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Excerpts from Newspapers on Town Managers

Ongoing examples of town managers and what they achieved before moving on...Bolded areas indicate changes.

1. KSBW News, Steve Adams, King City

The process included a statewide search conducted by Avery and Associates, an executive search firm, an extensive interview process involving the City Council, panels with staff and members of the community, and a comprehensive background investigation.

Arroyo Grande...he served as the City Manager for over 14 years and led the organization and the community through the difficult recession.

During that time, the City's streets, facilities, and infrastructure were upgraded, services were enhanced, financial reserves were substantially increased, and a number of quality new businesses, developments and affordable housing projects were constructed.

2. Watsonville, webpage, Charles A. Montoya ---Seven month search

The nationwide search was conducted by Jim Armstrong of Ralph Andersen and Associates, an executive recruiting firm out of Rocklin, California. The City Council solicited public input ...to identify the key qualities that the ...community desires in a new City Manager. These qualities included strong communication, organizational, financial management, and economic development skills. When the initial search effort did not produce a viable candidate ...a new search was re-initiated.

Mayor Nancy Bilicich states, Mr. Montoya's background strongly fits the needs of the City.

Mr. Montoya brings over twenty three years of professional management experience at municipal, county, and state government levels. He most recently served as the Town Manager for the City of Florence, Arizona. ...**He demonstrated success in enhancing economic development activity in the downtown area, greatly improving the permitting process to encourage development, increasing capital project completions, and continuing to provide core services during a downturn in the economy.**

Prior to this, he served as the Director of Finance in the Town of Castle Rock, Colorado. He has a Master in Public Administration from the University of New Mexico and a Bachelor of Business Administration from New Mexico State University.

Mr. Montoya will be earning a salary of \$195,000 per year and is expected to officially begin with the City on November 30, 2015.

3. Napa Valley Register posted on Jan 19, Calistoga CM retires

CALISTOGA — When Richard Spitler took the job of Calistoga city manager in 2010, times were tough: low cash reserves (\$17,000), paltry city revenues (\$900,000), few available personnel resources (nine staff vacancies), lawsuits and environmental regulation conflicts (Kimball Dam), and millions of dollars in unmet deferred needs.

Today, the tables have turned substantially and, in comparison to five years ago, Calistoga's future looks bright with a \$4.5 million dollar General Fund, and revenues of \$9 million.

"I came to the City Council with a financial plan," he said.

Spitler's financial plan was, in part, to focus on developing higher end luxury tourist accommodations and this, by his measurement, has been a key component of the city's financial renaissance.

"Focusing on the high-end tourist means the town has to provide fewer city services for each individual visitor," he said. "Yet even though their numbers won't be great, these visitors will spend more while they are here."

He pointed out that hotels are a triple revenue source, providing property tax, sales tax plus a 12 percent transient occupancy tax (TOT). This is the financial driver of the city's plan. A tourist staying in a luxury room costing \$500 per night will generate \$60 per night in TOT, versus \$12 for a room costing \$100 per night. But most importantly, that 12 percent TOT goes directly to the city of Calistoga, which doesn't have to share the income with the county or state.

4. Windsor Hires Linda Kelly, Nov 2012; The Windsor Times

Linda Kelly, currently City Manager for the City of Sonoma, has been hired as the Town of Windsor's new Town Manager.

"The Council is pleased to appoint an experienced city manager with impressive credentials and valuable Sonoma County experience," she said. "We are confident

that Linda will provide the leadership we have come to expect from our Town Manager as we look to the future and the challenges facing our Town.”

Fudge said the council’s decision was unanimous and said Kelly is well respected. “Mostly it was Linda’s reputation county wide was what won us over and the fact that the employees will work really well with her,” she said. “She feels like a good fit. To confirm all that, I’ve gotten emails from Sonoma residents saying you’d better appreciate what you got and take good care of her.”

Fudge said economic development and specifically handling the continued repercussions from the elimination of redevelopment will likely be top priorities for the new manager. “The challenge will be to continue to deal with the aftermath of redevelopment. There were projects that we wanted to do with (redevelopment funds) but there is also money that the State wants back from us that we didn’t think we’d have to return.”

Kelly said she has experience with successful economic development plans in Sonoma including a strong tourism and retail spheres. She said immersing herself in the budget will be important in her first few weeks leading up to the Town’s new budget.

“With a new budget cycle and the next two-year budget, sitting down with staff, the finance director to better understand the revenue history and projects is important,” she said. “Just understanding how they are dealing with the budget preparation as well as understanding how redevelopment has impacted their budget.”

In addition to her work in Sonoma, Kelly has served as city manager in the city of Fairfax. She has a Masters Degree in Political Science from UC Riverside. An active member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Ms. Kelly has completed the ICMA Emerging Leaders Development and Credentialed Manager Programs. In 2011, she was awarded the ICMA Program Excellence Award for Community Partnerships.

In a statement, Sonoma Mayor Joanne Sanders praised Kelly’s work. “Linda has done a great job managing us through tough times. We understand this is a positive opportunity to further her career. Selfishly, I wish it wasn’t happening the same time as my term is ending. We wish her well, know she will be a tremendous success and Windsor is lucky to have her!”

5.SJ Mercury News, Saratoga, Dave Anderson Retires

"When I first came here, the city had a very difficult political culture, and I think that over time that's become much better," said Anderson. "I think also when I came here, the city's infrastructure was in decline. It was in a dilapidated state, and we've been able to improve that."

The most challenging years of his tenure, said Anderson, were during the economic downturn, when the city had to juggle delivering high-quality services to its residents amid a difficult budget environment.

6. Tiburon town manager , retires after 8 years, Marin Independent Journal 4/15

She said two of her prouder accomplishments are the construction of the Dairy Knoll recreation facility and “navigating our way through the Great Recession and coming out a stronger organization.”

Dairy Knoll, on Neds Way, provides space for Belvedere-Tiburon Joint Recreation classes for children and adults, staff and events. During the recession, she said, “all our employees took pay cuts. We froze positions and made some structural changes, like how we treat sick time and vacation time.”

“We made lasting changes that helped us get through the recession and have also strengthened the organization financially. We reduced our liabilities.” “She just makes it all work. It’s going to be really hard to find somebody who can live up to her standards,” said Tiburon Mayor Frank Doyle.

Curran’s career began in 1982 with a post as director of community and economic development for the city of Santa Monica. She then became assistant city manager for Beverly Hills, then accepted a job as town manager for Telluride, Colorado, in 1991. She came to Tiburon in 2006.

“I specifically chose small towns because I like the connectedness, the ability to get things done and a higher level of responsiveness all around,” Curran said.

“One of the wonderful things about Tiburon is it has so many citizen volunteers doing all kinds of things from volunteering at the library to pulling weeds and preserving our historic treasures,” she said. “We have such an engaged community and it’s just a real pleasure to work with people who care so much about the place where they live.”

7. St Helena Star, City Manager Broad to Retired; 4/2014

Broad said that when he arrived, the city’s general fund surplus had dwindled from \$5 million to \$2 million, and there was little money for necessary capital improvements.

“There was little recognition of the fact that the city had no increasing revenue sources, and could not continue to spend money the way it was,” Broad said.

In his first year, Broad oversaw a series of layoffs and staffing shuffles that freed up \$1 million a year. The biggest chunk of that surplus went to long-

deferred road repairs.

The Grandview hotel, which Broad said could pull building permits in April, should represent “a big revenue enhancement,” he said. Broad said he’s been deeply involved in discussions with the developers, and he’s glad to see the project moving along.

Broad said he also enhanced communication between the city and its citizens by revamping the city’s website and creating the E-News bulletin, which has 2,700 subscribers.

During Broad’s tenure the city also settled two major lawsuits related to the flood project, one with the contractors who worked on the project and another with property owner and developer Dennis Hunter. Meanwhile, new lawsuits have been filed by affordable housing advocate David Grabill and, in another dispute related to the flood project, Vineyard Valley Mobile Home Park.

The challenge all along was “how to have a productive conversation about St. Helena’s future, and how to get all the interested groups together and put their ideas on the table,” Broad said.

He said the council will hold a wide-ranging special meeting about the city’s economic future, with a mediator to lead the conversation and help everyone find common ground.

Broad said he’s been impressed with staff’s morale, in light of layoffs, furloughs and contract takeaways that have increased employees’ costs for their health care and retirement plans.

“I was the third city manager in a three-year period, and I’ve been really impressed with how well city staff has maintained their balance during this period and continued to do a good job serving the community,” he said.

Broad said he worked well with the “very talented” City Council and always felt like he had their support.

“My decision to leave has absolutely nothing to do with my relationship with the council,” Broad said. “In fact, I feel bad at giving them the unexpected news that I’ve chosen to retire.”

Nevero agreed that Broad worked well with the council, despite the inevitable differences of opinion that arise in any working relationship.

Nevero said Broad was hired when the city was in a time of transition. With the flood project finally done, the city was struggling to come to terms with decreased revenue due to the recession. Now we’re in a new day, and we need to focus on customer service and streamlined processes,” Nevero said.

8. Laura Sniderman Announces Departure from Half Moon Bay, 2014

Working closely with the City Council and various stakeholders, Ms. Sniderman achieved many highlights during tenure, including:

Transforming the City's service delivery model by reorganizing City departments and functions through the introduction of an efficient, contract-based model for law enforcement, planning, and recreation services;

Securing \$13.15 million in settlements with insurance companies that will be utilized to pay off Half Moon Bay's bond debt a decade earlier than originally scheduled;

Achieving a FY 2013-2014 budget surplus after consistently reducing the City's budget deficit in previous years;

Making investments toward the City's long-term fiscal health for the first time in years, including paying off multiple debts, increasing employee contributions toward retirement costs, and establishing and rebuilding appropriate reserves;

Moving forward with important infrastructure improvement projects and plans for the benefit of the community, such as new pedestrian trails, restarting street repairs, new playground equipment, construction of a new Emergency Operations Center, a new Circulation Element, and initiating the General Plan and Local Coastal Program updates;

Improving City operations with the creation of a Community Development Department, launch of an electronic document management system, and creating, updating and implementing many crucial staff policies and procedures;

Finalizing a creative, three-way land exchange between the City, San Mateo County and the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), which allowed the City to acquire the Smith Field athletic fields.