



The Mercer Group, Inc.

COCOA, FLORIDA

CITY MANAGER

**Susan Stanton
Berkley, California**

Summary

- **ICMA - CM**
- **Master of Public Administration**
- **Master of Divinity**
- **Current position: Sabbatical to pursue degree**

- **Cover Letter**
- **Resume**
- **Internet Research**

Various news articles – neutral mention
Linkedin

THE MERCER GROUP, INC.

Dona Higginbotham
Senior Vice President
Daytona Beach Shores, Florida 32118-8202
DHHiggin@att.net

www.mercergroupincflorida.com

Susan Ashley Stanton, ICMA-CM

2451 Ridge Road, Berkeley, CA. 94709

susan@stanton58.com 602-622-0682

June 6, 2020

Dona Higgin, Senior Vice President
Mercer Group Florida
Daytona Beach, Florida
DHHiggin@att.net.

Re: Cocoa City Manager Recruitment

Dear Ms. Higgin:

Please find the attached resume, which highlights my experience and education as a City Manager for the City of Cocoa. I am a credentialed City Manager with extensive experience managing cities in Illinois, Kentucky, Florida, and California. As a former resident of Florida, I am very familiar with the City of Cocoa and have enjoyed dinning in the downtown. I moved to California in 2011 but would like to return home to be closer to my family and enjoy the Florida lifestyle.

As indicated in my resume, to enhance my leadership skills in 2017, I took an extended sabbatical from local government to attend seminary in Berkeley, which I completed in May. While attending seminary is not the training most city managers seek, I believe this very specialized education has enhanced my skills and compassion as an administrator. It has uniquely equipped me to manage the City of Cocoa and lead the effort to recruit their next police chief. As witnessed these past weeks around the nation, the relationship between elected and appointed officials with a Police Chief is critical to a community's ability to successfully address social change in our current COVID-19 environment.

During my career in local government, I have successfully led the recruitment of many Police Chiefs. I have always extensively sought input from the community, law enforcement professionals, and department staff. In each of the processes I have used, I have always involved citizens from the community who were knowledgeable about the City, subject matter law enforcement professionals knowledgeable about the candidate pool, and police employees who desired a sense of ownership in the selection of their leader. Just like recruiting a city manager, developing an accurate candidate profile is one of the essential tasks that would need to be completed by the community and department. It would be a top priority if selected as the City of Cocoa's next city manager.

The next city manager for the City of Cocoa will need extensive experience in utility management because the City is a regional water utility provider. In the City of Largo, Florida, I was responsible for directing the management of a 12 MGD Advanced Wastewater Reclamation Plant and an extensive Reclaimed Water System, which serves both residential and commercial customers. During the reclaim water system's construction, I was responsible for defining service areas, establishing customer rates, and developing long-range capital investment plans. During my tenure as City Manager in Lake Worth Beach, Florida, the City finalized the design and constructed a \$17-million-dollar Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment plant to reduce the burden on existing shallower surficial water withdrawals and the impact of increased saltwater intrusion into municipal drinking water wells. The City also had management responsibility for a 70 MGD regional water reclamation facility and an associated sub-regional system consisting of major gravity interceptors, master pump station and force main distribution system that provided services to five neighboring communities. In Greenfield, California, I implemented a water and sewer cost of service rate study to fund needed capital improvements in the City. In partnership with Hawksley Consulting, the City developed a multi-year financial management plan for each fund, which integrated capital funding needs identified in a newly commissioned Master Plan for the Utility. Using the revenue requirements from the revenue sufficiency analysis, the City performed a detailed cost of service allocation to determine the proper distribution of costs and corresponding revenue requirements between the respective customer classes of each fund.

The profile statement for the City Manager also indicates that economic development experience is critical for the next city manager. In Largo, Florida, I had extensive experience creating a tax-increment district, establishing a Main Street program, approving two downtown redevelopment plans, and implementing an innovative development code to meet the specialized needs of downtown businesses. During my tenure in Largo, I successfully led the development of the Hyde Park Village in the City's downtown redevelopment district. This project involved mixed-use development that combined retail and professional office construction with townhomes and apartments along a major City commercial corridor. Before the success of this project, long-time residents said it would be impossible to redevelop downtown due to declining property values and the slum and blight designation within the Community Redevelopment Districts. The City acted as a master redeveloper in the sale of a surplus City facility for the construction of a five-story hotel, which would not have happened without active participation from the City in the negotiation of a comprehensive development agreement.

I have been a successful manager because I recruit, retain, and empower high performing employees with the right tools, resources, training, and responsibility to do their jobs. People who work with me know that my two most important

City of Cocoa City Manager Recruitment
Susan A. Stanton, ICAM-CM
June 6, 2020

management tools are the conference table in my office and a whiteboard on the wall. My best collaboration takes place during regularly scheduled meetings with elected officials, department directors, supervisors, labor leaders and employees, community leaders, and city residents. I manage by direct and frequent communication with people at all levels of the organization irrespective of their job, title, or level of responsibility. I never talk to people sitting behind my desk, don't read my email when I am supposed to be listening and surround myself with people who are smarter than I am and tell me when they think I am wrong.

I am very interested in the City of Cocoa. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the position in more detail if you feel my background and experience would be of interest to the Mayor and City Council.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Susan Stanton".

Susan A. Stanton, ICMA-CM



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A DYNAMIC AND EFFECTIVE MANAGER WITH EXCEPTIONAL INTERPERSONAL AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS COMMITTED TO CREATE AND FOSTER A WORK ENVIRONMENT WHERE COMPASSION, CULTURAL COMPETENCE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND RACIAL EQUITY ARE VALUED.

RELEVANT LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Seminarian, Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, CA

2017-2020

To expand my leadership skills and ability to assist communities address the moral and civic dimensions of social change exemplified by the COVID-19 global pandemic and civic protest involving policing, completed a three-year graduate seminary program and awarded a Master of Divinity in May 2020.

Chief Operating Office, Santa Clara Water District, San Jose, CA

2017

The mission of the Santa Clara Valley Water District is to provide Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy. With headquarters in San Jose, the District provides water supply, enhances streams and watersheds through creek restoration and habitat protection; provides flood protection for homes, schools, businesses and roadways, and partners with other agencies to provide trails and open space for the community. As a public agency with the current FY2017 \$523 million operating and capital budget and a staff of over 780 employees, the District is committed to being transparent and accountable regarding its operations and business practices.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Responsible and accountable for the planning, management, performance and improvement of the District's major administrative divisions and functions.
- Served as a key member of the executive leadership team and represents the CEO and the District in interactions with employees, the public, and other agencies and organizations.
- Directed four divisions: Financial, Planning and Management Services; Information Technology; General Services; and Human Resources with a total budget of \$102 million and a staff of approximately 180.

City Manager, City of Greenfield, CA

2012 - 2016

The City of Greenfield is a diverse community with a population of 18,000. Greenfield is centered in one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world. Known as the "Salad Bowl of the World," 80% of the lettuce grown in the United States is from the Salinas Valley and over \$2 billion worth of fruits and vegetables are shipped annually across the United States and abroad. The area around Greenfield is also the heart of Monterey County's premier wine grape growing region due to favorable soils and climate with over twenty vineyards and wineries within a thirty-mile radius. Vineyards, wineries, and wine tasting rooms continue to expand throughout the region.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Chief executive officer of a small municipal government with 51 full time staff. The City adopted a Biennial Operating Budget in FY 2016. The total FY 2016 operating and capital budget is \$28,700,000 and \$17,037,300 in FY 2017.
- Oversight responsibilities for the following functions: sanitary sewer and water utility system, police, streets, drainage, parks, recreation, planning, zoning, building, community development and finance.
- Serve on the Board of Directors for the Monterey Bay Area Self Insurance Authority, Chairperson for the Salinas Valley Enterprise Zone Advisory Board, Chairperson for the Monterey Bay Area City and County Managers Association and Committee member on the California League of Cities Revenue and Taxation Committee and Housing and Economic Development.

Achievements:

- Obtained voter approval for two Transaction and Use Tax measures removing a restrictive sunset provision and enacting an additional ¾ tax to supplement law enforcement and recreation service levels
- Reduced the City's Successor Agency total annual debt service by \$120,800 generating \$2,286,000 of net savings by refunding existing redevelopment debt.
- Improved fiscal health of the City resulting in an upgrade in Standard & Poor's bond rating from a "BB" rating to "A"-rating.

City Manager, City of Greenfield, CA (cont.)

- Negotiated a \$9.9 million Energy Management program to install a solar system and related energy conservation measures which will produce \$4.5 million of net benefits to the City over twenty-five years. Phase II includes installing automatic meter readers to generate \$138,000 of annual energy conservation savings and \$100,500 in utility management maintenance.
- Obtained a \$5 million CDBG grant for the construction of an \$11 million rental housing project to benefit low income families.
- Resolved a demand by DOF to disallow \$4.7 million of previous RDA expenditures and received a *Finding of Completion* and approval of a *Property Management Plan* transferring property to the City to finalize the dissolution of the RDA.
- Partnered with private developers to obtain low-income housing tax credits and construction of an affordable multi-family senior rental housing project. Negotiated a Disposition and Development Agreement for the purchase of property, an Affordable Housing Regulatory Agreement to restrict project occupancy to low income seniors and an Acquisition and Fee Deferral Loan to facilitate the development of the project.
- Obtained a \$1.4 million CDBG grant to rehabilitate the City's water supply, distribution, wastewater collection and treatment systems including master planning, conducting a revenue sufficiency study and revising a new Utility Rate Tariff.
- Presided as the City's chief labor negotiator to collaboratively negotiate six labor agreements to improve City Operations and establish high performance standards for city staff.
- Obtained \$465,000 in grants to launch a Housing Rehabilitation program to assist residents finance the costs of repairs and general property improvements; and a Homeowner Assistance program to assist with the purchase of a new home.
- Partnered with regional non-profit groups and Foundations to obtain funds to open the City's first downtown Cultural Arts Center.
- Strengthened professional city management by recruiting professional executive staff for Police Chief, Administrative Service Director, City Attorney, City Engineer, Community Service Director and Human Resource Manager.
- Eliminated political polarization in the community by instituting government reforms that promoted open and transparent city government dedicated to improving the quality of life in the community.

City Manager, City of Lake Worth, FL**2009-2011**

The City of Lake Worth is a diverse city with population of 35,800 and is located on the east coast in Palm Beach County, Florida. Since 2007, the City lost 50% of its total assessed land value and is challenged by substantial foreclosure of residential properties, slum and blight and a history of high turnover of its executive and management staff.

Duties and Responsibilities as City Manager:

- Chief executive officer of a municipal government with 318 full time staff with an FY 2012 Budget of \$172 million. Oversight responsibilities for the following functions: electric and water utility system, police, streets, stormwater drainage, sewer, parks, recreation, planning, zoning, building, community development, finance, library services, beach development and solid waste management.
- Administered the City during a State of Financial Urgency and restored fiscal solvency and financial discipline.

Achievements:

- Privatized and outsourced costly and ineffectively managed public service functions and reduced FY 2012 personnel expense by \$1.2 million without any reduction in service levels to the public.
- Implemented critical cost saving modifications to City's Pension program which saved \$1.3 million in FY 2012.
- Reduced the annual cost of police protection by \$2.3 million by collaboratively renegotiating a multi-year Law Enforcement Service Agreement without reducing levels of service.
- Reduced the cost of Fire and EMS service by \$11.8 million by renegotiating a ten year Fire and EMS Merger Agreement and removing excessive supplemental fire payments previously agreed to by the City.
- Declared a State of Financial Urgency which allowed the City to dramatically reduce personnel cost and expedite the resolution of a collective bargaining impasse with the City's three labor unions.
- Instituted the use of Financial Forecasting to identify and address projected long range deficits and accurately aligning projected expenditures with available revenues which empowered elected officials to make difficult economic decisions based on accurate financial data and reports.
- Renegotiated an agreement to secure a \$5 million grant from the Palm Beach County Cultural Facilities Bond for the redesign and redevelopment of the beach and averted the forfeiture of these funds due to inaction and indecision.
- Established a Utility Conservation Program to provide free residential and commercial utility audits and grants to qualified residents to reduce wasteful consumption of electric and water.
- Designed and financed the construction of a \$17 million Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant and \$10 million Deep Well Injection system to improve the City's long term water system
- Developed a long-range Electric Improvement Plan that could be accomplished with in house staff and a city created apprentice program.
- Implemented the "Energized Lake Worth" plan which included GHG Emission Inventory of the City and Communities energy consumption patterns

City Manager, City of Largo, FL**1992-2007**

The City of Largo is a city with a population of 78,400 residents covering approximately 17 square miles. It is located in the State's most densely populated region in central Pinellas County, Florida. The City is known for being family friendly and dedicated to providing superior services to promote pride and enhance the quality of life to its residents. Hired as Assistant City Manager in 1990 and promoted to City Manager in 1992. .

Duties and Responsibilities as City Manager:

- Chief executive officer of a municipal government with 882 full time staff with an FY 2016 General Fund Budget of \$67 million and total budget of \$147 million. Oversight responsibilities for the following functions: police, fire, EMS, advanced waste water treatment, solid waste, housing, streets, stormwater drainage, sewer, reclaimed water, parks, recreation, planning, zoning, building, community development, finance, library services, cultural arts and golf.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate redevelopment strategies to attract businesses by successfully adopting Community Redevelopment Districts which addressed conditions of slum and blight and supported private investment through plans, policies and programs that afforded maximum rehabilitation and redevelopment.
- Foster positive employer-employee relationships which promoted high employee morale.

Achèvements:

- Demonstrated open and transparent communications with the Mayor, City Commission, employees, and community and exemplified the best principles and practices of the council-manager form of government;
- Prepared and shared information equally with all members of the City Commission; provided the Commission with alternatives, fiscal impact analysis and recommendations on all matters affecting the community.
- Planned, organized, and managed redevelopment projects to provide incentives and remove barriers for community redevelopment and reinvestment.
- Responsible for negotiating a private/public partnership that created a downtown mixed-use development which entailed retail and professional office construction with townhomes and apartments
- Expanded the City's economic and property tax value by \$330 million dollars by the establishment of a multi-year Annexation Management Program which started in 1997.
- Supervised the financing and construction of a \$22 million dollar library and the renovation of an \$11 million dollar city complex. Coordinated the purchase, acquisition, and financing of commercial and residential property for the construction of a regional park to stimulate reinvestment in the downtown.
- Instituted a comprehensive evaluation system of all employee positions, classifications and job structure and design to ensure personnel system was fair to employees and meeting current and future needs of the organization. The process included job restructuring, manpower forecasting and organization realignment.
- Created an innovative *program to increase productivity, reduce absenteeism and control preventable healthcare costs. The program consisted of* voluntary seminars throughout the year, an annual employee health screening event, employee assistance programs and the creation of participant wellness plans with specific goals to address health related risks and to promote healthy behavior and lifestyle choices.
- Established an innovative succession planning program designed to ensure stability and continuity in leadership and management functions in all work programs, divisions and departments. Program included the creations of leadership workshops for executives, supervisors and employees to prepare managers for future promotion and responsibility

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**City Administrator, City of Berea, KY****1986-1990**

The City of Berea, located in the Kentucky Bluegrass, is a college community with a population of 12,000 residents and an FY 1990 budget of \$7.2 million. In FY 1990, the City employed 85 employees in the departments of Administration, Finance, Police, Fire, Planning, Public Works, Solid Waste, Land Fill Management, Recreation, and Industrial Development. Developed a comprehensive economic development program in the creation of a large Industrial Park which resulted in four international manufacturing firms locating in the City.

Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, City of Champaign, IL**1984-1986**

The City of Champaign, home of the University of Illinois with a population of 60,000 residents and an FY 1986 budget of \$26 million. In FY 1986, the City employed 380 employees. Major accomplishments included coordinating a \$4 million dollar renovation project of City Hall and conducted and prepared policy analyses and recommendations for City Council consideration on issues relating to the operations, responsibilities and functions of city departments.

Administrative Assistant to the Borough Manager, Ketchikan, AK**1983-1984**

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough consists of several islands in Southeast Alaska's Inside Passage and the Tongass Narrows with a population of 14,000 residents and an FY 1984 budget of \$4.3 million. Accomplishments included acting as the Boroughs' primary representative for negotiating labor contracts with International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots (MMP) and the Inland

Boatmen’s Union (IBU) which reduced operating costs and strengthened management rights and conducted performance analysis of Borough operations and made recommendations for the reorganization of staff and management control systems.

EDUCATION

Church Divinity School of the Pacific	Masters of Divinity
University of Florida, Graduate School, Public Administration	Masters in Public Administration
University of Florida, College of Political Science	Bachelor of Arts
University of California San Francisco Medical Center	Clinical Pastoral Education Certificate
University of California Berkeley	
Goldman School of Public Policy, Executive Seminar	Continuing Education
Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government	Continuing Education
Senior Executive in State and Local Government	
University of Oklahoma, Economic Development Institute	Continuing Education
University of Virginia, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service	Continuing Education
Leading, Educating and Developing	

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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| ➤ International City and County Managers Association | ➤ California City Managers Foundation |
| ➤ California City and County Managers Association | ➤ Monterrey Bay Area City Managers Group |

PERSONAL

Enjoy outdoor photography, writing in a personal journal, running and hiking. I am ordained as a member of clergy in the Episcopal Church and take pride in my son’s career as a Police Officer with the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office in Tampa Bay, Florida.

References Provided Upon Request