



**CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

**PAUL M. ZIEHLER**  
*City Administrative Officer*  
*Clerk/Treasurer*

414/302-8294  
414/302-8207 (Fax)

City Hall  
7525 West Greenfield Avenue  
West Allis, Wisconsin 53214

[pziehler@westalliswi.gov](mailto:pziehler@westalliswi.gov)  
[www.westalliswi.gov](http://www.westalliswi.gov)

August 2, 2013

The Honorable Mayor Dan Devine  
and Members of the Common Council  
7525 West Greenfield Avenue  
West Allis WI 53214

Subject: Communication from City Administrative Officer requesting permission to fill  
a new employee position of Innovation Officer/Energy-Sustainability Coordinator

Dear Mayor Devine and Common Council Members:

This letter is to request your approval to fill a new employee position of Innovation Officer/Energy-Sustainability Coordinator. As you will recall, a new position of Energy-Sustainability Coordinator was included in the 2013 Mayor's Recommended Budget. However, the Common Council, in its review of the Mayor's Recommended Budget, deleted this position and directed staff to do more research and investigation on the position. The Council also directed that staff report back later (in 2013) with the results of the study. Among the matters that staff was asked to look at included: (1) what other cities are doing in this regard, (2) how do other cities fund such a position, (3) what might be the costs for it, and (4) what the duties, goals, and objectives of this position would look like in an actual job description.

Over the last several months, staff has conducted the research and investigation that the Council asked for last year. At the June 24, 2013 Administration & Finance Committee meeting, staff presented a verbal report on the results of the study. The findings include the following:

- 1.) Several other cities have created similar positions. Most notably in the Milwaukee metropolitan area, the City of Milwaukee has created a multifaceted, comprehensive sustainability plan. One of the first tasks this position would do would be to prepare such a plan for our City. At the same time, the new, added facet to the position of "innovation" will show immediate cost savings through administrative improvements. The Innovation Officer component of this job would work with all City departments to implement new methods.

Also, as part of the study, some other activities and programs were identified as to what other organizations are doing. They include: the National League of Cities Sustainability Program, the MMSD Neighborhood Outreach and Green Infrastructure Program, the WI Partners for Clean Air activities, the Wisconsin League of Women Voters green promotional efforts, the Wisconsin Fuel Choice Fleet Participation Program, the UWM Center for Climate Research, the E/3 Manufacturing Programs, and the Wisconsin Small Business Help Program.

- 2.) Most cities are funding this out of their General Fund. In a few instances, again this was the case in the City of Milwaukee; some initial, private “seed” money or federal or state grants assisted in getting the program started. However, most of this early funding has gone away. Some funding is obtained from cities’ utility funding, since these are financial savings to be made from their reduced energy consumption. This could be done in our case.
- 3.) The first year annual costs for such a position with the City of West Allis would be approximately \$115,000. This would include a \$70,000 annual salary, \$35,000 for fringe benefits, and initial annual operating costs of \$10,000. Subsequent annual costs would be slightly less at \$110,000, with the initial annual operating costs dropping by \$5,000 from \$10,000 to \$5,000. This cost would be further reduced if a part of the costs is charged to our utility operations funds.
- 4.) The duties, goals, and objectives of the position would be as described in the attached job descriptions (Attachments 1 and 2) from several other municipalities. Also attached is the added description of the “Innovation Officer” component of this position (Attachment 3). When this original position was proposed in the 2013 Mayor’s Recommended Budget, it only included the Energy-Sustainability duties. However, since that time, the additional idea of the Innovation Officer and that related work has been added to maximize the potential output of this position and to create even more efficiencies and cost savings.

A few other points can be made to justify this additional City position and expense. They are as follows:

- 1.) The position will easily pay for itself. The amount of annual savings will exceed the cost. An annual report can be prepared for the Common Council to document such.
- 2.) The emphasis will be on innovation, creativity, energy savings, and green/livable/sustainable community programs.
- 3.) The focus will not only be on City operations and buildings, it will also include assistance to residences and businesses in the City on their innovation, energy, and sustainability challenges.

- 4.) The new staff position will be able to work on and implement new management techniques and strategies with all departments and divisions. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, benchmarking, lean processes, 5-S, Six Sigma, and others.
- 5.) The position can also perform general budget and management analysis, and take the lead in aggressively seeking federal, state, and private funding to supplement regular City financial resources and reduce the taxes.
- 6.) The program will be evaluated and successful in showing both short-term and long-term accomplishments.

Assuming this new position is approved, no new funding is anticipated to be needed for 2013. Rather, the first funding would be needed on January 1, 2014. This is due to the fact that until a job description is written, a recruitment is conducted, and a person is selected and begins, it will be next year (2014). Accordingly, the position can be budgeted for in the 2014 Budget, which is being prepared now. The position would be placed organizationally in the City Administrative Office and report directly to the City Administrative Officer with also special guidance and direction from the Mayor.

Also attached are two additional pieces of research information for your background reading on this subject. Attachment 4 is ten ideas for improving cities. Attachment 5 is a fact sheet on what 38 other local governments are doing in this regard.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Your approval is strongly recommended. If you have any questions, or need further information or clarification, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Paul M. Ziehler,  
City Administrative Officer  
Clerk/Treasurer

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Attachments  
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