

Extraordinary Qualifications - Civil Service Form #1298

Requester Information

Name: SineadDaniell Date: 7/12/2018

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Phone Number: 504-658-7204

Department: Safety & Permits

Employee Details

Employee Name: Ashley Bechne

Department: 260 - Safety & Permits Appointing Authority: Zachary R. Smith
Jennifer Cecil

Is this a promotion or a new hire?: New Hire (Hired Above Minimum) Promotion (Qualified Above Minimum)

Proposed Classification: CHIEF ZONING OFFICIAL

Job Posting and Appointment

Type of Appointment: Probationary Date of Appointment (if known):

Duration of Job Posting: 4/20/18- Continuous

Method(s) of Advertising?: Government Jobs website

Detailed Position Description:

- Supervise and provide professional guidance to Zoning Administration staff on interpretation and application of the City's Zoning Ordinance.
- Supervise application intake and license review for all alcoholic beverage licenses.
- Coordinate enforcement activities for zoning violations, alcoholic beverage code violations, City Code violations, and French Quarter Security plan implementation.
- Manage operations of the adjudication bureau of the department to ensure compliance with notice and procedure requirements of the City.
- Meet with citizens and developers to review proposed developments for compliance with City standards.
- Manage operations of the short term rental administration of the department to ensure compliance with all code requirements, conduct code-based performance audits, and coordinate enforcement activities.
- Develop, implement, and enforce regulations pertaining to tire shop performance standards.
- Develop internal Departmental policies for the review of permit and license applications to ensure compliance with the comprehensive zoning ordinance, City Code, and other applicable regulations

Qualifications

How many applicants were on the eligible list? After reviewing the register, how many possessed the extraordinary qualification(s) described below?:

Six applicants were on the eligible list. after reviewing the register, it was found that none possessed the extraordinary qualifications below.

Describe:

Describe how similar qualifications are not readily available in the labor market at the minimum rate:

Rule IV, Section 2.7 (a) says that the additional pay shall be "justified based on objective analysis of the additional financial advantage the increased hiring rate will provide the City." In this regard, Ms. Becnel's advantages are apparent. The other candidates consist attorneys with only tangentially related experience in Zoning work. Only one other candidate is admitted to practice to the same courts as Ms. Becnel. No other others hold that qualification alongside both extensive private and public experience in land use matters. Ms. Becnel not only meets, but exceeds the minimum qualifications. And though attorneys are readily available on the labor market, those with the municipal experience of the job posting, and who have worked directly in the New Orleans environment of rules, laws and codes, are few and far between at the minimum rate. Ms. Becnel's current salary of approximately \$85,000 in the Law Department is evidence of that. Additionally, the median national salary of an a licensed attorney is \$118,160 according to US News and World Report, and the average pay for an attorney with 9 years' experience is \$160,486. We are lucky that Ms. Becnel is willing to work at the rate being offered, and we understand her decision is informed by our benefits program and a strong personal satisfaction gained from working in the public interest.

Whereas the current Council consisted of 5 attorneys and 2 non-attorneys, the attorney/non-attorney ratio of the new Council if 2 to 5. Accordingly, the new Council needs a centrally accessible attorney on its staff.

How are the duties of the position relevant to the advanced qualification?:

In the exercise of the supervision of the zoning division, Ms. Becnel's experience in public and private practice will enable her to ensure all enforcement actions taken by the department will be performed in accordance with due process and notification requirements, thus making actions less likely to be appealed. Her experience in legal publication will help the department's official determination, which are appealable to BZA and then CDC will be upheld and frivolous challenges will be deterred. Her years of experience should allow the department's opinions to be wholly formed to address potential counter arguments. Additionally, her strength in writing legal opinions and forming policy arguments make her well-suited to train other staff members, and improve the depth of skills of the zoning division. She is also expected to employ these talents to formalize and document processes that increase the accuracy and efficiency of the department's work. Her leadership in the local Bar Association ensures that Ms. Becnel will be exposed to feedback and best practices through her interactions with peers across local governments.

Are there other departmental employees in this classification with the same or equivalent qualifications: Yes No

Additional Documentation

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Proposed Pay Rate

Rate Granted in Steps (maximum of 21): 21 Rate Granted as a Percentage (must be divisible by 1.25): 26.25

How will hiring this person at the rate specified be a financial advantage to the City? (Please provide an objective financial analysis):

The higher quality of the noticing procedures and proper code citation the Ms. Becnel's experience ensures will lower the staff time expended by the Law Department to defend erroneous or procedural appeals. Hiring above the minimum entrance rate will allow the Safety and Permits to acquire a well-qualified candidate that will stay in the position. Rehiring or hiring someone that is not well-qualified will require additional decreased departmental effectiveness, time, and money that could be better utilized with the right candidate. This candidate possesses a unique familiarity across all levels and functions of City's legal interest, rather than specifying in only one or two as is the case with most of the other candidates. Ms. Becnel will hit the ground running, providing a seasoned professional to serve as an expert teacher and critical legal mind to improve the department's consistency, especially in its function to interpret the code per City Charter.

Appointing Authority Approval

Name: Jennifer Cecil

Date: 7/12/2018

Approval: Approved Denied

Comment:

Class & Pay Approval

Name: Samuel Stoute

Date: 7/13/2018

Approval: Approved Denied Cancel

Comment: