

**TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: NEIL JENSEN, City Administrator**

**SUBJECT: Public Works Director Position**

**MEETING DATE: September 1, 2020**

**BACKGROUND:**

Several months ago, the City approved the advertisement to fill the Public Works Director position. The search ended with 14 applicants in which 4 were selected for interviews. Two of the applicants were selected to bring back for the second interview. Kevin Zittel was selected as the Public Works Director pending successful background check.

Mr. Zittel informed me by email (attached) that he is withdrawing his application and job offer for the City of Cannon Falls.

In talking with the hiring committee, it was discussed to fill the position thru a search firm of David Drown and Associates. This firm could complete the process in about 2 ½ to 3 months. The Public Works Director position is fully funded for the entire 2020 budget. The cost of the firm would be funded with the budget for the PWD position.

Please see the attached proposal from David Drown and Associates. The process will cost \$14,000 and DDA will stay with the process until a successful candidate is found. The process could start immediately after council approval and be wrapped up in 3 months.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the Hiring Committee's recommendation please approve the contract/proposal with David Drown and Associates to conduct the Public Works Director search.

**REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION**

Make a motion to Approve the contract/proposal with David Drown and Associates to complete the Public Works Director search.

## Neil Jensen

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**From:** Kevin Zittel <Kevin.Zittel@co.washington.mn.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:23 AM  
**To:** Neil Jensen  
**Subject:** Withdrawal of application

I would like to withdraw my application and job offer from the city of cannon falls. At this time I would not like to move on.

Thank you for the opportunity

## Kevin

**Kevin Zittel** | Parks Supervisor  
Phone: 651-430-8247  
[kevin.zittel@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:kevin.zittel@co.washington.mn.us)

**Washington County Public Works Department**  
10191 St. Croix Trail South | Hastings, MN 55033

"Plan, build and maintain a better Washington County"



August 27, 2020

*Sent via email only*

Mr. Neil Jensen  
City of Cannon Falls  
918 River Road  
Cannon Falls, MN 55009

Dear Mr. Jensen,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a proposal to assist the City of Cannon Falls with a search for your next Public Works Director.

The attached proposal includes several elements that set us apart in our approach to providing this service. Highlights include:

- **Knowledge:** Our firm comprehensively understands local government in Minnesota, and our consultants are former Administrators with significant experience.
- **Communication:** We will be on available throughout the search process and will provide weekly email updates to the City throughout the process.
- **Experience:** DDA has conducted more executive searches in Minnesota in the last five years than any other firm, by a wide margin.
- **Effort:** As you know, this is a difficult position to fill, so we will work very hard to help find your next Public Works Director, and our work will not stop until that has been accomplished.
- **Adherence to deadlines:** When a deadline is established, we will meet it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Gary Weiers  
DDA Human Resources, Inc.

Enclosure

# DDA HUMAN RESOURCES, INC.

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## PROPOSAL FOR THE CITY OF CANNON FALLS **PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR SEARCH**

AUGUST 27, 2020



**DDA**

Human Resources, Inc.  
*a David Drown Associates Company*

## CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

♦ Description of the Firm	♦ Process Details
♦ Approach to the Process	♦ Fees
♦ Service Team	♦ References
♦ Timeline	

## DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRM

David Drown Associates (DDA) is a full-service consulting firm with more than 20 years working with local governments providing a full range of fiscal and economic development services, along with compensation and classification services and executive searches, to over 450 government clients throughout Minnesota. Over these years, we have gotten to know local government well, and we have worked hard to keep our services up-to-date to meet the ever-changing needs of our clients.

In 2013, we expanded our scope to provide human resources services — we started with executive recruitment and organizational studies and more recently added classification and compensation studies. Because of growth in our human resource service area, a new Human Resource affiliate company was created in 2017. DDA Human Resources Inc. currently employs seven individuals serving cities, counties, and special districts throughout Minnesota. The vast majority of our consultants are recent practitioners having served as Administrators or Human Resource Managers. In addition, the scope and breadth of experience levels we bring to this project is second to none.

We take great pride in providing the best service at a fair and equitable price. We think you will find that our small company is nimble, efficient, and personable. We know and understand local government, and that will always guide our work.

## APPROACH TO THE PROCESS

Our approach to this search will be to focus on finding the best fit for the City of Cannon Falls. This is accomplished, first and foremost, by listening to what you are saying, understanding your goals and objectives, and building the search process off of that foundation.

After gathering background information, we comprehensively advertise the position and make sure that the posting gets into the hands of prospective candidates. In some cases, those persons are not active job seekers, so we will make every effort to find those folks through direct outreach efforts. After the posting closes, an analysis of candidates will be completed so that, when the semifinalists are presented to the City, you will be confident that these people are the best matches from the submitted applications.

After the City selects the finalists, these candidates will be fully researched, and all necessary hiring information will be available prior to the City making a decision.

Communication with the City is a high priority. In addition to our Consultant Gary Weiers being on site regularly, the City will receive weekly email updates, and he will always be available for questions.

# SERVICE TEAM

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## Gary Weiers

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Gary joined DDA in 2013 and has conducted over 75 executive searches and numerous organizational studies. Prior to joining DDA, Gary had over 20 years of county government management experience, the last 11 years as County Administrator in Rice County. Prior to becoming Administrator, Gary served as the Social Service Department Director in Rice County and worked as a Social Service Supervisor in Mower County and Sherburne County. Gary received his bachelor's degree from the University of St. Thomas and has honed his skills by working his way up from an entry level social worker position to be the head of a \$50 million organization with over 350 employees.

Gary has worked with local governments ranging in size from a few hundred residents to counties of over 1 million persons.

In addition to conducting executive searches, Gary has done work with communities on sharing services, organizational analysis, strategic planning, and other management related work.

Gary will be the lead Consultant on this project.

## Liza Donabauer

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Liza came to DDA with both private and public-sector experience. With a background in construction and finance administration, her passion for public sector work led her to Wright County where she provided support to the HR Department, County Coordinator, and Commissioners. While pursuing her MBA, Liza entered city management for Clearwater, Kansas, and then later moved to Arlington, Minnesota.

During her four years in Arlington as a City Administrator, she completed a reorganization of the administration department, developed an orientation and capital planning process for two new councils, conducted compensation studies for several departments, engaged in a strategic planning session, and took part in developing a leadership curriculum for up and coming leaders in Sibley County. Her work has centered on human resource management, strong community participation, and leadership development.

Since joining DDA, Liza has conducted several Administrator searches and Compensation and Classification Studies.

Liza will assist with reference checking the final candidates.

## Liz Foster

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Liz is an Assistant Consultant that provides support and assistance within our Human Resources Division. Since joining DDA in 2015, Liz has been involved in numerous executive searches and other HR projects.

Some of Liz's duties include community research, creating position profiles, assembling interview materials for our clients, and providing general administrative support to our consultants.

# TENTATIVE TIMELINE

*This timeline is tentative. The final timeline will be set after the City Council's decision to proceed.*

ITEM	TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Decision by City Council to proceed		September 1, 2020
Information gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Gather all pertinent background information</li> <li>◆ Gather salary information and review job description</li> <li>◆ Meet individually with Councilors and others</li> </ul>	September 8, 2020
Advertisement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Develop one page advertisement</li> </ul>	September 9, 2020
Approve Advertisement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ City approves advertisement, job description, salary range, and hiring process</li> </ul>	September 11, 2020
Candidate recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Post position immediately upon approval of advertisement</li> <li>◆ Comprehensively advertise</li> <li>◆ Email and phone calls to prospective candidates</li> </ul>	September 14, 2020- October 6, 2020
Screening of applicants	DDA will review and rank applicants based on job related criteria	October 7, 2020
Selection of finalists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ City Council sub committee selects finalists for interviews</li> <li>◆ DDA will notify candidates not selected as finalists</li> </ul>	October 13, 2020
Background check of all finalists selected for interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal background: City, state, national</li> <li>• Sex offender registry</li> <li>• Social Security number verification</li> <li>• Employment and education verification</li> <li>• Credit Check</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	October 26, 2020
Reference check on all finalists	DDA will conduct reference checks with current and former employers on all finalists	October 26, 2020
Intellectual profile and personality index	DDA will administer an intellectual profile measuring verbal reasoning, mathematical and logical reasoning, and overall mental aptitude. A personality index will also be administered.	October 26, 2020
Finalist Packet	DDA will provide the City information including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of references</li> <li>• Results of background checks</li> <li>• Personality index reports</li> <li>• Video interview</li> <li>• Resumes, etc.</li> </ul>	October 28, 2020
Interviews	DDA will prepare all interview materials and be present at all interviews and other functions. It is recommended that interviews be at a special meeting	November 5, 2020
Decision	City Council may select candidate for offer	November 5, 2020
Offer and agreement	DDA will negotiate agreement with selected person	November 6, 2020
Projected start date	New Public Works Director begins	December 7, 2020

# PROCESS DETAILS

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## ***Step 1: Information Gathering***

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DDA will gather and assemble background information pertaining to the City and position. In addition, Gary will speak the City Administrator and hiring committee to discuss candidate attributes, experience, and other important qualifications. At the same time, the job description will be reviewed and, if needed, we will gather relevant comparative salary information for consideration by the City. We will quickly develop a comprehensive understanding of the organization, community, and position.

## ***Step 2: Development of Advertisement***

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Based on the information received from the interviews, DDA will develop a one page advertisement that presents information about the position and organization. A draft will be presented to the City Council for consideration and approval prior to advertising.

## ***Step 3: Advertisement and Recruitment***

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DDA will comprehensively advertise the position and make direct contact with possible candidates who are not active job seekers. Some of the places the position will be advertised include: League of Minnesota Cities, Association of Minnesota Counties, and municipal associations in Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota. In addition, the posting will be shared with the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association, American Public Works Association, Minnesota Society of Professional Public Works Directors, National Society of Professional Engineers, and the Minnesota Rural Water Association. Other local advertising will be done as per direction from the City. Regular communication with candidates will occur throughout the process.

The simple DDA online application process will be used unless the City prefers to use an existing City methodology.

## ***Step 4: Selection of Finalists***

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DDA will complete a comprehensive analysis of every application received and share the candidate information with the City Council subcommittee about one week prior to selecting finalists. DDA will then meet with the Committee, and the Committee will select finalists for interviews by the City Council. After the City selects finalists, those not selected as finalists will be notified by DDA.



### ***Step 5: Selection***

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After the City selects finalists, DDA will complete comprehensive background screenings including criminal history, civil court history, verification of recent employment, verification of education, driver's license review, credit check, and other items. Along with background checking all finalists, DDA will check employment references on each person.

In addition, DDA will administer an intellectual profile measuring verbal reasoning, mathematical and logical reasoning, and overall mental aptitude. Each finalist will also complete a personality index.

About a week prior to the final interview process, the City Council will have access to each candidate's application materials, video interview, background check results, reference information, a work personality report, and an intellectual profile on each person.

Early in the search process, Gary will discuss interview possibilities including department head participation and other options.

Prior to the interviews, Gary will prepare questions and then facilitate all interviews and other activities the City determines appropriate. Our goal is to make the process smooth and painless so the City can focus all its energy on finding the right person for the job.

### ***Step 6: Offer***

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After interviews are complete, we will assist the City Council with deliberations and facilitate the offer to the selected candidate. We will negotiate the terms with the candidate based on the parameters established by the Council.

# LIST OF SEARCH CLIENTS FROM THE PAST TWO YEARS

Entity	Type of Search	Entity	Type of Search
Brainerd HRA	Executive Director	City of Aitkin, MN	Administrator
City of New Brighton, MN	Manager	City of Lake City, MN	Finance Director
City of St. James, MN	Manager	City of Brainerd, MN	Administrator
Waseca County, MN	Administrator	Isanti County, MN	Administrator
City of Kasson, MN	Administrator	City of Staples, MN	Public Works Director
City of Scandia, MN	Administrator	Mahnomen County, MN	Administrator
City of Sleepy Eye, MN	Manager	Albert Lea HRA, MN	Executive Director
City of Albert Lea, MN	Manager	Sherburne County, MN	Administrator
City of Waseca, MN	Finance Director	Murray County, MN	Administrator
Murray County, MN	Administrator	City of Plainview, MN	Public Works Director
City of Montevideo, MN	Police Chief	City of Montevideo, MN	Manger
Kitchigami Regional Library System	Director	City of Melrose, MN	Administrator
City of Melrose, MN	Administrator	City of Dundas, MN	Administrator
City of Maple Lake, MN	Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer	Brown County, MN	Administrator
City of New Ulm, MN	Manager	City of Olivia, MN	Police Chief
City of Sleepy Eye, MN	Manager	City of Blooming Prairie, MN	Administrator
Albert Lea Econ. Dev. Agency	Executive Director	City of Prior Lake, MN	Manager
Yellow Medicine County, MN	Administrator	Mower County, MN	Administrator
City of Dodge Center, MN	Administrator	City of Brainerd, MN	Comm. Development Director
City of Winsted, MN	Administrator	City of Springfield, MN	Manager
Todd County, MN	Coordinator	Houston County, MN	Administrator

In addition to the specific references listed on the following page, the City of Cannon Falls is encouraged to speak with any of the entities listed above.

DDA is currently conducting searches for the Cities of Albert Lea, Crookston, Monticello, Paynesville, Pequot Lakes, and Waseca, Minnesota, as well as Beltrami, Cook, and Kittson Counties.

## FEES

The fee for the search process is \$14,000. This all-inclusive fee covers professional services and all expenses including travel, advertising, personality index, intellectual profile, background checks on all finalists, etc.

# REFERENCES

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## **Ed Menk**

Mayor, City of Brainerd

*Administrator Search*

Phone Number: 218-829-7266

Email: [emenk@ci.brainerd.mn.us](mailto:emenk@ci.brainerd.mn.us)

## **Royal Ross**

Council Member, City of Faribault

*Administrator Search*

Phone Number: 507-456-2932

Email: [rross@ci.faribault.mn.us](mailto:rross@ci.faribault.mn.us)

## **Steve Jacob**

Commissioner, Winona County

*Administrator Search*

Phone Number: 507-534-2554

Email: [sjacob@co.winona.mn.us](mailto:sjacob@co.winona.mn.us)

## **Jeff Docken**

Commissioner, Rice County

*Administrator and CFO Searches*

Phone Number: 507-339-9711

Email: [jdocken@co.rice.mn.us](mailto:jdocken@co.rice.mn.us)

## **Sara Folsted**

Administrator, Rice County

*Administrator and CFO Searches*

Phone Number: 507-332-6121

Email: [sfolsted@co.rice.mn.us](mailto:sfolsted@co.rice.mn.us)

## **Gordy Wagner**

Commissioner, Pope County

*Coordinator Search*

Phone Number: 320-815-3211

Email: [gordy.wagner@co.pope.mn.us](mailto:gordy.wagner@co.pope.mn.us)