

Date: January 12, 2022

To: Honorable Members of the Ethics Commission

From: April Walker, Administrative Deputy City Manager

Subject: **Ethics Officer Recruitment Update**

Background

On August 24, 2021, the City Council appropriated \$165,000 to add one Ethics Officer in the City Manager's Office reporting to the Administrative Deputy City Manager. After Council approval, staff created a draft Ethics Officer position bulletin that included a position description, roles and responsibilities, desired qualifications, and requirements to file. Staff also received and incorporated great feedback from two Ethics Commissioners who volunteered to review the draft job description with staff. The bulletin was then sent to the Human Resources Department (Human Resources) for their review and posting.

On October 15, 2021, Human Resources posted the bulletin which remained open for application submittals through November 27, 2021. This period includes a two-week extension to allow for additional application submittals. Human Resources also advertised the position through LinkedIn and Handshake, a platform where colleges and universities advertise employment opportunities to students and alumni. Additional advertising was conducted through the online job postings of the Ethics & Compliance Initiative and the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics.

Application Submittals

Though the original intent of an external recruitment process was to hire an ethics expert, the challenges below have made this goal extremely difficult to meet.

- A limited pool of ethics field professionals from which to recruit from;
- The City's financial position and limited funds to offer more competitive pay; and,
- The general competitive state of the job market.

Despite these challenges, eighteen total application submittals were received by the closing date and were reviewed by staff from the City Attorney, City Clerk, and City Manager Offices. Application were received from the local, regional, East Coast, and Midwest job markets, and applicants possessed experience in: working in medium to large organizations, training staff, compliance - healthcare, human resources and personnel management, investigations - public safety, and legal pedagogy. However, applicants lacked key aspects of the Ethics Officer role, such as: direct experience in the ethics field, certifications, and experience in large municipal organizations, including working with elected or appointed officials.

After two thorough reviews of applicant qualifications and staff discussion, staff concluded that none of the applicants met the minimum requirements of the position. On December 21, 2021, this information was shared with the Ethics Commission (Commission) Chair and Vice Chair during a virtual meeting.

Next Steps

Given the applicant pool's limited experience and knowledge in the ethics field, and larger challenges noted above, staff has developed, and will pursue, an internal recruitment plan to identify potential candidates for the position. Rather than focus on recruiting an ethics expert, this approach focuses on identifying an internal candidate who has strong project and/or program development and management experience, possesses strong relationships with colleagues through their past and existing roles within the City, and has the willingness to learn and grow as the City's in-house ethics expert. The position will allow this individual with the resources to gain relevant certifications such as LPEC (Leadership Professional in Ethics and Compliance) and CCEP (Certified Compliance and Ethics Professional).

Internal Recruitment Process

An internally recruited candidate would also be expected to bring several advantages. Expected advantages include: an existing understanding of the City's process and culture, and therefore a shorter learning curve; established ties to departments and connections to staff; and, a shorter onboarding process. Additionally, staff Citywide are practiced at managing and running a wide array of programs and projects from the onset into completed projects or fully developed programs, some of which have been recognized at State and national levels. Examples of projects and programs built internally by staff include, but not limited to, a cannabis licensing and equity program; Framework for Reconciliation; Public Records Act requests; Independent Redistricting; American Disabilities Act Compliance; COVID-19 response, including vaccination efforts; homeless services; and 2020 Census efforts.

In addition, the recruit will be supported by existing staff that support the Commission. The City Attorney's Office currently contracts with a law firm that has assisted them in ethics and ethics training. This firm, or other outside professional services providers, can be accessed to assist the Ethics Officer and City staff team with ethics education program development and implementation resources. Human Resources also retains professional services that can be tapped for this need. Vendor solicitations are also options to ensure that the Ethics Officer and ethics program is supported.

The internal recruitment approach was also shared with the Commission Chair and Vice Chair during the December 21, 2021 virtual meeting.

Internal Recruitment Timeline

The timeline below is an anticipated schedule and is subject to change depending on staff, candidates, and Commissioner availability.

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Date	Activity
January 17 – January 30	Application live
Week of January 31	1 st Round of staff application reviews (City Manager Team)
Week of February 7	2 nd Round of staff application reviews (City Attorney and City Clerk)
February 10	Invitations to interview sent
February 18	Interview response window closes
February 21 - 25	Interview schedule confirmed
February 28 – March 3	City staff interviews
Week of March 7	Community panel interviews (Commissioners – 3)
Week of March 14	Candidate decisions
Mid-April	Candidate joins team

Commissioner Participation

Up to three Commissioners are invited to represent the full Commission during the recruitment process by way of a Community Panel Interview. Community Panel Interviews may include those members who reside or work within Long Beach. In this case, the Community Panel will be comprised solely of three Commissioners from the Ethics Commission. Selected Commissioners will be provided with interview questions previously vetted by Human Resources. Commission feedback will inform staff in candidate evaluations and decision process. Please contact Julian Cernuda if interested in serving as part of the Community Panel Interview.

If you have any questions please contact, Special Projects Officer, Julian Cernuda at Julian.Cernuda@longbeach.gov or at (562) 570-6154.

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