PORTSMOUTH, RHODE ISLAND

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE & CHALLENGE STATEMENT

The ideal Candidate for the position of Portsmouth, RI Town Administrator will have:

- A graduate degree in public administration or related field (BA/BS required)
- At least 10 years of progressive management & leadership experience
- The willingness to make a long-term commitment to the community
- A record of thoughtful financial management and strategic capital planning
- The proven ability to be a proactive, innovative problem solver
- Strong public speaking and presentation skills
- Knowledge and experience in all aspects of municipal finance
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience with collective bargaining, contract administration and HR
- The ability to “listen” and to provide the highest level of customer service
- A proven record of nurturing a positive culture
- A demonstrated ability to provide unbiased guidance
- The ability to organize and manage people
- Strong public ethic, integrity, and accountability
- Ability to manage large-scale public projects
- Demonstrated skills as a consensus builder

The new Town Administrator will need to earn the respect of the community and be committed to holding her/himself and others to the highest standards of integrity and accountability. He or she must have a proven record of establishing positive internal as well as external relationships.

It is imperative that the Town Administrator provide unbiased, independent information to the Town Council in a manner that demonstrates full commitment to the concept of transparency in government. The best interests of the Town must always be the priority.

Ideally, this position will be best suited to someone that has a good “business” sense demonstrated by looking at problems from a big picture perspective and thinking “outside the box” to find innovative, perhaps non-traditional solutions. The successful candidate must be able to anticipate and recognize potential problems and then work with staff and other officials to develop solutions.
The Portsmouth Town Administrator serves as the lead negotiator with the Town’s collective bargaining units. The Town Administrator must be an experienced and effective negotiator with demonstrated skill and success in managing and administering collective bargaining agreements. An immediate challenge facing the successful candidate will be to understand the current agreements and develop appropriate relationships with the unions.

Internal relationships are important to the Council so the Town Administrator will be expected to nurture relationships with employees and to lead the employee teams in the delivery of high quality services to the community.

Like many other New England communities, Portsmouth struggles to provide the level of services desired within a limited tax base. The Town Administrator will play a key role in growing the tax base in a way that is respectful of the character and heritage of this community. Certainly, the possible re-development of the Naval Tank Farm in Portsmouth may play an important role in the community’s future and the Town Administrator will be relied upon to advocate for the Town’s collective best interests.

The Town Administrator will need strong skills in municipal finance in order to balance the costs of services with the community’s ability to pay. Guiding the Town to the financial stability it seeks while giving thoughtful consideration to strategic and capital planning will be a constant theme. To effectively manage the efficient delivery of public services to the Town, the Town Administrator will need to be resourceful and fully explore consolidation opportunities and potential regional partnerships. Seeking alternative funding sources and leveraging the Town’s vast waterfront/natural assets will also be important.

In addition to the technical and professional skills desired by the community, the new Town Administrator must be an excellent written and verbal communicator that is experienced in making public presentations. Perhaps even more important will be the ability to receive input from the Council, staff and members of the community in order to reach the best possible outcomes for future challenges.