
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

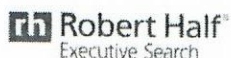
- Must have compassion
- A people person; willing to get out away from one’s office and be in the community
- Is fair
- Patient
- Brings a sense of humor
- Driven
- Inspirational
- Sensitive
- Confident, but humble
- Charismatic
- Enthusiastic and engaged
- Willing and eager to learn
- Inspirational

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.



Mr. Kevin Hicar
Executive Recruiter
Robert Half Executive Search – mid Atlantic
1401 I Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington DC, 20005
Via Kevin.hicar@roberthalfes.com

Re: Amherst Housing Authority Executive Director Position

Dear Mr. Hicar,

Enclosed please find my resume that will detail for you my career growth and professional accomplishments. As an Executive Director of Public Housing Authorities in the bordering community of Connecticut, I have an understanding of the size of the Amherst Housing Authority, the climate in which it operates and the programs and services it offers.

For the past two years I have been fortunate to contribute to the development of an Accreditation program for Public and Affordable Housing providers. During this exercise I have identified best practices for all manner of housing programs. I have developed compliance indicators to demonstrate these successful programs and services. This opportunity has afforded me with significant awareness and understanding of some of the best program delivery practices from around the country. I bring with me that knowledge and offer it as part of my contributions.

During my career in housing, I have experienced compensation growth from \$55,000 to \$107,000 relative to the size of the agency I have served. I am open to conversations regarding compensation with SHA. Please contact me to further discuss the unique contributions I could offer as Executive Director for the agency.

Warmly,

Sandra Desrosiers

Sandra Desrosiers

Skills: Strong Negotiator * Empathetic Leader * Well-formed Business Acumen * Cultivated Analytical Skills * Experienced Public Speaker * Impassioned Advocate

Experience

January 2014 – Present Accreditation Manager

Currently coordinating all initiation activities of the *Affordable Housing Accreditation Board*, a start-up nonprofit aiming to develop and implement an accreditation process for public and affordable housing providers. This is a contracted relationship with an expected end date relative to AHAB's transition from HAI Group. My work includes:

- Draft standards of excellence in housing by identifying best practices of successful housing providers and target key indicators to capture documentable compliance with those standards.
- Identified quality improvements relative to the delivery of affordable housing services and programs.
- Developed and implemented project timeline to establish accreditation products and services.
- Designed and developed scope of software requirements.
- Drafted accreditation application process cycle.
- Field test accreditation design, systems and processes among various stakeholders within diverse environments.
- To introduce Accreditation to the national audiences of public and affordable housing, I have developed a wide national network among public and affordable housing providers, residents, advocates, industry group leaders, and stakeholders for the housing industry.
- Engaged numerous conversations with the leadership of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to address possible compliance partnerships with existing federal assessment tools.
- Provided workshops and public speaking events to national and regional audiences of 5 to 100+.
- Cultivated business partners, trained boards and service providers and engaged strong national support for the accreditation program.

2005-2014 Public Housing Executive Director

2005-2012 Executive Director for the Housing Authority of the Town of Windsor and Bloomfield.

In this capacity I oversaw all agency operations, leadership and forecasting. As a leader I seek to engage impassioned teams committed to service delivery. I adhere to the philosophy that my greatest accomplishment is the improved quality-of-life experienced by my customers, staff and the community.

- As the Managing Agent in Bloomfield, I began the process of identifying, removing and replacing obsolete scattered site housing stock.
- Initiated the first Consolidation Agreement in the state of CT of the Windsor and Bloomfield Housing Authorities providing each with significant expansion resources.
- As leader of the Windsor Housing Authority I transformed Millbrook Village, a State subsidized elderly/disabled site, from a dangerous and unattractive environment to a highly sought after community through resident engagement and capital improvement.
- Led the Board of Commissioners and town stakeholders through the authority's first strategic planning process and developed one-, three-, and five-year strategies for growth and sustainability.
- I successfully sought and engaged management contracts with business partners to expand agency unrestricted revenue opportunities.

2012-2013 Executive Director for the Ansonia Housing Authority. I oversaw all agency operations, leadership and forecasting. Upon my arrival the agency had not had an Executive Director for two years. Its public housing program was designated as Troubled by HUD, staff was disengaged, and the Board was severely divided as to the future growth of its services and programs in the community.

- As lead negotiator for the Ansonia Housing Authority, I ended a three-year dispute of the employment contract between the Authority and its union contracted staff by drafting mutually beneficial agreements with union representatives and the Board of Commissioners.
- I identified and replaced, or renegotiated \$1 million + in auto renewing vendor relationships that were not efficiently serving the agency.
- Initiated capital improvement projects that enhanced several quality-of-life issues for residents in Elderly/Disabled state supported housing.
- Re-instituted/designed several social programs to address the unmet critical health and safety needs of underserved families in public housing.
- Continued the demolition of obsolete public housing
- Engaged the requirements to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing by negotiating replacement housing opportunities and strategies with the Town of Ansonia.

5/13 - 12/13 Interim Executive Director for the East Windsor Housing Authority.

I provided leadership and congruity of services during the Board's search for a permanent Executive Director. I audited all agency operations, identified strengths deficiencies and established corrective action plans to establish a course of action for effective and efficient service delivery for the residents of the Authority. .

- Renewed open communication with Town leadership.
- Applied for and received several State supported grants to enhance resident services
- Supported the establishment of a resident advisory board at the request of the residents
- Provided board training and facilitated more than two dozen policy revisions to promote best practices for the agency operations.

2003-2005 Regional Property Manager

As an agent for *White and Katzman*, I managed more than 1,000 units in ten locations throughout northwest Connecticut, of privately owned condominiums.

- Negotiated dozens of capital improvement projects on behalf of the owed asset communities.
- Oversaw contracted activities including, but not limited to, roofing, architectural design, paving, landscaping and siding, recreational activity construction.
- Routinely delivered requests for proposals of vendor services such as landscaping, snow and trash removal services.
- Worked successfully with ten volunteer resident Boards of Directors, guiding them toward the physical and fiscal health and longevity of their assets.

1997-2003 Landlord/Tenant Counselor

Through a volunteer opportunity with the *Housing Education Resource Center*, I transitioned into a full time position as a landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities counselor.

- Acquired expert-level knowledge of federal and state regulations and fair housing requirements.
- Arbitrated disputes between landlord and tenants regarding all aspects of their contractual and statutory relationships.
- Provided educational series to stakeholders regarding Landlord/Tenant Rights and Responsibilities. Served as Housing Court liaison for pro se clients.

Professional Affiliations:

New England Regional Conference - NAHRO, Board Member

NAHRO, BETC Committee Member

Coram Deo, Board Member

Active membership:

CLPHA

NAHRO

Certifications and Recognition:

Nan McKay PHM Certified

Leadership On Board, Leadership Certificate

CT Fair Housing Center, Fair Housing Training Certification

Conn-Nahro Certificate of Completion OSHA Training

Education

Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, CT

2003 BA, Public Administration, Cum Laud 3.8/4.0

Manchester Community Technical College, Manchester, CT

1997 Associates, Paralegal Studies, 3.5/4.0

October 20, 2016

Kevin Hicar, Principal
Robert Half Executive Search
kevin.hicar@roberthalfes.com

Dear Mr. Hicar:

I am pleased to submit my resume for the position of Executive Director of the Amherst Housing Authority (AHA). My ultimate goal has always been to lead the organization. I feel that my tenure, knowledge and experience with the AHA demonstrates that I am an excellent candidate for this position. The expertise I have gained through the years allows me to serve as a strong leader, in which I have demonstrated compassion, patience and sensitivity in working with the diverse culture of our residents, applicants and the public.

During my employment of over 23 years of service with the Amherst Housing Authority, I have had the opportunity to learn all aspects of the organization. As the Director of Leased Housing, I oversaw the complicated Housing Choice Voucher program and each year, under my direction, AHA achieved the status of "high performer" as part of the HUD SEAMAP review. Through the many positions I have held, I have acquired expertise in the affordable housing industry and specifically the programs AHA delivers. For the past several years, I worked very closely with the staff as an intermediary between the staff and the Executive Director.

This past year, which has brought many staff changes to the AHA, as Director of Housing Programs, I also served as the acting Housing Manager. While in the position, I filled various vacancies, conducted annual recertifications, implemented a new State voucher program and trained a new employee which resulted in her promotion to Housing Manager. Finally, as the interim Executive Director, I have successfully led the organization through a positive transition, reestablished relationships with community partners, streamlined various daily operation procedures and prepared for an upcoming annual audit.

Throughout my career at the AHA, I took the initiative to enhance my knowledge by completing numerous certification programs such as, the MassNAHRO, Massachusetts Public Housing Administration, the Nan McKay and Associates, Public Housing Manager and HCV Executive Management. Additionally, I received my Master of Management Degree at Cambridge College in 2006.

I love my work here at AHA and wholeheartedly support our mission to provide affordable housing programs and services to those in need. I believe my commitment to Amherst Housing Authority and my experience will serve the organization well; I feel that I am a strong candidate for the Executive Director position.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Debbie Turgeon

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Responsible professional with twenty-three (23) years of experience working in the public housing field. Dedicated to the mission to preserve and expand affordable housing and to ensure equal opportunity housing to low income families, elders, and people with disabilities.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Directed, Supervised and Managed
 - Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) and Federal Public Housing
 - State Rental Voucher Program(s) (MRVP) and (AHVP) and (DMH)
 - State-Aided elderly and disabled housing (667, 705 & 689)
 - Low Income Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- Conducted quality control internal file audits
- Trained and supervised staff for all federal and state programs delivered in my positions
- Financial oversight including department budgets, daily operations and monthly/annual balances
- Personnel supervision and training (up to 20)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Interim Executive Director, Amherst Housing Authority (June 2016-present)

- Direct all financial aspects of the agency
- Implement streamline processes for continued procurement and supervision of all contracts
- Report and monitor compliance for HUD, DHCD, MHP and Spectrum
- Prepare and report all operations to the Amherst Housing Authority board
- Direct and supervise all programs delivered by AHA

Acting Housing Manager, Amherst Housing Authority (2015-2016)

- Managed Public Housing Programs
- Supervised of department
- Property management, leasing and compliance for all housing authority owned and managed properties

Director of Housing Programs, Amherst Housing Authority (2012 present)

- Develop administrative office and program procedures
- Update and revise annually, Administrative Plan (HCV) & Admissions and Occupancy Plan (ACOP) for State-Aided and Federal Public Housing Programs
- Monitor financial management and program utilization for the Federal HCV program
- Conduct quality control reviews to ensure program compliance
- Prepare statistical and financial reports as required and other related tasks assigned by the Executive Director

Property Management, Pomeroy Lane Cooperative (2011 present)

- Management of 25 units of with mixed finance requirements
- Resident-Matters: (resident selection, preparation for recertification, resident compliance with lease and rules, carrying charge and shares collection, move-in and move-out processing)

- Oversight and supervision of maintenance
- Oversight and control of property finances
- Market available units in accordance with Affordable Housing Restrictions
- Enforce lease requirements and initiate court action when necessary

Director of Leased Housing, (2006 – 2012)

- Managed State and Federally funded Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program, Alternative Housing Voucher Program and Department of Mental Health voucher programs
- Effective oversight of rental assistance program budgets of 3.1 million
- High performance scores from SEMAP reporting
- Supervised leased housing staff and two contracted housing inspectors
- Monitored leasing performance to ensure maximum use of rental subsidy funding
- Applicant selection for leased housing programs, issuance of housing vouchers, conduct applicant briefing sessions
- Prepared narrative and statistical reports as necessary, monthly, quarterly, annually

Section 8 Coordinator (1998 – 2006)

- Calculated income for Housing Choice Voucher participants to determine monthly rents
- Conducted verification of income, asset and family composition through third party sources
- Negotiation, mediation and resolution regarding tenant/landlord issues
- Processed electronic data to HUD, DHCD, and other funding sources

Reception (1993 – 1997)

- Reception and answering phones
- Processed work order and maintain asset inventory systems
- Rent collection and banking

EDUCATION

Cambridge College, Springfield, MA

2006

Master of Management Degree

Concentration - Business Negotiation and Conflict Resolution

CERTIFICATIONS

HCV Executive Management (Nan McKay and Associates)

2013

Developing & Managing PBV Specialist (Nan McKay & Associates)

2013

Massachusetts Public Housing Administration (MassNAHRO)

2009

Public Housing Manager (Nan McKay & Associates)

2007

Section 8 Rent Calculation (Nan McKay & Associates)

1997