
POSITION PROFILE

Amherst Housing Authority

Executive Director

September 27, 2016

RH Executive Search advises the client named above on the basis of the retained Search Project named above. This Position Profile documents RH Executive Search's understanding of the client's requirements for the position. No revisions or modifications of this document should occur without explicit approval of the client and RH Executive Search. The details of this Position Profile are for the client's, candidates' and selected sources' information in conjunction with this Search Project.

ORGANIZATION

The Amherst Housing Authority (AHA) is dedicated to providing quality housing to eligible individuals and households in the town of Amherst, Massachusetts. The AHA, which is overseen by a five member Board of Commissioners, owns and manages 193 units of state and federally funded public housing on 13 sites, administers 413 Rental Assistance vouchers, and manages two additional properties totaling 36 units. The current budget shows annual revenue of \$4.16MM, and full- and part-time staff numbers 16.

Amherst is a vibrant town, located in the middle of the Pioneer Valley in Western Massachusetts – a region also known for its Five College Consortium (University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges). Amherst prides itself on being an inclusive community and provides a large number of educational and cultural opportunities to its residents, especially noting its year-round population of nearly 40,000. Local college and university students contribute greatly to the town's culture, many of whom are heavily involved in community-based initiatives. Amherst's local government has traditionally provided exceptional services to its residents, including strong public education and support for open space, agricultural initiatives and affordable housing. As the town moves into the future, it continues to be respectful of its past.

The Amherst Housing Authority is a quasi-municipal, public agency operated primarily with state and federal funding. The Authority is completely compliant with regulations established by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) as well as the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The mission of the Amherst Housing Authority is as follows:

1. To preserve and to expand decent, safe and affordable housing for low and moderate income households, elders and persons with disabilities.
2. To support programs, services and resources that promote economic self-sufficiency, and improve community quality of life, tenant empowerment and responsibility.
3. To maintain quality of service delivery and ensure equal opportunity in housing.
4. To operate programs and deliver services that maximize financial and human resources while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

The AHA is pleased to provide comprehensive information to potential tenants, as well as those interested in volunteering or serving as a steward, on its website, amhersthousingauthority.org. One may additionally find Annual Reports, the Section 8 Administrative Plan, the Federal 5 Year Plan, and minutes from Board of Commissioners meetings on the site.

POSITION

The Amherst Housing Authority (AHA), located in Amherst, Massachusetts, seeks a dynamic, passionate, technically-skilled individual to become its next Executive Director (ED). The right candidate will be more than just the leader of a housing authority. This individual, who will be a public representative of the AHA and the “face” of the organization, must be thoughtful and sensitive to the needs and concerns of a diverse population, but can display strong leadership and the ability to resolve conflict, when needed. S/he must be able to empower and delegate, but not be afraid to roll up his/her own sleeves. The next ED must be a great listener and methodical in approach, while being solutions-oriented. S/he must be confident, but humble, and patient, but driven. Finally, the right candidate must have a desire, belief and passion for serving the spectrum of the population that seeks and/or qualifies for affordable housing, including extremely low-income individuals and families, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

The Executive Director will report to the Amherst Board of Commissioners, who are strong professionals and supportive community members. Principal functional competencies the Executive Director must engender include the preparation and control of the annual budget, the administration of day-to-day operations, project management, and strategic planning. S/he will work closely with DHCD and HUD, serving as the key liaison with the state and federal agencies that provide resources and/or regulatory oversight. In addition, the ED will have to stay up-to-date on new and/or improved housing or service programs and techniques in the public and private sectors, developing plans for future public housing, as appropriate.

The Board is proud of the fact that the Amherst Housing Authority has many community allies with whom the Executive Director will be able to partner to ensure the continued successful tradition of providing critical services.

This is an excellent opportunity for an individual who has worked in a housing authority or similar environment to continue their professional career in public housing, working for a fiscally sound organization whose properties are in good shape.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director's role is to provide the leadership and overall management of the agency.

Specific roles and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Interprets, implements and administers the policies of the Board of Commissioners and all applicable federal and state housing regulations
- Represents the Amherst Housing Authority and acts as a liaison with regulatory agencies, local officials and community-based organizations
- Compiles agency budget for Board review and approval
- Attends, on a consistent basis, meetings, workshops, conferences, seminars and other sessions, in order to gain first-hand knowledge of new or improved housing programs in the public and private sectors
- Provides staff support to the Board and supervises and/or completes the preparation of all written material, including minutes, notes, statements, reviews, policies, correspondence and reports
- Receives bids for Board approval, executes contracts for work by others, and monitors work in progress for compliance with contractual provisions
- Keeps and posts office hours in accordance with the Department's guidelines so that tenants, applicants, local and state officials and the general public have a reasonably convenient ability to communicate with the LHA and to take steps necessary to access the LHA's programs and opportunities
- Supervises management and control of the agency's finances, including payables, receivables, cash or other assets associated with operating contracts (including investments), insurance administration and all internal and external financial operations following administrative and financial procedures and policies prescribed in the Department's guidelines.
- Acts as the Authority's Personnel Officer, not only in managing employees, but in assuring that all personnel policies, procedures, position descriptions and general personnel practices conform with all applicable statutes
- Adopts and enforces appropriate anti-discrimination policies, which meet the requirements of applicable law, including, a policy against sexual and other discriminatory harassment and a policy for reasonable accommodation on account of disability.
- Initiates the writing of proposals and grants
- Reviews, approves and implements regulations and notices from governmental and regulatory agencies, and responds to such in a timely manner, whether written or oral
- Offers general oversight of the management and maintenance of all housing developments to ensure a high degree of liveability at the lowest possible cost
- Supervises the purchases of equipment, materials and labor to satisfactorily meet the standards of good and proper maintenance
- Provides general oversight of the selection of tenants, the execution of leases, the collection of rent, and the enforcement of leases as required by Board policies and procedures
- Coordinates administration with other departments, sections or agencies to prevent delays in actions required or to improve services to residents
- Performs other such duties as may be assigned by the Board of Commissioners

CANDIDATE PROFILE

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION/ LICENSE CREDENTIALS

- A bachelor's degree is strongly preferred
- Certification as a Public Housing Manager from a HUD approved organization is required within one year if not already certified, and may be substituted by certification as a property manager or similar classification by a nationally recognized housing or real estate organization or by certification as a MPHA of a DHCD-approved Massachusetts Public Housing Administrator Certification Program

FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES — SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE

- At least five years of experience in a supervisory position in housing management, community development, public administration or a closely related field
- Supervision of a staff of eight (8) or more for at least one year
- A proven track record of contributing to the advancement of an organization's vision and mission
- An openness and willingness to work closely with the Board of Commissioners
- Ability to create a vision and strategy for the future direction of the Amherst Housing Authority
- Proven ability to successfully interact and form strong relationships with diverse populations, including the very low-to moderate income constituencies served by the Amherst Housing Authority
- An understanding of funding sources and the comprehensive application processes
- Competence in property management and the fundamentals of maintenance supervision
- Politically knowledgeable about issues and policies effecting public housing
- Ability to be flexible and perform work under time pressure when necessary
- Prior skills in budgeting, personnel management and public relations
- Considerable knowledge of local, state and federal governmental procedures and regulations as they relate to housing development, construction, and the management of local housing authority operations
- General ability to understand blueprints, engineering drawings and technical documents
- Acumen to assess the appearance and conditions of all buildings owned or managed by the Amherst Housing Authority
- Ability to work in a public housing environment in all weather conditions (hot, cold, humid, dry and wet)
- Willingness to work at least 37.5 hours per week
- Must have the ability to be available to on-call staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays, and to effect appropriate response to such calls. A designee may be appointed to cover during out of state travel or vacations
- Strong computer skills are required
- Minority and bilingual candidates are encouraged to apply

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT/ BEHAVIORAL COMPETENCIES

- Innovative; is able to think “outside the box”
- Strong written and oral communication skills; one who can present well to others
- Empowers and delegates
- A strong advocate for those who the Authority serves
- Strong problem-solving skills
- A great listener
- Values transparency; communicates at the level needed with tenants, staff, the Board and others
- Ability to motivate and inspire others
- Culturally sensitive to the needs and concerns of diverse populations
- Well-organized
- Can work both independently and as part of a team; understands the importance of building a good team
- Solutions-oriented
- Attention to detail
- Strong analytical skills

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Must have compassion
- A people person; willing to get out away from one’s office and be in the community
- Is fair
- Patient
- Brings a sense of humor
- Driven
- Inspirational
- Sensitive
- Confident, but humble
- Charismatic
- Enthusiastic and engaged
- Willing and eager to learn
- Inspirational

The Amherst Housing Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Compensation is subject to DHCD Salary Schedule and HUD guidelines, and will be in the \$85,000 to \$87,000 range, commensurate with experience.

The selected candidate will be asked to sign a “Contract of Employment between the Amherst Housing Authority and the Executive Director,” a document which will be shared with finalists during the final stages of the interview process.

To apply for this role, please submit a letter of interest and resume to: Kevin Hicar, Principal, Robert Half Executive Search, at kevin.hicar@roberthalfes.com by October 31, 2016.