



CITY OF MERRILL
AD-HOC COMMITTEE
AGENDA • TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

6:30 PM

To attend remotely phone 574-208-1312 PIN 179 777 043 #

- I. Call to Order
- II. Minutes from Previous Meeting
 1. Approve minutes from August 16th meeting
- III. Discussion of duties of the position
 1. Answers received from Department Heads
- IV. Title of the position
- V. Establish date and time of next meeting
- VI. Public Comment
- VII. Adjournment

**City of Merrill
Ad Hoc Committee – City Administrator
Tuesday, August 16, 2022
City Hall – Common Council Chambers
5:30 PM**

Members Present: Mayor Hass, Alderperson's Mike Rick, Michael Caylor
LaDonna Fermanich
Citizen members, Nancy Kwiesielewicz, Rebecca Rutkowski, Chris Malm

City Attorney Hayden, IT Manager Brown, Zoning Administrator/Building
Inspector Pagel, City Administrator Johnson, Police Chief Bennett, Alderperson
Weix, Alderperson Blake, Merrill Productions personnel

I. Call to Order

II. Introductions of Committee Members

Members of the committee introduced themselves.

III. Discuss title name of future City Administrator position

Discussion regarding the name of the future position occurred between
the committee members.

Additional information was provided at the meeting.

It was decided the committee would discuss the duties of this position
before the title of the position.

IV. Discussion and review of job description

Alderperson Caylor said the current position has become a large part of
marketing. City Administrator Johnson stated the past years his position
has dealt with development and recruiting developers. He also receives a
lot of emails from the public that are funneled to him. Personnel issues
are another portion of his position. Department heads report directly
to him with questions and issues. He attends meetings with organizations
and businesses in the region. He discussed other duties.

The committee decided the next meeting would involve key components
for the job description and input from the department heads.

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, September 6 at 6:30 pm in the
Common Council Chambers.

Ad-Hoc Committee on the City Administrator Position – August 16, 2022

V. Public Comment

No public comment

VI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Alderperson Rick to adjourn. Alderperson Caylor seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori L. Anderson-Malm
City Clerk

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2022 2:41 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: City Administrator Ad-Hoc

Keep for ad-hoc please.
 Steve Hass

From: Bonack, Dustin
Sent: Tuesday, August 23, 2022 9:19 AM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: City Administrator Ad-Hoc

Steve,

Here are my answers to the questions you had:

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the city administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today?

- The top issue I depend on the city administrator for is help with personnel issues. Dave has a vast knowledge and experience in navigating the issues related to interviewing/hiring/discipline, etc.

Is there anything you would like to see the next city administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided?

- No, our current administrator has always been very responsive and gets me the information I am looking for.

Thanks,

Dustin Bonack
 Street Superintendent – City of Merrill
 715-536-4222

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2022 2:43 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Ad-hoc

From: Akey, Rod
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 12:00 PM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Steve,

1. The city administrator provides a consistent go to for all departments. We rely on this position to answer questions on HR, policy, city functions and organization. This position allows us to do our jobs and not have to spend valuable time with these other issues.
2. The city administrator position provides support and guidance with dealing with the public, businesses and the council. We need this position to be able to function with a team approach philosophy.

Roderick J. Akey, PE
Public Works Director/City Engineer
City of Merrill
715-536-5594

The city administrator ad-hoc committee asked the department heads to answer the following questions:

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the city administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today?

Is there anything you would like to see the next city administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided?

Please send your responses to the Mayor by Friday, September 2nd.
Please do not "reply to all" when sending your responses.

Thank you,

Lori L. Anderson-Malm
City Clerk
City of Merrill
1004 E. 1st Street
Merrill, WI 54452

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Thursday, August 25, 2022 10:41 AM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: Fwd: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Please put with the others

Steve J. Hass
 City of Merrill Mayor
 715-536-5595

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Klug, Josh" <Josh.Klug@ci.merrill.wi.us>
Date: August 25, 2022 at 10:06:54 AM CDT
To: "Hass, Steve" <Steve.Hass@ci.merrill.wi.us>
Subject: FW: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Mayor,
 Please see my response below. Thanks,

Josh Klug

Fire Chief, Merrill Fire Department
 Northeast Regional Coordinator, MABAS Wisconsin
 Vice President, North Central Fire Chiefs Association
 110 Pier St.
 Merrill, WI 54452
 (715) 536-2233 (fire station)
 (715) 722-1121 (direct line)
 (715) 218-0815 (work cell)

From: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Sent: Wednesday, August 17, 2022 11:07 AM
To: Akey, Rod; Bennett, Corey; Bonack, Dustin; Brummond, Brad; Hayden, Tom; Klug, Josh; Mrachek, Tammie; Pagel, Darin; Steinagel, Gabriel; Unertl, Kathy; Wendorf, Dan; Wszalek, Nick; lolhoff@tbscottlibrary.org
Cc: Hass, Steve
Subject: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

The city administrator ad-hoc committee asked the department heads to answer the following questions:

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the city administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today? I rely heavily on the current city administrator's experience and knowledge of human relations issues. Within our department, we have new hires, promotions, and even discipline from time to time. Dave has been a real asset on these functions. I hope a new administrator will be able to provide the same services. The other issue that is essential for a new administrator is to

be hands-off departments and not micromanage them. Dave has been an excellent supporter of department heads. He encourages them to lead and improve their respective department. He offers suggestions, but does not dictate to me what needs to be done. My fear is that we get a new administrator from a smaller community than Merrill that doesn't have a full-time fire & EMS department. They might be enticed to change how we operate. Tony Chladek was an example of that. He tried to change our department based on other communities he served.

Is there anything you would like to see the next city administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided? Not really. I think finding someone that could do the things that Dave did will be difficult.

Please send your responses to the Mayor by Friday, September 2nd.
Please do not "reply to all" when sending your responses.

Thank you,

Lori L. Anderson-Malm
City Clerk
City of Merrill
1004 E. 1st Street
Merrill, WI 54452
715-536-5594
Lori.Anderson-Malm@ci.merrill.wi.us

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Thursday, August 25, 2022 3:52 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: Fwd: Administrator Questions

Steve J. Hass
 City of Merrill Mayor
 715-536-5595

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Pagel, Darin" <Darin.Pagel@ci.merrill.wi.us>
Date: August 25, 2022 at 3:36:20 PM CDT
To: "Hass, Steve" <Steve.Hass@ci.merrill.wi.us>
Subject: Administrator Questions

Mayor Hass,

In response to the questions from the Ad Hoc Committee.

I depend on the City Administrator for support when the public questions or has a problems with the orders I have written. The same holds true for the Council.

I believe the Committee and the Council needs to start from scratch with this position. Develop a job description that is consistent with the Council's vision for the future. I see the position as being a liaison between the Department Heads, Mayor, and the Council. The person must strive to eliminate any division between the employees, the Council, and the public. This should be the go-to person for Department Heads and Employees with open communication to the Mayor and Council. I believe HR duties should be with the Attorney's office. You have the perfect opportunity to develop a position and description that is right for the City of Merrill , that is beneficial to all parties involved, internal and external.

Thanks, Darin

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 1:11 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Importance: High

For the ad hoc file.
 Steve Hass

From: Steinagel, Gabriel
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 12:43 PM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: FW: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee
Importance: High

Gabe Steinagel
 715-536-6561

From: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 10:43 AM
To: Akey, Rod; Bennett, Corey; Bonack, Dustin; Brummond, Brad; Hayden, Tom; Klug, Josh; Mrachek, Tammie; Ollhoff, Laurie; Pagel, Darin; Steinagel, Gabriel; Unertl, Kathy; Wendorf, Dan; Wszalek, Nick
Subject: FW: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee
Importance: High

Good Morning,

Just a reminder: The city administrator ad-hoc committee asked the department heads to answer the following questions:

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the city administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today?

He trusts me, and my decisions in running the water and wastewater utility. He has the department heads working together, it runs a lot better when we can use every ones strengths.

I depend on him with the HR policies.

Is there anything you would like to see the next city administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided?

I can't think of anything at this time.

Please send your responses to the Mayor by **Friday, September 2nd**.

Please do not "reply to all" when sending your responses.

Mayor Hass has already received responses from some department heads. If you've already sent your response please disregard this reminder.

Thank you,

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 2:24 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: City Administrator

Ad-hoc file for next meeting.
 Steve

From: Wendorf, Dan
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: City Administrator

Good afternoon Mayor, I hope all is well. The following is a response to an email that was sent out by City Clerk Anderson-Malm looking for feedback from two questions that were generated from the City Administrator Ad-Hoc Committee.

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the City Administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today?

There are a lot more than one or two items that I depend on from the City Administrator.

One of the most important items I consistently use the Admin for is personnel related issues. These issues have become much more complex over the past decade plus and when dealing with all of our seasonal employees and part time it helps to have a person to double check on things with and ensure that what we are doing is all good. This ties into policy items, I use the Admin for quite a few policy related items to double check that what we are doing is what we should be doing. Vacations, time off, other leave uses to go along with full time/seasonal/part time employees as they all have different interpretations.

Another common issue I depend frequently upon the Admin for is advice/professional sounding board person (person to hear me out). It is really nice to have someone that I can bounce ideas off of and tell me if it is a good idea, bad idea, maybe we should do this a little different or that, offer suggestions and sometimes simply just to listen. Especially somebody who has the experience that our current Admin has. That has been an amazing asset for me to pick his brain and experience to help with decisions both large and small. This is something I used Dave for quite frequently and I found it very helpful through his 10 years here and I appreciate it very much.

When we were building a \$4 million dollar Aquatic Center, Dave was eager to help me navigate through that process and was extremely helpful through the entire process from start to finish. He had been involved in many large municipal projects in previous positions and it was very helpful to have Dave help us see this very big project through.

One of the biggest things an Admin gives all of us is a conduit to and from the Common Council. This includes being an advocate for both groups and to ensure that both are informed and educated. This is where our organization really benefits. . . . **I really think this one is understated still to this day, coming from someone who worked here before we ever had an administrator. It is fantastic to have a person to go to for interpretation of things from the Council and I am sure it works just as well the other way around.

Is there anything you would like to see the next City Administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided?

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)

This is difficult to answer to be honest. We were extremely fortunate to have an Administrator that is the caliber that Dave Johnson is. His extensive experience and knowledge is going to be almost impossible to replace (and I don't say this just to say this). From my extensive interactions with Dave, there really isn't anything that I can think of that he couldn't help me with (if it was something he wasn't 100% sure of – he'd research it and get back to me). He and I communicated very well between each other and he was there to help me whenever I needed it. I appreciated his honesty (even when we disagreed, we did so respectfully and found solutions). The amount of positive changes he helped to create in our community in 10 years will be very difficult to replicate by anyone.

**I hope the City continues with a City Administrator. The complexities of running a municipality in today's day and age is not what it once was and I feel it extremely important to have a qualified professional on staff to oversee the day to day operations.

*****Please share this with the Ad-Hoc Committee verbatim so that the true sentiment of my thoughts are allowed in their entirety – and not summarized as a group.**

Thank you,

Dan Wendorf

Parks & Recreation Director
City of Merrill
715-536-7313
www.merrillparkandrec.com

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 3:27 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Ad-hoc please
 Steve Hass

From: Unertl, Kathy
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 2:55 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori; Hass, Steve
Subject: Fwd: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

From Kathy U - Finance-Development:

Someone as "front gateway" to City resources for development, including interacting with developers, realtors, and business owners/representatives. Grant writing and preparation & evaluations of Request For Proposals (RFPs).

Someone to assist Mayor/Council/Finance Director with fiscal planning and budget development process.

From Brenda - Overall:

I have consulted with Dave on issues pertaining to pool car repair, Federal SAM renewal, insurance, and fixed assets (mainly general city questions or involving the MFG).

From Jill - Payroll - Employee Benefits:

I definitely work with Dave on HR related matters the most. The replacement needs to be trained in HR or they need to hire an HR manager. I don't think handing it to a current employee to just "take on" is acceptable. There are so many rules and regulations involving HR that we need someone that is trained. Dave and I work together on things such as FMLA, work comp, disciplinary matters, drug testing, wages, handbook interpretation, union contract issues, health insurance, benefits – just to name a few.

Kathy Unertl, Finance Director/RDA Secretary
 City of Merrill

From: "Anderson-Malm, Lori" <Lori.Anderson-Malm@ci.merrill.wi.us>
Date: August 17, 2022 at 11:07:13 AM CDT

Subject: Questions from the City Administrator Ad Hoc Committee

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)

The city administrator ad-hoc committee asked the department heads to answer the following questions:

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the city administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today?

Is there anything you would like to see the next city administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided?

Please send your responses to the Mayor by Friday, September 2nd.

Please do not "reply to all" when sending your responses.

Thank you,

Lori L. Anderson-Malm

City Clerk

City of Merrill

1004 E. 1st Street

Merrill, WI 54452

715-536-5594

Lori.Anderson-Malm@ci.merrill.wi.us

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 8:26 AM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: My take on the City Administrator position

Ad-hoc
 Steve Hass

From: Hayden, Tom
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 8:06 AM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: My take on the City Administrator position

Mayor: We are extremely fortunate to have a City Administrator well versed in finance, personnel issues and approaches, Union negotiations and strategy and long range planning. His successor should be equally well versed in all these.

I appreciate the "inclusive approach" that has been used in approaching and solving issues that arise. Dave has been a great "sounding board" on virtually all issues my office faces, and I would hope his successor would be able to serve in that same capacity.

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 10:25 AM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: city admin feedback

Ad-hoc
 Steve Hass

From: Mrachek, Tammie
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 9:42 AM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: city admin feedback

Hello Steve

Here is my response. Please let me know if anything needs further clarification.

What are the top one or two items or issues you depend on the city administrator to provide to you to help your department operate today?

Is there anything you would like to see the next city administrator assist you with that isn't currently available or being provided?

I depend on the City Administrator for a variety of items/issues.

If I have to choose the top two areas, they fall under personal/human resources and policy/procedure/ operations. I seek this guidance for assistance if needed and to ensure that what I do is in full compliance. It is beneficial to have a central point of contact that is knowledgeable in most, if not all city functions.

Indirectly related, I would also like to mention that I strongly feel that the department heads should be included at some level in the interview process of a new city administrator.

Thank you for asking for our input.
 Tammie

Tammie Mrachek
 Director – Merrill Enrichment Center (MEC)
 City of Merrill
 303 N. Sales St. Merrill, WI 54452
 715-536-4226

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)

Anderson-Malm, Lori

From: Hass, Steve
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 2:27 PM
To: Anderson-Malm, Lori
Subject: FW: City Admin questions

Ad-hoc
 Steve Hass

From: Wszalek, Nick
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 2:15 PM
To: Hass, Steve
Subject: City Admin questions

In response to the email concerning the City Administrator position and what we as department heads use that person for:

I have always been very comfortable going to Dave with questions that pertain to personnel and H.R. issues. It has been great knowing that we have someone with the experience and confidence to handle these issues that can keep the city from putting themselves in a negative situation when it comes to these two issues in particular. The experience that Dave has brought will be tough to replace. I also really appreciate the “no nonsense approach” that Dave has had since I’ve been here. I realize that to some people on the outside looking in they don’t always see things the same way but I have a lot of respect for people that handle themselves with confidence. Dave has corrected me when needed and supported me when he seemed it necessary to do so. I think a good leader is capable of being both rigid and respected.

As far as what I would like to see in the next City Administrator, I don’t think finding someone with the experience of Dave is possible but It is possible that the next Administrator could have a different perspective on how to make Merrill great. I am hopeful that we can keep the momentum going and bring this city to where it needs to be to compete with other communities in the area and the state. I can say from experience that working without an Administrator makes that extremely difficult and things seem to sit and stagnate. It has been a great pleasure working with Dave and I can comfortably say he has been the best boss I have had in my career.

Best of luck in the search, thank you for the opportunity to give my input.

Nick Wszalek
City of Merrill
Facilities Maintenance Manager
 (715)-722-1127

Attachment: Questions from Committee (9181 : Answers received from Department Heads)