



CITY OF POQUOSON

Office of the City Manager
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January 25, 2016

TO: City Council

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Request Authorizing the Establishment of a Temporary (One Year) Full Time Position of Graduate Management Assistant

I am asking City Council to authorize the establishment of a temporary (one year), full time position of Graduate Management Assistant (GMA). This proposed program is modeled after a program that I was a participant in while in Prince William County. The focus of the program is to provide entry level professional work experience for a recent college graduate whose course of study and intended career path is local government management. If approved, I would also like to open the program to persons who have recently left military service who wish to pursue a career in local government. Unlike shorter term internship opportunities, both paid and unpaid, that the City offers to high school and college students, this program will for all intents and purposes be a full time, entry level position.

There are three principal reasons that I am asking for your consideration of this program at this time. First, as Council is aware, the Planning Commission and the Community Development staff will soon begin the Comprehensive Plan Update process. As envisioned, the GMA will work approximately ½ time in support of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Providing short term additional staffing support to the Department of Community Development will help the Department balance the increased workload requirements associated with the Comprehensive Plan Update with the other responsibilities of the Department such as development plan review and staffing of rezoning and conditional use permit applications.

The second reason that I am making this request at this time is to help the organization assist the City government generally, and the Office of the City Manager specifically, with our succession management efforts. As Council is aware, within the next few years the City anticipates a significant wave of retirements. In many cases these long term professionals have "grown up with the job" and I intend to use this position to assist us by documenting standard operating procedures, informal practices and

policies and related activities to increase our readiness to transition these responsibilities to those that will step into the shoes of these retiring employees.

Finally, by providing the GMA the training and experience to assist us in a wide variety of entry level professional tasks as outlined in the attached job description, we benefit in the short term from the work itself, but as an organization we may benefit longer term should a successful GMA seek to pursue longer term employment with the City as positions become available. As a small City we face challenges in hiring experienced, qualified professional staff given our salary scales. In addition, the fact that we are small, often having only one person in each professional job type, we do not have the luxury of extended training periods nor the resources required to do so in many instances. This program may help us deal with these challenges.

If approved, I would propose to fund the first year of the GMA program using salary savings from vacant positions. Any decision to extend the program beyond Fiscal Year 2017 would be a separate, future decision based upon a review of the initial program performance and be made part of the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget process.

Graduate Management Assistant (Intern)

The City of Poquoson is seeking highly qualified applicants for the position of Graduate Management Assistant. This opportunity is intended for persons who have a strong, demonstrated interest in pursuing a career in local government administration and who have earned a Bachelor's or Master's Degree in Public Administration, Planning, Political Science or similar within the last three years; however, the position is also open to persons who have recently completed military service and are wishing to pursue a career in local government administration.

The City of Poquoson is a small coastal City with a population of approximately 12,000 people located within the Hampton Roads Region. The City has been recognized as Virginia's Safest City, has one of the best school systems in Virginia and has been rated as a Top 5 National Suburb. Our small workforce of approximately 130 full time positions is dedicated to providing outstanding service to our community in a team-oriented manner. Because we are small and have limited resources we wear many hats and often must work creatively and collectively to achieve success. We believe that we can provide an outstanding training opportunity for a qualified applicant wishing to make local government administration his or her long term vocation.

During the course of this one year appointment the Intern will have an opportunity to serve as part of the staff team working with the Planning Commission on the update to the Comprehensive Plan. The intern will also have the opportunity to work in a wide range of administrative areas under the supervision of the City Manager including, but not limited to Human Resources, Human Services, Records Management, Constituent Services, Budget Development and Management Analysis.

This full time, one year position has a starting annual salary of \$32,412 with full benefits. The City reserves the option of reclassifying and converting this position to permanent status at the end of the internship period, subject to consideration and approval of the City Council. Interested applicants should submit a City of Poquoson Employment Application, resume and letter of interest to the City Manager's Office, 500 City Hall Avenue, Poquoson, Virginia, 23662 no later than February 25, 2016. The City of Poquoson is an Equal Opportunity Employer.