



DATE: January 18, 2022

CONSENT

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jake Dickson, Assistant City Administrator

AGENDA ITEM: Authorize Job Description for Code Enforcement Official and Approve Hiring

BACKGROUND:

The full-time Code Enforcement Official position was identified as an opportunity for process improvements within the Planning Department in the operational audit performed last year. Staff researched and collaborated to create the Code Enforcement Official job description included in your packet.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

Should the City Council approve the Code Enforcement Official job description and approve the recommended hire?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

The proposed job description creates a position that is primarily responsible for code enforcement issues within the city. The current code enforcement model is reactive and is managed by the City Planner. The creation of the Code Enforcement Official allows for one staff member to be primarily responsible for code enforcement issues that are expected to increase as the city grows.

The proposed Code Enforcement Official responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Perform property investigations and inspections of possible municipal and zoning code violations
- Respond to inquiries and complaints regarding municipal code, zoning code, property maintenance, and related matters
- Assisting in zoning administration duties including reviewing building site plans, fence, pools, impervious surface requirements, setbacks, sign, etc.
- Backup the Permit Technician and assist in scheduling, permitting, and building inspection administration
- Providing information and education to interested parties regarding code requirements, options and remedies
- Identifying changes and relevant potential amendments to municipal code

A full job description and responsibilities are included in your packet.

Staff further recommends that the City Council elect to not advertise the position and hire Sophia Jensen as Code Enforcement Official. Sophia was hired as the GIS Intern in 2021 and continued to provide part time support to the planning department after the end of her internship. As per the personnel policy, the City Administrator or a designee will determine if a vacancy will be filled through an open recruitment or by promotion, transfer, or some other method. If approved, Sophia would be hired at a starting wage of \$23.15/hour and start working the day after approval.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Code Enforcement Official wages are included in the 2022 budget.

OPTIONS:

- Approve and the Code Enforcement Official Job Description and hire Sophia Jensen
- Approve the Code Enforcement Official Job Description and advertise the position
- Approve the Code Enforcement Official Job Description with amendments
- Do not approve the Code Enforcement Official Job Description

RECOMMENDATION:

If removed from the Consent Agenda:

“Motion to Approve the Code Enforcement Official Job Description and Hire Sophia Jensen at the Terms Described Above.”

ATTACHMENTS: Code Enforcement Official Job Description

City of Lake Elmo

Job Title: Code Enforcement Officer

Department: Planning

Status: Full-time regular position

Benefits: Qualifies for full-time benefits

Reporting Relationship: Reports to Planning Director

Supervisory Duties: This position has no supervisory responsibilities.

Position Details: Under limited supervision, this position is responsible for interpreting and enforcing municipal and zoning codes. This position responds to concerns and complaints regarding property maintenance, nuisances, junk/debris, vehicles, zoning, encroachment, etc. This position performs under the general supervision of the Planning Director and is responsible for, but not limited to the following duties:

Code Enforcement:

- Perform property investigations and inspections of possible municipal and zoning code violations
- Maintain accurate records of inspections, follow-up actions, and compliance, and maintains a database for tracking code enforcement cases
- Prepare a variety of correspondence and mailings regarding planning and zoning issues
- Respond to inquiries and complaints regarding municipal code, zoning code, property maintenance, and related matters
- Develop and maintain accurate code violation cases for public hearings and court proceedings, appearing at hearings as necessary, and coordinating with City prosecutor when appropriate
- Coordinates with Washington County Sheriff's Office on inspections and code enforcement cases

Planning and Building:

- Assist in zoning administration duties including reviewing building site plans, fence, pools, impervious surface requirements, setbacks, signs, etc.
- Serve as backup to Permit Technician and assist in scheduling, permitting and building inspection administration
- Assist in the review and administration of applications
- Respond to inquiries and concerns regarding the City's planning and zoning operations and applicable codes in-person or via phone and email
- Assist in the review of building site plans and zoning permits and requirements for compliance

Administrative Duties

- Provides information and education to interested parties regarding code requirements, options and remedies
- Keeps current with information on property maintenance and code compliance inspection practices

- Interprets and applies City enforcement policies and ordinances as approved by the City Council
- Identifies changes and relevant potential amendments to municipal code
- Contributes to reviewing, developing, and modifying code compliance strategies, policies, and procedures
- Participate in the formation of departmental long range and strategic plans

While these are the primary focus of the position, we believe strongly in teamwork and employees will be called upon to perform a variety of duties as part of their role with the City.

Position Requirements

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Demonstrates ability to prioritize tasks, solve problems and meet deadlines
- Interface with other City, County and State Government entities and other jurisdictions when required
- Excellent customer service and problem-solving skills
- Knowledge of or ability to learn city ordinances, policies, and procedures related to code enforcement, planning, zoning and development regulations
- Knowledge of or ability to learn principles and practices of land use and city planning.
- Ability to maintain composure under pressure, as well as in difficult or tense situations
- Ability to learn to use a variety of software applications applicable to land use planning.
- Ability to read, analyze and clearly interpret professional publications, technical manuals, and land use planning and zoning regulations to communicate these to non-experts in understandable terms
- Ability to manage multiple tasks and meet deadlines
- Prepare clear and concise written reports and materials for presentations
- Assist in interpreting planning and zoning activities to commissions, boards, developers and the public
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing
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Education: High School Diploma or equivalent

Requirements:

- Fully capable in word processing, and other applicable computer software
- Able to use GIS mapping software.
- Fully capable in creating and using spreadsheets to collect, track, and analyze information.
- Knowledge of basic land use principles
- Ability to interpret rules, procedures, and/or laws
- Experience working with the public
- Demonstrable experience with problem solving and research
- Valid MN State Driver's License

Desired Qualifications:

- At least one year of work experience or formal training in code enforcement, municipal codes and/or zoning codes.
- Demonstrable experience applying regulations and achieving compliance
- Experience working with the public in the public sector
- Fully capable in GIS mapping software
- American Association of Code Enforcement Certification

Physical and Mental Requirements: Work is performed in both office and field settings. Some of the employee's time is spent in field inspection associated with code enforcement and development cases. Sufficient mobility is necessary to navigate natural terrain and construction sites. Visual acuity sufficient to evaluate field conditions, plans and drawings is necessary. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance, vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus. Hand-eye coordination is necessary to operate computers and various pieces of office equipment.

While performing duties of this job, the employee is required to sit, stand, walk, talk and hear, use hands to finger, handle, feel and operate objects, tools or controls. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move 40 pounds.

***The physical demands described here are representative to those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

Working Conditions: While performing duties of this job, the employee is required to sit, stand, walk, talk and hear, use hands to finger, handle, feel and operate objects, tools or controls. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move 40 pounds. Work is performed in a field environment involving working inside and outside of vehicles and in confined spaces. Seasonal conditions can include excessive heat or cold. Conditions can include working in wet, muddy, slippery or dusty and windy conditions.

Competencies Common to All City Positions:

- Develop, maintain a thorough working knowledge of, and comply with all departmental and applicable City policies and procedures
- Demonstration by personal example the spirit of service, excellence, and integrity expected from all staff
- Develop respectful and cooperative working relationships with co-workers, including willing assistance to newer staff so job responsibilities can be performed with confidence as quickly as possible
- Confer regularly with and keep immediate supervisor informed of all important matters which pertain to the applicable job functions and responsibilities
- Represent the City of Lake Elmo in a professional manner to the public, outside contacts and constituencies

***The work environment characteristics described here are representative to those an employee encounters while performing essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*