



## **CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS**

### **City Council Agenda Communication**

**Meeting Date:** August 4, 2025

**Prepared By:** Joanie Baxter, CPA – Finance Director

**Agenda Item:** Increased Purchase Authorization – City Administrator Executive Recruitment

**Explanation:** During its meeting of July 21, 2025, the City Council approved a proposal from Jim Arndt with Arndt Municipal Support, Inc. for executive recruitment services for the City Administrator. The proposal that was approved was for a collaborative approach with City staff providing some services for a reduced fee of \$19,500.

Because some concerns were raised about some of the services proposed to be provided by City staff, I reached out to Jim to discuss possible reallocation of services, specifically as related to job offer, contract negotiation, and candidate searches on social media and news articles.

Jim indicated that he was willing to make those changes and there would be a minor increase to the contract cost due to his staff time doing the searches.

Attached is the revised proposal with the above services allocated to Arndt Municipal Services for a total fee of \$20,000.

**Fiscal Impact:** Sufficient funds have been budgeted in General Fund – Leg/Adm for FY25-26 to cover the cost of the contract.

**Action Requested:** Approval of the revised contract with a total cost of \$20,000 which is a \$500 increase over the initial approved amount.



Lilija Stevens  
Mayor  
West Washington, Illinois

Mayor Stevens and Director Baxter,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with a proposal to collaborate with the City of Washington in the recruitment of your next City Administrator. Arndt Municipal Support, Inc. prides itself on a tailored, personal approach to executive recruitment for local governments. I can adapt to the city's specific requirements for the project.

#### **UNDERSTANDING OF ENGAGEMENT – SUMMARY**

The city seeks to undertake a very collaborative executive recruitment for its next City Administrator beginning in August 2025. We will work with your human resources team on this project.

This Collaborative Executive Recruitment process will include:

- Social media teaser postings to ramp up professional interest and engagement – prepared by Team Washington and promoted by both Team Washington and AMS.
- On-site project kickoff meeting with Human Resources, the Mayor and City Council.
- Virtual individual interviews with the Department Directors, Mayor, and City Council conducted AMS.
- Preparation of a professional executive job announcement by Team Washington with input and support from AMS.
- Advertisement and professional outreach provided by AMS.
- Preparation and distribution of a social media/website promotional document by Team Washington. AMS will team up with Team Washington in this promotion.
- Preparation and distribution of an executive job brochure by Team Washington. AMS will provide a sample brochure and AMS will promote the brochure.
- In-depth professional background search that includes up to five national background searches for finalists that include credit, criminal, driver's history, education verification, and reference checks provided by AMS.
- Up to five Maxwell DISC Assessments for finalists. The finalists will be displayed in an Organizational DISC Chart provided by AMS.
- Social media background searches conducted by AMS.
- News article background research conducted by AMS.
- Preliminary virtual interviews with each semi-finalist conducted by AMS. AMS will share the list semi-finalists with Team Washington.

- On-site candidate presentation to Human Resources, the Mayor, and City Council.
- Candidate portfolios for each finalist prepared by AMS.
- Final interview coordination and facilitation provided by AMS.
- 1-year guarantee (if candidate leaves for any reason before the end of 1-year, consultant will complete a new recruitment at no cost except for costs associated with the background checks, DISC Assessments, and advertisement) provided by AMS.
- Employment offer assistance provided by AMS.
- Leadership gift for the new City Administrator on their first day of employment to inspire them to continue their leadership growth and development provided by AMS.

### **CONSULTING FIRM BACKGROUND**

Arndt Municipal Support Inc. is a public-sector management consulting firm specializing in meeting the needs of local government. All services are provided primarily for public jurisdictions.

Arndt Municipal Support Inc. provides service to jurisdictions and agencies on a variety of contemporary issues, providing **executive recruitment**, leadership development, leadership training, classification and compensation studies, and strategic planning assistance. The company opened in January 2021. Arndt Municipal Support is currently recruiting for the Chief of Police for Mahomet, IL, the Director of Public Works for Casey, IL, the Assistant City Engineer for Decatur, IL, the Village Manager for Nilus, IL, and the Community Development Director for Freeport, IL. Our partnership with Illinois cities, counties, and villages from Antioch in Northern Illinois to Marion in Southern Illinois places Arndt Municipal Support in a unique position to better meet the needs of the City of Washington in this critical recruitment.

### **PROPOSED CONSULTING TEAM**

President/CEO James Arndt will serve as the project manager and executive recruiter.

Office Manager Jenny Kiddle will serve as the advertisement and background specialist for this recruitment.

Senior Recruiter Scott Smith will support the recruitment outreach efforts and assist with the facilitation of the on-site interviews.

Recruitment Testimonial:

"As Mayor of Salem, Illinois, I had the pleasure of working with Jim Arndt as a consultant during our search for a new City Manager. Jim's expertise was instrumental throughout the entire process. From conducting DISC assessments and background checks to marketing our city and leading initial candidate outreach, he ensured that we attracted and evaluated top-tier candidates. His guidance during negotiations was invaluable, and his strategic approach made the entire hiring process seamless and efficient. Jim's professionalism, knowledge, and dedication to municipal leadership are truly top-notch. I highly recommend his services to any city looking for a skilled consultant to assist with executive recruitment, leadership and management."

Nic Farley – Mayor, Salem Illinois

## **REFERENCES**

City of Salem, IL  
City Manager  
Lisa Peck  
618-407-5795

City of Charleston, IL  
City Manger  
Steve Pamperin  
217-549-7267

Village of St. Joseph, IL  
Village Administrator  
Joe Hackney  
217-663-8898

City of Mt. Vernon, IL  
City Manager  
Nathan McKenna  
618-242-6802

City of Greenville, Illinois  
City Manager  
Jo Hollenkamp  
618-267-1643

## **EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The following proposed scope of services assumes kick-off of the project in July 2025.

## **PROPOSED SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **TASK 1**

**Outcome** – Completion of On-site Kick-off Meeting.

**Description** – The Consultant will conduct an on-site recruitment kickoff meeting with the City Elected Body to discuss the recruitment process, assist with setting the positions advertised salary range, develop the recruitment schedule, gather job announcement data, and establish advertisement sources.

**Method and Timeline** – August 2025.

## **TASK 2**

**Outcome** – Complete individual virtual interviews with the Departments Heads, Mayor and Council.

**Description** – In this task, the Consultant will meet virtually or via phone with the Department Heads, Mayor and each council member for a short interview.

**Method and Timeline** – In August beginning immediately after the kick-off meeting.

## **TASK 3**

**Outcome** – Creation of Job Announcement and Advertisement

**Description** – In this task, after the completion of the Department Head, Mayor and Council interviews, the Consultant will collaborate with Team Washington as outlined above. This project includes up to \$2,500.00 in advertising expenses for this position. Additional advertising costs, if desired by the client, will be billed directly to the client.

**Method and Timeline** – The 30-day advertisement period will begin in August 2025 based upon the preference of the city.

## **TASK 4**

**Outcome** – Virtual preliminary interviews and initial background checks.

**Description** – The Consultant will complete virtual interviews with all semi-finalists that meet or exceed the qualifications desired by the city. At this time, AMS will complete a social media check and “Google” news check on each candidate.

**Method and Timeline** – Through virtual interviews at the completion of the 30-day advertisement process.

## **TASK 5**

**Outcome** – Semi-finalist Presentation

**Description** – The consultant will prepare a candidate booklet and present the semi-finalists to Human Resources, the Mayor and City Council (on-site).

**Timeline** – September 2025.

## TASK 6

### **Outcome** – Finalist Interviews

**Description** – The Consultant will schedule, coordinate, and facilitate on-site interviews. This may include public stakeholders, department directors, and/or the city council. Prior to the final interviews, the Consultant will complete the DISC Assessment, the Organizational DISC Wheel, reference checks, and final background checks on up to five finalists. If more than five are desired, the city will be billed the additional expense of these services per additional finalist.

**Timeline** – As dictated by the flow of the recruitment process and the successful completion of a background check September/October 2025.

## TASK 7

### **Outcome** – Job Offer

**Description** – AMS will make the job offer to the preferred candidate and negotiate final employment terms with the preferred candidate.

**Timeline** – September/October 2025

## TASK 8

### **Outcome** – Post Offer Leadership and Relationship Support

**Description** – To assist the city and the appointed City Administrator reach success in this new relationship, the Consultant will send a leadership development book to the City Administrator for use on their first day on the job.

**Timeline** – October 2025

## NOT-TO-EXCEED FEES FOR THE REQUESTED SERVICES

For Collaborative City Administrator Recruitment Services:

- **Total Cost of \$20,000.00**
- **Additional costs associated with advertising, Maxwell DISC Assessments, and background checks will be billed at actual costs as outlined above.**
- **Total Cost does not include actual costs for candidate's travel expenses.**

## Billing

40% contractual fee after Task 1 – on-site kickoff meeting.

40% contractual fee after Task 5 – semi-finalist presentations.

20% contractual fee after Task 7 – job offer is accepted by preferred candidate.

Arndt Municipal Support, Inc. is driven by our three core organizational values: dependability, integrity, and enthusiasm. Arndt Municipal Support, Inc. exists to support local governments, and we strive to provide value in every service I provide. Following your review of this proposal, and if you find it acceptable, please sign the Contract Acceptance on the next page and return to my office via email to [james@arndtmunicipalsupport.com](mailto:james@arndtmunicipalsupport.com). I appreciate your consideration of this Proposal.

**COLLABORATIVE EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT CONTRACT**

Between Washington, Illinois and Arndt Municipal Support, Inc.

The City of Washington, Illinois agrees to have Arndt Municipal Support, Inc. conduct a collaborative executive recruitment for the City Administrator.

Total Project Cost for All Tasks Outlined in the Proposal:

**\$20,000.00 plus additional expenses, if applicable as noted above.**

The city will be billed 40% of the Total Project Costs after the completion of Task 1, 40% after the completion of Task 5, and the final 20% after the acceptance of the job offer (Task 7).

**ACCEPTED BY WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS:**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCEPTED BY ARNDT MUNICIPAL SUPPORT, INC.:**

BY: James Arndt

TITLE: President/CEO

DATE: July 23, 2025

