandria, VA	
Fire Chief	City Manager
Chief Purchasing Agent	Independent Police Review Auditor
City of Cincinnati, OH	
City Manager	
City of Creedmoor, NC	
City Manager	
City of Durham, NC	
Deputy City Manager	Director, General Services
Director, Building & Inspections	Director, Human Resources
Assistant Director, General Services	Director, Public Works
Assistant Director, Public Works	Director, Transportation
Assistant Director, Water Management	Street Superintendent
Director, Economic Development	Chief Financial Officer
Budget Director	Deputy Chief Financial Officer
City of Eau Claire, WI	
City Manager	
City of Rocky Mount, NC	
City Manager	
City of Tallahassee, FL	
Deputy City Manager	Human Resources Administrator
Durham County Government, NC	
Chief, Emergency Management	Deputy County Manager/General Manager
Chief, Emergency Medical Services	Director, Public Health
County Manager	Safety & Risk Manager
Fire Chief	Police Chief

Government of the District of Columbia	
Chief Financial Officer	Director, General Services
Assistant Director, Classification & Compensation	Director, Health
Assistant Superintendent, Early Childhood Education	Director, Human Resources
Attorney General	Director, Human Rights
Chief Administrative Law Judge	Director, Human Services
Chief Engineer	Director, Juvenile Justice
Chief Medical Examiner	Director, Latino Affairs
Chief Procurement Officer	Director, Medicaid
Chief Technology Officer	Director, Public Works
City Administrator	Director, Small & Local Business Development
Deputy Fire Chief/Medical Director	Director, Transportation
Deputy Mayor – Children, Youth & Families	Human Capital Administrator
Deputy Mayor – Public Safety and Justice	Inspector General
Director, Child & Family Services	Superintendent of Schools
Director, DC Health Exchange	
Prince George's County Government	
Chief Operating Officer, Department of Health	Director, Housing
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Economic Development	Director, Human Resources
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health, Human Services & Education	Director, Permits, Inspections and Enforcements
Director, Central Services	Police Chief
Director, Corrections	Deputy Fire Chief (2)
Chair – Maryland – National Capital Parks and Planning Commission	
Prince William County	
County Executive	

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Attachment – References

1) City of Alexandria, VA
   Mayor Justin Wilson
   Justin.Wilson@alexandriava.gov
   703-746-4500 (office)
   703-338-2843 (private mobile)

2) City of Rocky Mount, NC
   Mayor Sandy Roberson
   Sandy@SandyRoberson.com
   (252) 972-1130

3) City of Durham, NC
   Wanda Page, City Manager
   Wanda.Page@Durhamnc.gov
   919-560-4222

4) City of Charlottesville, VA
   Michael Rogers, Interim City Manager
   Rogersmc@charlottesville.gov
   434-970-3101
   202-821-8528 (private mobile)

5) City of Charlottesville, VA
   Lloyd Snook, Mayor
   Lsnook@charlottesville.gov
   434-293-8185 (office)
   434-760-7959 (mobile)

6) District of Columbia Government
   Nicole Cook
   Chief Administrative Officer
   Dept of Human Resources
   Nicole.Cook@dc.gov
   202-316-8543

7) Fairfax County
   County Executive Bryan Hill
   Bryan.Hill@FairfaxCounty.gov
   703-324-4001 (office)
   703-397-6040 (mobile)