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City Manager Annual Performance Evaluation for FY 21/22

DUE to Norma Santoyo by May 20, 2022. You will also receive this evaluation form in your email with a link to complete online. You may elect to complete it online or on paper.

The City Manager's Performance Evaluation will be on Jun 8, 2022 Council Agenda.

Summary

The City Manager's performance evaluation consists of an annual appraisal by the City Council, as provided for in the City Manager's employment agreement.

The purpose of the evaluation process is to maintain a strong Council/Manager team by ensuring open and productive communication on an annual basis. During this formal 360 degree review process, there is an opportunity to identify areas of satisfaction and areas for growth or needing change as identified by the Council.

The City Manager will complete a self-evaluation. Key stakeholders will be invited to participate in the performance review process.

The Director of Human Resources is the facilitator for this process, and will gather input from a confidential survey completed by the key stakeholders. The data will then be compiled into a comprehensive format and presented at a Council Meeting for the Council's review and discussion.

The attached evaluation form will also be completed in hard copy or digitally by each member of the City Council and provided to the Director of Human Resources. A staff report, Council's individually completed evaluation forms, and the summary results from the electronic evaluation survey will be provided as supporting materials for the public meeting at which City Council reviews the annual performance of the City Manager.

→ as requested
10/21,
it would be
valuable for
Council to
have these
to assist in
our
reviews.

Please do not hesitate to contact Norma Santoyo at 775-300-0677 with any questions.

Rating Criteria

For each performance criteria, please use the following rating scale:

- E – Exceeds your expectations.
- M – Meets your expectations.
- AG – Areas for growth.
- NA – Not applicable.

Vision and Strategy:

AG Supports the development of the Council's vision; communicates and fosters it throughout the organization and within the community.

AG Supports Council's development of a City-wide strategy, including strategic plan development. Strikes the right balance of dealing with day-to-day demands versus attending to long-term strategic interests of the City.

AG Encourages the City to tackle difficult, but necessary, long-range challenges.

AG Prevents crisis when possible but responds to crisis appropriately when necessary.

Comments for Vision and Strategy:

Due to limited character space in this fill form, please see attached documents for comments.

Communication Skills:

AG Verbal Communication Skills – Good command of oral expression; expresses ideas clearly and concisely; easily comprehends ideas expressed by others; ability to explain and understand difficult and complex subjects.

AG Written Communication Skills – Good command of written expression; expresses ideas clearly and concisely; easily comprehends ideas expressed by others; ability to explain and understand difficult and complex subjects through written media.

NA Presentation Skills – Ability to present effective, quality presentations in public settings appealing to a variety of audiences.

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AG Ability to utilize appropriate media for communication – TV, radio, newspaper, group interaction, individual meetings.

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Comments for Communication Skills:

see attached

Interpersonal Skills/Relationships:

AG Ability to relate well to others and to make people feel at ease, even in difficult situations.

AG Ability to gain the trust and confidence of the public; fosters contact and cooperation among citizens, community organizations and other government agencies.

AG Fosters cooperative communication and positive working relationships with the Council.

M Skilled in negotiation techniques in a variety of scenarios – employee, council, public, interagency.

AG Demonstrates sensitivity to individuals and groups, as appropriate.

AG Is forthright and honest in all relationships.

Comments for Interpersonal Skills/Relationships:

see attached

Leadership (Culture):

AG Supports and manages in accordance with identified City Values and Council Priorities.

AG Provides City staff with direction and management according to the transparent and high performance government model.

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AG Uses sound judgment in decision making; seeks out all relevant and necessary data, makes decisions in a timely manner.

AG Directs utilization of City resources effectively; consistently supports re-engineering efforts City-wide.

AG Crises and/or emergencies are handled in an effective, efficient, and professional manner.

AG Stays current on management practices and techniques and seeks to increase his/her value to the City.

Comments for Leadership (Culture):

see attached

Innovation:

AG Participates with Council and Staff in strategic planning.

AG Links strategic goals to the Strategic Plan and Council Priorities; sets objectives for performance and manages toward those objectives.

AG Promotes creative thinking and policy development that is suitable for the times.

AG Receptive to new ideas, suggestions and approaches to make our community a better place. Exhibits a short-term and long-term forward-thinking approach to the State of the City.

M Receptive to a changing environment.

Comments for Innovation:

see attached

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Management (Operations):

- AG Roles of Charter: Knowledgeable, effective and efficient use of authority granted by the City Charter to the City Manager, the City Council and other elected or appointed positions; respectful of the delegation of powers described in the Charter.
- AG Setting the Agenda for City Council Meetings: Presenting issues for consideration by the Council in a timely manner; creating logical sequence for items to be considered.
- AG Preparation of Materials for City Council Meetings: Materials explanatory to the Council, with the pertinent facts and analysis for the Council to make informed decisions; materials available for the general public and media to review and understand.
- AG Conduct of City Council Meetings: Initiates responses to issues and concerns that the Council and/or public poses; contributes positively to Council deliberations.
- AG Ability to delegate authority, granting proper authority at the proper times; sound judgment in the evaluation of when delegation is appropriate.
- AG Utilizes a positive approach to direct work efforts of staff.
- AG Encourages and rewards initiative and promotes effective Human Resources programs and values.
- AG Utilizes effective project management techniques. Completes projects agreed upon with Council within a given time frame.
- AG Promotes cohesive teamwork with the Senior Management Team.

Comments for Management (Operations):

see attached

General Comments:

In a brief narrative, please describe:

What are you most pleased with in the City Manager's performance?

See attached

What areas for growth would you like to see? Please provide specific suggestions on how the City Manager may improve the areas for growth?

See attached

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Comments Addendum to Council Member Brekhus' CM Evaluation June 8, 2021

As it is less than 7.5 months from the October 25, 2021, evaluation I am attaching the comments from that review as most are still applicable. It is Exhibit A.

Please note, in this review I cite several example situations. These are representative of impressions that helped inform my review. These situations are not except for those identified in the General Comments section, the specific reason for any rating. I believe that illustrative case studies are a useful technique and so included some in this review to help explain why a rating level was given.

Comments for Communication Skills:

There are often not informational or relevant social media posts generating from the City. I have raised this with CM privately. While this may be entertaining to some audiences, I fear that it may crowd out the attention necessary for when the City needs to communicate on a serious emergency or timely manner. A few members of the public have commented about posts to me and stated that there is sometimes a tone that is belittling to specific individuals. This is an example of why the rating criteria for utilizing media for communication is an area for growth.

Comments for Interpersonal Skills/Relationships:

The sudden firing of the Finance Director was disturbing. Just 24 hours before she was fired, she brought a major initiative to the Council – the resolution to finance the City's largest general fund debt obligation. At that meeting, she was praised by members of the Council and Mayor for the accomplishment. Some Council members discussed her expertise and how they relied upon her professional recommendation to make their decision.

In a conversation with the Finance Director after she departed, she said that she had recently received a positive appraisal of her performance.

She was in no way aware that she would be shortly fired. A firing of this type can create chaos in an organization as managers develop fear that they may be next on the chopping block. CM should develop honest and frank relationships with his direct reports so that they are knowledgeable of his assessment of their performance. With few exceptions like someone who commits a breach of legal, policy or ethical obligations, a firing should be not a surprise to employees. Employees should also be given

opportunities to improve their performances identified as meeting expectations.

This is an example of why the rating criteria pertaining to making people feel at ease even in difficult situations is rated as a growth area. If CM disapproves of a subordinate's performance, he must coach them over time toward success.

Comments for Leadership:

As discussed in October 2021, I think CM likes being a leader and that is an admirable trait. However, there are two areas for concern with his leadership. First is related to the rating criteria about use of resources. I have observed a lot of events both internal and external to which staff is invited and attends to celebrate or honor and event or occasion. I think that his leadership style is one in which he likes to gather people for these sorts of happenings. I am not sure this is the best use of resources. I would like to see more leadership on product delivery such as an ordinance, plan, or other material organizational policy. Many of these are not being delivered like the sewer fee rate proposal or the urban wildfire regulations. I think that he should focus less on ceremonial gatherings and more on gatherings of teams for work production.

I am also concerned that he was supposed to attend but did not, the FEMA training for emergency management that was held last month in the east coast. I understand that it is critical for the top executive to be trained in that field. This is an example of why the rating criteria pertaining to staying current on management techniques is marked as an area for growth.

Comments for Innovation:

This rating criteria pertaining to participating with the Council and Staff in strategic planning is again an area for growth. I mentioned in the October 2021 review that CM needed to convene the Council for a strategic workshop. This was scheduled for a specific day in the spring and then CM cancelled it. There was a "refresh" with a strategy consultant but a scheduling snafu (see concerns about retaliation below) prevented me from being a participant in this activity.

Comments for Management:

This area continues to be one of concern and increasingly so. CM has overreached in areas of executive administration to the detriment of public participation and even in that of encroaching upon areas in which the Council should be providing direction and publicly deliberating. An example of this is informing the Council by email that civic plaza was being "refreshed". This central public place has been the source of past planning studies and proposed concepts that have not come to fruition. I

spoke to him privately at least a half dozen times about the need to revisit those planning efforts. I was surprised that without any public review or even consultation with an urban designer, the space was redesigned.

Just this week, the City announced that Reno is participating in a pilot study related to blockchain technology. Immediately upon this announcement I received input from a constituent. This is an initiative that has not been discussed by the Council. It is not suitable for the City to implement new programs without public review or even knowledge of elected officials.

Due to defects of the Council strategic planning effort that he organized, he has a carte blanche of a broad and ill-defined Council strategy document to exercise executive authority as he sees fit. This is not serving the Council or the citizens of Reno well in being participants in their community's future.

I am also concerned that the Manager is withholding information from the Council that would be useful as baseline information in advance of making specific decisions. For this reason, preparation of materials for City Council meeting is ranked low. As example, the long-awaited master plan for the TMWRF has not been presented to the Council while several implementing efforts of the plan have come for decision making to the Council. In addition, the police department operations study was never brought forward for a presentation. This study is helpful for the Council to have a snapshot in time understanding of how an independent expert viewed the successes and areas for improvement in this critical area.

General Comments:

I have two specific examples of the City Manager not following his own policies as contained in the citywide Policies and Procedures manual.

This is of serious concern. If the administrator of city policies and guidelines who also has authority in disciplining personnel for policy violations is not personally in compliance the legitimacy of the policy framework is compromised.

Example 1: Violation of Policy #409 -Alcohol and Drug Use (attached hereto as Exhibit B) on November 5, 2021. On this day in the 4 PM hour, I entered the executive wing of the 15th floor. I knew CM was in the building as I had just ridden the elevator with him from the 7th floor where we attended a retirement send off for an employee. After the elevator ride, I kept an appointed phone call with a retired firefighter about benefit concerns that he had. I thought this was timely information to share with CM, so I went to see him.

As I approached his office, I noted that the wing was empty but heard his voice. I did not enter his private office but stood on the threshold and he approached speaking to someone through his earbud devices but also

holding a beer can. I recognized it as a Coors beer can. I mimed to him, and we mutually agreed using hand signals, that he would call me back. Startled to see him drinking alcohol during work hours on city premises, I left the building.

It was a warm day, and I was on my bike ride home when he called me, and I asked him if he was drinking alcohol and he denied that he was. I was deeply troubled by this because I recognized it as a Coors beer can and later confirmed the image in my mind's eye with one on the internet.

I thought about making a formal complaint about this matter and now wished I had because I believe that he has retaliated against me for my unfortunate timing that day. A formal complaint would have protected me from this retaliation. I did not report because I hoped this would be an isolated incident, did not have other evidence that alcohol use impacted his work ability, and feared an investigation where my word would be pitted against his.

I spoke to a few people in the organization about this issue so that others would be aware if they observed a similar incident in the future and confirm my understanding of the problems that could arise if a person at the apex of the organization violated the alcohol policy.

Example 2: Violation of Policy 401-Ethical Standards (attached as Exhibit C). Immediately after the incident described above and upon the start of the New Year, I noticed that CM had a changed disposition toward me. When he first started his tenure, I requested to meet with him twice monthly to go over general issues. These meetings were critical for me to be informed to do my Council job.

One day after he missed two of these meetings upon short notice, I went looking for him to see if he was at work that day. After that, he told me that he would not meet with me in person and only interact with me through written communication. My requests to meet with staff on issues to help me have knowledge to perform my job also went unmet. He also cancelled my regularly scheduled meetings with him in advance of Council meetings. This cancellation resulted in me not being as prepared as I needed to be for two Council meetings. He has since restored those meetings in a more formalized manner with staff.

Disturbingly, he wrote me a text message attached hereto as Exhibit D.

This text message implies details regarding my political campaign for Mayor and in turn, finding details objectionable. Due to those unspecified objections, he refused me access to himself and staff under his command to provide me information that I need to perform my duties – namely being prepared for votes at City Council and in responding to constituent

concerns.

Using knowledge (accurate or not) of what a political candidate may be saying on the campaign trail to influence city management operations is a clear-cut violation of this policy. This includes subsection VII B4, Participation in Political Activity but likely other provisions as well.

I believe that his criticism of my political campaign, requirement that I discuss matters with him in writing, and blocked access to staff are retaliatory. He is using his position of executive authority to prevent me from doing my Council job because I had observed him drinking alcohol on city premises, confronted him about that activity and shared the detail of that observation to other individuals.

As mentioned in the October 2021 review, I did not support CM's initial hiring as I believe he lacked the experience to do this job. Since that time, I've also grown more convinced that he is not growing in the job but becoming increasingly incapable of performing the duties. As with the prior evaluation, I am attaching ICMA (International City/County Management Association) Code of Ethics (see Exhibit E). Special notice should be given to Code 7 that involves neutral positions in elections of the employing member body. It is also relevant that Section 2d of CM's employment contract requires adherence to the code.

The City is an ICMA member and I understand that this organization has resources to assist in the professional development of city managers.

Should the Mayor and Council wish to continue Mr. Thornley's employment I encourage them to formalize a process for him to receive guidance and professional development assistance.

I am at this time making these policy violations known and am requesting the assistance of the City Attorney's Office to explain to me how to request investigations into the policy violations described above.

Addendum to Council Member Brekhus CM Review 6-22