



“...meeting community needs...enhancing quality of life.”

Human Resources Department
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To: Board of Health, Human Resources/IT Committee and Common Council Members

From: Jay Ratchman, Human Resources Director 

Date: August 9, 2021

Re: Health Officer Hiring Process

On August 4, 2021, resolution #12-R-21 Health Officer Hiring was submitted and referred to the Board of Health. To assist you as you consider this resolution, I would like to offer some background information to provide greater context for your upcoming discussion.

On February 4, 2020, then Health Officer Eggebrecht submitted his intent to retire on June 4, 2020. We immediately launched a national search to find a successor. On April 17, 2020, Health Officer Eggebrecht selflessly rescinded his resignation in an effort to assist the City through the looming pandemic. Consequently, the hiring process for the Health Officer position was paused.

We re-opened the hiring process in March 2021, in anticipation of Health Officer Eggebrecht's retirement in June 2021. Subsequent interviews were conducted prior to Health Officer Eggebrecht's retirement; however, we did not find a candidate who met the education, skills, and competencies we expect, particularly for our top-level leadership positions. As has always been our practice, we did not want to sacrifice our goal of finding quality candidates by making quick decisions which may not serve us well for the long-term.

Knowing the pandemic was waning but not departing, we wanted to ensure that we continued our legacy of strong leadership in this critical position. As a result, we proactively reached out to the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to work through our interim plan to make sure we remained as a Level III health department. As we reviewed/created our interim plan, we discussed the qualifications of our Interim Health Officer and reviewed our ongoing recruitment efforts to find a successor. A memo dated May 24, 2021, from the Mayor which announced the appointment of an Interim Health Officer, was brought to the HR/IT committee and Common Council (see attachment).

Resolution #12-R-21 requests that members of the Common Council urge the Mayor to prioritize and expedite the hiring of a Health Officer as quickly and as practically as possible. I would like to reassure the City of Appleton Common Council that this hiring process has and will remain a priority. Particularly during this critical time in public health, we are committed to moving this process forward as quickly as possible, all while ensuring we are finding the best candidate to lead us through these challenging times and beyond. We won't hesitate to ask if we need additional resources.


As always, we will keep you abreast of the progress of the Health Officer hiring process. Should you have questions in the meanwhile, please let me know.



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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Jacob A. Woodford
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TO: Human Resources & Information Technology Committee
FROM: Mayor Jacob A. Woodford 
DATE: May 24, 2021
RE: Interim Health Officer Appointment

Health Officer Eggebrecht has announced his retirement from the City of Appleton, effective June 4, 2021. Health Officer Eggebrecht has dedicated 21 years of his career to the City. Identifying a successor has received our full attention and we expect to name a successor shortly as this search nears its conclusion.

Public Health Nurse Supervisor Sonja Jensen joined the City of Appleton in 2013 and has demonstrated her capability in the health field and through her work in helping lead the City through the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the depth of experience and commitment to the City of Appleton, I am pleased to appoint Ms. Jensen as the Interim Health Officer. She will serve in this capacity to ensure there is no vacancy, however brief, in the Health Officer role.